

## Western Uttar Pradesh

In Western Uttar Pradesh, solar energy is transforming lives and industries. Brick kilns, initially powered by coal, are transitioning to solar panels, providing cleaner energy and improving living conditions for workers. Despite challenges such as heat, the benefits include electricity, reduced pollution, and enhanced quality of life.

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**S**moke swirls from brick kiln chimneys mingle with sleek solar panels reflecting the monsoon skies in western Uttar Pradesh. Here, solar energy is revolutionizing lives and industries. Eight brick kilns in Aligarh district have shifted from coal to solar panels, cutting pollution and bringing electricity and digital connectivity to villages.

Om Prakash Sharma, a brick kiln owner, cited substantial long-term benefits despite initial costs. His 16 solar panels save Rs 50,000 monthly, also powering worker huts. Migrants like Kalavati and Anil now enjoy electricity for lighting, fans, and phone charging, a vast improvement over oil lamps.

Environmental consciousness is growing, with workers investing in smaller solar panels. Githartha Das of Transform Rural India suggests subsidies could scale this transformation, despite challenges like extreme heat. Nevertheless, the transition offers mixed blessings for workers, providing modest but significant improvements in their daily lives.