

Cabinet nod to Rs 4K cr project to enhance agri productivity

UP AGRISE project is backed by the World Bank with Rs 4K cr funding and aims to enhance productivity in backward districts of the state

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LUCKNOW: The state cabinet in its meeting chaired by chief minister Yogi Adityanath here on Tuesday gave approval to the proposal for the launch the Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Growth and Rural Incomes Ecosystem Strengthening (UP AGRISE) project with a view to transforming the agriculture sector.

Backed by the World Bank funding, the \$500 million (around Rs 4,000 crore) ambitious project aims to enhance the productivity and economic viability of agriculture in the targeted 28 backward districts in U.P. The project's duration is six years from 2024-25 to 2029-30.

The project will cover 28 backward districts comprising eight divisions under eastern UP and Bundelkhand, focusing on improving crop yields and boosting the income of marginal and small farmers.

The World Bank, according to the proposal, will fund the project and provide Rs 2,800 crore to the state for this purpose while the state government will bear the remaining project cost of Rs 1,200 crore.

Despite its significant agricultural output, Uttar Pradesh faces challenges such as low productivity, limited value addition and poor export performance.

The UPAGRI project, managed by the Uttar Pradesh Diversified Agriculture Support Project (UP DASP), aims to address these issues by implementing climate-resilient farming practices, developing high-value crop clusters and promoting local agricultural enterprises.

The new project is expected to create local employment, improve food security for Uttar Pradesh's 240 million residents and establish a digital agribusiness network to facilitate better information exchange among stakeholders. It will also work on improving post-harvest management, processing and market

Industry status to ITES okayed

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LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal to give industry status to Information Technology and IT Enabled Services (ITES) to provide incentives to the IT and ITES units in the state.

The state cabinet also approved the proposal to set up solar parks along both sides of the Bundelkhand Expressway.

Briefing media persons, finance minister Suresh Khanna said the IT and ITES units would get subsidy in getting land and exemption in stamps duty. He said power connection to 150 KW units would be given on industry rates and the commercial units would be charged Rs 1.50 per unit.

He said the operation cost of the units would thus come down by 20 percent. He said 1500-hectare land was available for development of solar parks. Khanna said the state government has set a target of having solar power units to generate 22000 MW power by 2026-2027.

Around 450 MW solar power would be generated at the solar parks along the Bundelkhand Expressway. He said the land for setting up the solar parks would be given on lease for 25 years on a token sum and the scheme is likely to generate 100 jobs.

Nod to scheme for cinema halls

The state cabinet approved a scheme to encourage reconstruct/remodel the closed cinema halls and open multiplexes in the districts that already do not have one. The scheme also provides to encourage setting up single screen cinema halls or upgrading existing ones.

The schemes provides that 100% of the SGST collected for the first 3 years and 75% of the SGST collected for the next 2 years for building a commercial complex and modern cinema by demolishing a closed or operating cinema within 5 years from the date of issuance of the scheme would be reimbursed.

The second category provides for reimbursement of 75% of the SGST collected for the first 3 years and 50% of the SGST collected for the next 2 years for re-operating a closed or operational cinema building by making changes in its internal structure within 5 years from the date of issuance of the scheme or for increasing screens.

For constructing a single-screen cinema hall with a minimum seating capacity of 75, with or without commercial activities, 100% of the SGST collected for the first 3 years and 50% of the SGST collected for the next 2 years would be reimbursed. In districts where no multiplex is built/operated, 100% of the SGST collected for 5 years for opening a multiplex.

Excise policy 2024-25 amendments okayed

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LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved amendments to the excise policy for the year 2024-25. Under this, the duration of the licence issued to set up breweries and distilleries will no longer be extended like before. After three years, its time limit will be extended only if at least 50% work has been completed on the project.

This information was given by the minister of state for excise (independent charge) Nitin Agarwal. He said that all amendments were approved in the cabinet meeting held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of chief minister Yogi Adityanath.

While this will facilitate departmental work, industries will also get relief. He said that the duration of the licence issued

for setting up breweries and distilleries can be extended by one year. If the establishment is not done even in this period, the license is extended for another two years. Still, if the establishment is not done, it is extended for one year each.

Now, by amending the policy, it has been provided that the license period will be extended after three years only when at least 50% work on the project has been completed.

Similarly, while setting up a distillery, till now only the concerned company has to give an affidavit about the capacity of the plant to be installed in it.

Now, after the amendment, the original manufacturing company will also have to give a certificate regarding the capacity of the plant it has supplied. This will determine the accountability of both the companies.