

# GBC 4.0 to kickstart renewable energy projects worth ₹1.25 lakh cr in UP: Anupam Shukla, Director, UPNEDA

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Anupam Shukla, Director, UPNEDA

In its energy policy, the Uttar Pradesh government has underlined its focus on providing low cost, reliable and green energy to people and businesses in the state. The stated goal is to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, which create the problem of climate change, and achieve renewable energy.

Seventeen cities in the state, including the holy cities of Ayodhya and Varanasi, are being transformed into solar cities. The state government is offering incentives to investors and industrialists for setting up their green energy plants. The movement towards a green future in the state is being spearheaded by the Uttar Pradesh New & Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA).

In conversation with ETGovernment, Anupam Shukla, Director, UPNEDA, describes the progress that is being made to create infrastructure for producing low cost, reliable and green energy for people and businesses of Uttar Pradesh.

## Edited excerpts:

### **The Uttar Pradesh government is holding the Ground Breaking Ceremony (GBC) 4.0 on February 19. What is the significance of this initiative?**

Uttar Pradesh New & Renewable Development Agency (UPNEDA) received investment proposals worth ₹7.5 lakh crore in the renewable energy sector at the Global Investor Summit held in February 2023. Acting on the target of implementing MoUs worth ₹1.25 lakh crore for the ground breaking ceremony, we are ready with 111 projects, which include 32 solar projects of ₹45,000 crore, 74 bioenergy projects of ₹5,000 crore and 5 pumped storage projects.

### **Has the land been made available for these projects?**

We have provided over 6000 acres of land in the last 2-3 months for these projects. The land for 9 projects, 7 solar and 2 bioenergy projects has also been transferred to developers for the construction of the projects. Apart from this, the land has also been identified for the construction of bio-energy projects at 14 more places.

### **At present, what is the status of solar projects and bioenergy projects in the state?**

UPNEDA has partnered with Central PSUs like THDC, NHPC and SECI to implement utility-scale solar projects in the state. In the next two years, some of the major projects to be started include solar parks in Jhansi (600 MW), Lalitpur (600 MW) and Chitrakoot (800 MW). The process of land acquisition has been accomplished up to 90% in Jhansi, 75% in Lalitpur and 60% in Chitrakoot. These projects ranging between ₹4,000–5,000 crore will be implemented by Tusco Limited.

Apart from this, Solar Park in Jalaun – 1200 MW, Kalpi Solar Power Project – 65 MW, Madhogarh Solar Power Project – 45 MW and Mirzapur Solar Power Project – 100 MW will be implemented by BSUL. LSPDCL is implementing Jalaun Solar Park (Dakor) – 40 MW, Jalaun Solar Park (Guna) – 75 MW, Jalaun Solar Park – (Parasan) – 75 MW and Kanpur Dehat Solar Park (Gujarai) – 50 MW. Besides, LSPDCL has already established Prayagraj Solar Park and Mirzapur Solar Park – 75 MW.

### **What steps are you taking to promote bioenergy projects?**

We are promoting bioenergy projects in a big way and aiming to set up at least 1 bioenergy project in every tehsil of the state. In-principle approval has been given by the state government for 80 bio-energy projects. The total cost of the project is ₹2,960.87 crore, out of which a total of 25 projects, whose total cost is ₹1,289.97 crore, have also received final approval from the government. UPNEDA has also deployed a Project Management Unit to assist in the effective implementation of the Solar Energy Policy, Bio Energy Policy, and other Renewable Energy Schemes to expedite the implementation of projects.

### **How can the renewable energy sector help Uttar Pradesh achieve the goal of a 1 trillion dollar economy?**

Uttar Pradesh has made significant progress in the field of renewable energy. In the last seven years, the renewable energy capacity in the state has been increased to a total of 4300 MW by using 2100 MW solar energy and 2200 MW bioenergy. To further the efforts, the state government has released the UP Solar Energy Policy 2022 and Bioenergy Policy 2022. The government is committed to the sustainable development of the state through energy transition. To achieve the goal of creating a 1 trillion dollar economy, UPNEDA, the nodal agency designated for renewable energy works in the state, is promoting the use of various sources of renewable energy.

