

Special Economic Zones: Where Innovation Meets Opportunity

In Uttar Pradesh, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are essential for increasing exports, drawing in foreign investment, and fostering industrial growth. These strategically placed zones provide companies with world-class infrastructure, expedited regulatory clearances, and tax benefits. The state's major SEZs, which concentrate on manufacturing, exports, and information technology, are located in Noida, Greater Noida, and Lucknow. The objectives of Uttar Pradesh's Special Economic Zone strategy are to generate jobs, encourage innovation, and establish the state as a major centre for industrial and economic growth in India.

Transforming Trade: India's SEZ Success Story

As a leader in Asia's export-driven vision, India planted the seeds of economic transformation in 1965 with the establishment of Asia's first Export Processing Zones in Kandla. This was followed by a daring leap with the 2000 Special Economic Zones Policy, which was designed to cut red tape, attract foreign investment, and spark industrial rebirth. Supported by top-notch infrastructure and alluring fiscal incentives, this dynamic policy culminated in the historic SEZ Act of 2005 and its empowering regulations in 2006, creating a smooth single-window regime that encouraged investment, created jobs, and established SEZs as the dynamic engines driving India's global trade boom and inclusive economic evolution into the twenty-first century.

Objectives of SEZs

1. Generation of additional economic activity.
2. Promotion of exports of goods and services.
3. Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources.
4. Creation of employment Opportunities.
5. Development of infrastructure facilities.

The Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 empowers State Governments to play a pivotal role in driving export growth and building essential infrastructure, supported by a streamlined Single-Window approval system. At its core is a 19-member inter-ministerial Board of Approval (BoA), which evaluates proposals—endorsed by States—through consensus-driven decisions. The SEZ Rules define flexible land norms for various SEZ types, with each zone carefully structured into processing areas for industries and non-

processing zones for robust, world-class support infrastructure, fuelling India's economic dynamism.

The Special Economic Zones provide for

- Simplified procedures for development, operation and maintenance of the Special Economic Zones and for setting up units and conducting business in SEZs
- Single window clearance for setting up of a Special Economic Zones
- Single window clearance for setting up a unit in a Special Economic Zones
- Single Window clearance on matters relating to Central as well as State Governments
- Simplified compliance procedures and documentation with an emphasis on self-certification

Salient features of SEZs

- Duty-free SEZ, outside India's customs, for authorized operations.
- No licence required for import.
- Manufacturing or service activities allowed.
- The unit must achieve positive Net Foreign Exchange in 5 years from production.
- Domestic sales subject to full customs duty and import policy in force.
- Special Economic Zone units will have freedom for subcontracting.
- No routine examination by custom authorities of export/import cargo.
- Special Economic Zone Developers, Co-Developers, and Units enjoy direct and indirect tax benefits per the 2005 Act.

Special Economic Zones of Uttar Pradesh: A Snapshot of Prosperity

Noida Special Economic Zone: Powering India's Export Vision

An important centre in the export ecosystem of northern India is the Noida Special Economic Zone (NSEZ), which is situated in Noida Phase-II. NSEZ is the only central government-run SEZ in northern India. It was created in 1985 and was recognized as a Special Economic Zone in 2000. It was one of the nation's first seven Export Processing Zones and was formerly known as the Noida Export Processing Zone (NEPZ).

This Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which was developed with ₹1,114.96 crore from the Indian government, provides top-notch infrastructure, industry-specific facilities, and specialized support services for high-potential industries including electronics software and gems & jewellery. Despite being landlocked, the NSEZ has strategic access to

important export channels through the Delhi Airport and the Integrated Container Depots in Patparganj, Dadri, and Tughlakabad.

The zone includes 13 Standard Design Factory (SDF) complexes with 208 units, including a trading services block, and 202 developed plots. Plans for future expansion call for raising capacity to 224 SDF units.

Notwithstanding pandemic difficulties, NSEZ has demonstrated steady export success, with ₹4,043 crore in exports in 2020–21. In 2009, there were 32,550 operating units; in 2021, there were 40,061; and in 2009, there were 245 operational units. Software and service exports were ₹52,613 crore throughout all 34 SEZs under NSEZ's control, with NSEZ accounting for ₹3,009 crore of this total. According to CBIC, EOUs under its purview also made ₹10,006.6 crore in exports in 2020–21.



Additionally, the Noida Special Economic Zone's authority spans 9 states: Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Under Noida Special Economic Zone's jurisdiction, there are 34 SEZs.

Build, Scale, Export – All from Moradabad Special Economic Zone

The sole state-developed SEZ in Northern India is the Moradabad Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which was created in 2003 by the Uttar Pradesh government through the Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation (UPSIDC) Limited. With an investment of Rs. 1100 million, this sector-specific handicraft hub on Moradabad's Pakbara-Dingpur Road has been transformed into a flourishing trading ecosystem. It provides the perfect environment for the handicrafts industry, supported by qualified staff, thanks to its first-rate infrastructure, supportive services, and close proximity to Delhi/NCR.

Despite worldwide slowdowns in the handicraft sector, the Moradabad Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which began operations in April 2007 with just one unit, has expanded significantly. Its tenacity and attraction are demonstrated by the 58 operating units it hosted by June 30, 2021. A greenbelt, boundary wall, security systems, power substation, CETP, inland container depot (ICD), design and training centre, helipad, school, canteen, and other updated facilities are all present in the zone. The ICD, which is run by Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR), improves export efficiency by smoothly connecting to Moradabad's railhead.



Moradabad SEZ is a top location for handicraft enterprises because it offers reliable power, access to international telecommunications, and effective local transportation. This SEZ supports artisans and establishes Moradabad as a global leader in handicrafts by fusing heritage with contemporary infrastructure, propelling Uttar Pradesh's economy forward.

Inside the area run by the Container Corporation of India Limited (CONCOR), Moradabad, is the Inland Container Depot (ICD) facility. It is connected to the rail-head at the city's Moradabad Inland Container Depot (ICD).

MORADABAD SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

Export / Import data (up to 30.04.2021)

S. No.	Financial Year	Export Value (in Rs Lakhs)	Import Value (in Rs Lakhs)
1.	2015-2016	46429.00	5544.00
2.	2016-2017	114636.00	3484.00
3.	2017-2018	90912.00	1100.00
4.	2018-2019	27355.00	5669.00
5.	2019-2020	39204.00	6072.00
6.	2020-2021	18687.00	3102.00
7.	2021-2022 (up to 30.04.2021)	1930.00	27.00

Employment data (as on 30.04.2021)

S. No.	Financial Year	Direct Employment	Indirect Employment
1.	2020-2021	700	200
2.	2021-2022 (as on 30.04.2021)	800	200

Uttar Pradesh's Special Economic Zones – Powering Progress, Fuelling the Future Or From Artisans to Innovators: UP's Special Economic Zones Redefine Prosperity

The Special Economic Zones in Uttar Pradesh are catalysts for economic change rather than merely being centres of industry. These zones, which range from the tech-driven Noida SEZ to the artisan-rich Moradabad SEZ, demonstrate the state's dedication to fusing innovation and tradition. UP's SEZs are drawing international investment, generating jobs, and increasing exports—thanks to their prime locations, first-rate infrastructure, and investor-friendly regulations & policies. Through single-window clearances, they streamline procedures and provide a supportive atmosphere for both small and large businesses. Uttar Pradesh's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are thriving models of equitable development and sustainable prosperity as India enters the global market with confidence. These areas provide the ideal setting for investors, business owners, and craftspeople to create, expand, and prosper in a globally interconnected economy.