

Event-full story of development

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Addressing the inaugural session of the Uttar Pradesh (UP) Global Investors Summit (GIS) 2023 on February 10, industrialist Kumar Mangalam Birla praised Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, calling him “UPyogi” (useful).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had first used the description for the monk chief minister.

At the big-ticket event in Lucknow, Reliance chief Mukesh Ambani said the “golden period” of UP had just begun, while Daniel Bircher, chief executive officer of Zurich Airport Asia, which is developing Noida international airport, observed UP topped all states on the investment list.

Sample this: Against the initial target of ₹10 trillion, the three-day GIS got investment proposals of more than ₹33 trillion from more than 18,000 global and domestic corporations.

While the effusive praise made Adityanath grin in the presence of Modi and a galaxy of industry captains and investors, Lucknow back-to-back played host to three-day G20 deliberations during February 13-15 with the chief minister pulling out all the stops to exhibit the state’s soft power.

The hospitality at the G20 meetings elicited praise from Sherpa Amitabh Kant. Akash Kumar Sharma, secretary, Union Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), said foreign delegates were overwhelmed by the grandeur of the conference, and were now sceptical if they would be able to match the high standards set by UP.

Adityanath, who was a surprise pick for the post in March 2017, has consistently worked his way up to emerge as one of the most powerful politicians in India today.

After his elevation, he delivered for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Lok Sabha polls in 2019 and Assembly elections in 2022.

During the pandemic’s first wave, the state government managed the exodus of about 4.5 million migrant workers from other states to UP.

Yogi, who is called “Bulldozer Baba” for his unsparing action against criminals, is adding heft to his soft power by way of investment, infrastructure, and improving social sectors.

Ever since his preferment, Opposition parties have been in disarray. The pre-poll alliance of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls



failed miserably to dent the BJP’s support even in the backdrop of job losses, inflation, and economic slowdown.

With the 2024 Lok Sabha polls less than 14 months away, the BJP has started working on galvanising its rank and file.

Since UP sends the largest number of Lok Sabha MPs,

numbering 80, the state is vital to the party’s election road map. The BJP won power at the Centre in 2014 and 2019 primarily owing to its stupendous performance in the state.

With Yogi at the helm, the BJP is counting on his appeal and honest image to woo voters and ensure a third

successive win. Former UP chief secretary Atul Kumar Gupta said the state was fast emerging from its shadows of the past under the leadership of Yogi.

“The success of the GIS 2023, the G20 meet, and the extent of the investment kitty are testimony to the positive image the state has cultivated in the past few years. It is certainly good optics but also fosters confidence among the different sections of society as well as investors,” he said.

The UP government is now gearing up to launch GIS projects worth nearly ₹20 trillion at the groundbreaking ceremony to be held by August. Yogi has asked officials to follow up with investors, and warned against slackness and red tape.

UP has also aligned itself with Modi’s \$5-trillion agenda by getting up an ambitious plan to become a \$1-trillion economy by 2027, a tall order considering that the state’s gross state domestic product is estimated at \$250 billion.

Political and social commentator A P Tiwari said the “Yogi model of development” was being felt and reckoned in the political firmament not only in India but beyond due to the success of the GIS, G20 and other mega infra projects.

“Yogi has successfully broken the old template of politics-led development to a development-led polity. It will keep him and his party in good stead in future elections too,” he added.

