

# UP extends its smart city scheme

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**Lucknow:** The state govt has extended the smart city scheme, which was coming to an end on March 31, for two years.

The seven cities, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Ayodhya, Firozabad, Gorakhpur, Mathura-Vrindavan and Shahjahanpur, will continue to receive funds to improve basic infrastructure and implement smart solutions to enhance the ease of living and quality of life for the urban population.

Out of the total 17 cities governed by municipal corporations in UP, the ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) included 10 cities under the smart city scheme in June 2015. Over time, the status of seven more cities was upgraded, and the limits of the municipal councils (nagar palikas) were expanded, upgrading them into corporations. The UP govt introduced the state smart city scheme in 2019-20 to include the seven additional cities. However, the tenure of the scheme is slated to end on March 31.

Principal secretary of the urban development department, Amrit Abhijat said, "During the cabinet meeting that took place on Monday, we requested the state govt to extend the scheme in the interest of the public. The extension is crucial for developing these cities into model smart cities."

A corpus of Rs 400 crore will be created for the seven cities, with each one receiving at least Rs 50 crore to improve the delivery of citizen services. "Electronic service delivery, citizen engagement, intelligent traffic management, trade facilitation centre, creating smart hostels for working women, digitisation, e-governance, smart meters, incubation, and trade facilitation centres are some areas where funds could be utilised," said an officer.