

Uttar Pradesh's Proactive Reforms Nurturing an Investor-Friendly Environment for Economic Excellence

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Uttar Pradesh, under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, is undergoing a transformative journey marked by strategic reforms, major infrastructure projects, and a proactive approach to fostering an investor-friendly environment. With a focus on economic growth, improved connectivity, and sustainable development, the state is poised to become a dynamic hub for investment and innovation, shared **Shri Sanjay Prasad, IAS**, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, **Government of Uttar Pradesh** with **Ritika Srivastava** and **Abhineet Kumar** of Elets News Network (ENN).

What are the strategic initiatives being adopted by the government to boost infrastructure development in the state and achieve the target of transforming Uttar Pradesh into a \$1 trillion economy?

Led by the dynamic vision of Yogi Adityanath, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the Infrastructure and Industrial Development Department of the state is driving comprehensive strategies to foster the state's economic growth. A significant focus is on enhancing connectivity and industrial infrastructure.

Major infrastructure projects that are underway in the state include the Purvanchal Expressway and Bundelkhand Expressway, both of which are spurring economic activity in their respective regions after completion. In the 2024-25 budget, Rs. 2057 crore was allocated for the Ganga Expressway, Rs. 100 crore for Ayodhya's development, Rs. 150 crore to expand the Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, and Rs. 1750 crore for road development around religious sites. Additionally, Rs. 500 crore was provisioned for the Link Expressway, Rs. 346 crore for the Atal Metro in Agra, Rs. 400 crore under the Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission, and Rs. 1150 crore for the upcoming Noida International Airport.

Industrial corridors such as the Delhi- Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) and the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) are strategically promoted to catalyse manufacturing growth. To add to the growth momentum, several investment promotion policies and initiatives such as Invest UP and the Global Investors Summit are enhancing UP's appeal.

The state is an active participant in the Smart Cities Mission and the Smart Cities projects are transforming urban infrastructure in cities across the state. Recently, UP bagged 10 awards at the India Smart Cities Conclave, with Agra securing third position and Varanasi first position in respective categories.

Industrial parks and clusters located across UP provide modern amenities and serve as manufacturing and innovation centers, making the state an attractive investment destination.

The state is also contributing to the nation's journey towards a sustainable future. Renewable energy adoption is encouraged through initiatives like the 'Har Ghar Solar' and 'Solar Cities' schemes. Significant RE investments are creating jobs and new economic opportunities. Through leveraging PPP models, private sector resources are expediting high-quality, timely delivery of infrastructure projects in UP. These initiatives aim to achieve the state's ambitious target of a \$1 trillion economy.

Could you elaborate on the major reforms introduced to facilitate ease of doing business and attract greater private investments into Uttar Pradesh? How are these Ground Breaking Ceremonies helping in the transformation of the state?

Over the past few years, Uttar Pradesh has undergone a significant transformation in its industrial landscape. The government has diligently distributed investments across districts, fostering holistic growth, and earning the state the 'Achiever' status in recent LEADS 2022 and 2023 surveys. Uttar Pradesh consistently secures the top position in the 'Ease of Doing Business' assessment nationwide.

A notable reform is the implementation of 'Nivesh Mitra,' India's largest digital single-window portal, offering 450+ online services to entrepreneurs and integrating with the National Single Window System. The state has developed a comprehensive investor facilitation framework, featuring the 'Nivesh Sarathi' online portal as a one-stop solution for investors. This portal addresses queries, manages grievances, and monitors investments through relationship managers. The flagship 'Mukhya Mantri Udyami Mitra' scheme, with 100 dedicated managers, further supports investors, reinforcing job creation and enhancing Uttar Pradesh's appeal. 'Nivesh Sarathi' has streamlined investor engagement in the state.

