

'Lucknow has immense scope for medical tourism'

Max Healthcare Group has announced the start of its medical operations from Lucknow. The group has acquired and renamed Sahara Hospital as Max Super Specialty Hospital. The Group plans to generate 10,000 jobs in the state by setting up new hospitals. The Group's chairman **Abhay Soi** spoke to **Shailvee Sharda** about their future plans. Excerpts:

How important is Lucknow in the growth of Max Healthcare?

■ We had been trying to come to Lucknow since 2017 and that has finally happened. It's an important milestone for us. We have announced an investment of Rs 2,500 crore in the newly acquired Max Super Speciality Hospital. A scale up plan has also been rolled out and we plan to set up another 500-bed hospital spread along the Shaheed Path.

What kind of services will you bring to the city which already has some big hospitals?

■ We promise quality and efficiency along with our commitment to deliver healthcare through modern technologies such as robotics-based and ra-

diation therapy in oncology, and transplants, particularly liver, kidneys, bone marrow. Transplant of heart and lung will also start soon. We will also give impetus to nursing education.

What will be the next destination after Lucknow?

■ Kanpur is on the cards. We are also exploring cities like Gorakhpur, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

What is scope for growth and investment in UP's health sector?

■ Entry in Lucknow gives us an opportunity to participate in the development of Uttar Pradesh as it marches towards becoming a one trillion dollar economy by 2027. Even if we look at the conservative estimates, we are sure that UP is on the right track. There are hardly any big chains in UP now whereas the demand for quality healthcare services exists. Also, UP has several very important medical centres that have given some of the best doctors to the country and investment in the health sector of UP will create more jobs. There is immense potential for a centre like Lucknow in terms of medical tour-

ism. It can do what Pune and Gurgaon have done.

Ayushman Bharat is a key step towards universal healthcare. But many big hospitals are yet to join it. Your view?

■ The scope of associating with the PM's flagship scheme is being studied. This is our first interface with it as Maharashtra and Delhi, where we are largely present, do not have it. However, we will cater to cases supported by the CM Relief Fund besides providing services to CGHS, ESIC, ex-defense services. We also have a system of reserving some beds for the economically weaker section and its feasibility vis-à-vis policy framework in UP is also being evaluated.

Q & A