### **How much progress has the state made in solar rooftop plants?**

Till date, about 302 MW capacity solar rooftop plants have been installed in the state. Some of the plants have been installed in the residences of 12,938 domestic electricity consumers, who have been given a state grant amount of ₹38.63 crore. Solar rooftop plants have been installed in 1527 buildings of additional social, educational, government, semi-government, industrial and commercial institutions. To promote the use of solar rooftops, UPNEDA is also doing the work of making the beneficiaries aware in the identified districts like Ayodhya, Ghaziabad, Varanasi, Kanpur and Aligarh through information department, radio jingles, district-level workshops etc.

### **The holy city of Ayodhya is being transformed into a solar city. How much progress has been made in this vision?**

Under the Uttar Pradesh Government Solar City Programme, Ayodhya is being developed as a model solar city by building solar rooftops, solar high masts, solar street lights, solar trees, solar cold storage, solar boats, solar parks, and solar water. The establishment of kiosks and solar energization of pump stations etc. are also included. The government has sanctioned an amount of ₹28.2 crore for this project. A remarkable 14 MW of solar energy is already being generated in Ayodhya, while an additional 40 MW capacity has been installed and the production is poised to start soon. More than 2500 solar lights have been installed in Ayodhya and the city also boasts solar-powered amenities such as ATMs and solar trees adorning its 40 intersections, epitomizing the city's embrace of renewable energy solutions.

### **It has reported that the Government of Uttar Pradesh plans to transform 17 cities, including Ayodhya and Varanasi into model solar cities. How much progress has been made in cities other than Ayodhya?**

With Ayodhya blazing a trail in solar energy adoption, the focus now shifts to Varanasi, where plans are afoot to install rooftop solar plants across government buildings. Varanasi is slated to witness the installation of 25,000 rooftop solar plants, positioning it as a beacon of solar innovation. Apart from Ayodhya and Varanasi, 15 other municipal corporations have been included under the Solar City programme. Additionally, concerted efforts are being made to extend solar infrastructure to rural areas, thereby democratizing access to clean energy solutions across Uttar Pradesh.

UPNEDA is also organizing programs to promote special communication in districts like Kanpur, Varanasi and Aligarh to increase the adoption of rooftop solar. We have decided to train 3,000 Surya Mitras this year. In further efforts, training centers have been set up at several locations (Chinhat - Lucknow, Ghosi-Mau, Siyarmau - Kannauj and in tie-up with various ITI institutes) to ensure wider access to skill development programs under "Surya Mitra Yojana". Of the 1,900 youth who trained, 65 have successfully secured employment and 90 have taken up self-employment ventures.

### **Uttar Pradesh is all set to emerge as a frontrunner in the green hydrogen market. By when can we expect the launch of Uttar Pradesh Green Hydrogen Policy 2023?**

To promote green hydrogen and green ammonia production in the state, we have prepared a draft of Uttar Pradesh Green Hydrogen Policy 2023. The process to get the said draft policy approved by the government is in the final stage. Our goal is to achieve one million tonnes per annum (mtpa) green hydrogen production capacity and generate 120,000 jobs. We will also establish two centers of excellence (CoE) dedicated to research and innovation in green hydrogen.

We had received investment proposals worth ₹2.73 trillion for green hydrogen plants from 20 leading companies during GIS 2023. For the establishment of Pumped Storage Hydro Plant (PSP) plants, action is being taken to identify sites and implement them. For this work, the process has been started to set up 9 projects with a total proposed capacity of about 12,000 MW by five developer companies.

### **How is UPNEDA leveraging digital technologies to bring efficiency and transparency?**

UPNEDA is making efforts for timely and prompt disbursement of subsidies to customers through a transparent online portal. The subsidy has been distributed to around 8000 beneficiaries in this financial year, with the subsidy being made available in 15 days with the help of an online portal. To maintain transparency at every level, an ERP system is also being developed. Apart from this, bioenergy and solar energy portals have been developed by UPNEDA for effective and transparent approval of projects. Developers can register their projects through these portals for state government approval. All approvals are given through this portal. An online process for issuing NOC for the production of biodiesel from biodiesel projects has also been launched.