Our government's proactive initiatives, including the 2018 Uttar Pradesh Investor Summit and the 2023 Global Investor Summit, have attracted significant investments. The 2018 Investor Summit secured intentions of ₹4.28 lakh crores, leading to substantial projects and investments in subsequent Ground-Breaking Ceremonies. Between 2017-22, 227 projects valued at ₹43,700 crores were implemented, accompanied by ₹95,500 crores in investments through land allotments and the establishment of 5.20 lakh MSME units. Renowned international investors like Samsung, Microsoft, and Uber expanded their presence in the state. The 2023 Global Investor Summit witnessed investment intents of ₹33.5 lakh crores, drawing participation from 21 countries and over 10,000 delegates. International roadshows engaged with investors globally before the summit. The State Government's participation in events like the Dubai Expo and World Economic Forum underscores its commitment to fostering investment confidence.

Targeted policy interventions have created an investor-friendly environment, positioning Uttar Pradesh as an attractive industrial destination.

How will upcoming strategic projects such as the International Airport and Defense Corridor contribute towards accelerating the growth trajectory of Uttar Pradesh?

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has envisioned strategic infrastructure projects that will play a catalytic role in accelerating the state's development trajectory.

The Noida International Airport at Jewar, once fully operational, is envisaged to bolster air connectivity and robust aviation infrastructure in the state. This will boost accessibility for industries and facilitate greater trade and commerce opportunities by connecting UP with major domestic and global markets. The airport and surrounding areas have been earmarked for development as an aerotropolis to attract aviation, logistics, and manufacturing companies. This is expected to generate large-scale employment avenues.

The Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor spanning across six identified nodes will significantly strengthen indigenization efforts in the defence manufacturing sector. Through defence industrial partnerships and collaborations, the corridor aims to boost self-reliance in defence production. It is anticipated to attract major investments from global defence entities, thereby driving technology transfers, and skill development and positioning the state as a hub for defence equipment manufacturing.

These ambitious infrastructure projects are envisaged to accelerate industrialization across priority sectors and create robust manufacturing ecosystems. They will likely generate efficient supply chains and promote entrepreneurship in high-technology domains. The projects are also expected to place Western UP favourably on the global economic map by enhancing connectivity and reducing logistics costs. This can substantially augment the growth of MSMEs.

By leveraging extensive industrial multiplier effects, the Jewar International Airport and Defence Corridor are expected to power the state's economic transition toward realizing its vision of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy. It is hoped that these initiatives will place Uttar Pradesh amongst the top industrialized states in India.

In your view, how has the developmental landscape of Uttar Pradesh evolved in recent years to parameters like infrastructure, liveability, and industrial opportunities?

In recent years, Uttar Pradesh has undergone a transformative journey across various developmental parameters. The state has witnessed substantial progress in infrastructure development, contributing to enhanced connectivity and accessibility. Initiatives such as the construction of expressways, roads, and metros, with an allocation of INR 55,000 crores in the fiscal year 2023-24, reflect the government's commitment to bolstering the state's overall connectivity.

Liveability in Uttar Pradesh has improved significantly, with a focus on smart and sustainable infrastructure initiatives. The state's investments in inland water transport, as seen in the inauguration of India's first Multi-Modal Terminal at Varanasi and the ambitious National Waterway 1 project, highlight efforts to stimulate economic growth and trade, particularly in the Ganga- Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system.

Uttar Pradesh's industrial landscape has become increasingly attractive. Strategic policies and initiatives, including the 'Nivesh Mitra' digital single-window portal and the 'Mukhya Mantri Udyami Mitra' scheme, have created an investor-friendly environment. The state has successfully attracted significant investments, as evidenced by the 2018 Uttar Pradesh Investor Summit and the 2023 Global Investor Summit, with intentions and commitments totaling lakhs of crores.

Overall, Uttar Pradesh's developmental landscape has evolved positively, with a strong focus on infrastructure, improved livability, and burgeoning industrial opportunities. The state's proactive measures and targeted interventions have positioned it as a dynamic hub for investment, innovation, and sustainable growth.