


From revenue to reform: How UP excise department is redefining governance & sparking transformation

Excise has traditionally been viewed only through the lens of liquor sales. We are changing that—it's now about industrial growth, farmer benefits, tourism and international trade.



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Dr. Adarsh Singh, Excise Commissioner, Government of Uttar Pradesh

From record-breaking revenue to transformative policy shifts and global investor engagement, the Uttar Pradesh Excise Department is undergoing a silent revolution.

In a wide-ranging conversation with

ETGovernment's **Arpit Gupta, Dr. Adarsh Singh**, Excise Commissioner, Government of Uttar Pradesh, shares insights into the department's record-breaking revenue performance in Q1 FY 2025–26, ambitious investment plans and structural reforms transforming the excise ecosystem.

From digital transparency to ethanol leadership and Alco-tourism, the department is driving growth with purpose and innovation.

Edited Excerpts:
UP Excise Department has had a strong Q1 in FY 2025–26. Can you elaborate on the revenue numbers and the strategy behind this growth?

The first quarter (April–June 2025) has been extremely encouraging. We collected ₹14,229 crores in revenue, achieving 99% of our quarterly target of ₹14,400 crores set by the government. What stands out is the 20.7% increase compared to the same period last year—an incremental growth of nearly ₹2,500 crores. June 2025 alone saw a 30% rise from June 2024, with ₹4,458 crores in collections—our highest single-month increase in recent years.

This performance is a result of strong policy backing from the government, a transparent e-lottery retail allocation system, and structural reforms such as merging beer and foreign liquor outlets into composite shops. We have managed to reduce the total number of shops while increasing retail density—a rare feat. States like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Punjab have shown interest in studying our model. The transformation is being recognized across the country.

The department is hosting the Excise Investment Summit on July 9 in Lucknow. What is the broader vision behind it?

Excise is not just about liquor—it's a comprehensive ecosystem that includes ethanol production, molasses management, and industrial alcohol. Uttar Pradesh is the leading contributor to the Government of India's Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP), accounting for nearly 20% of national power alcohol production.

Post the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit (GIS), we have seen investments worth around ₹10,000 crores either grounded or in progress. Building on that momentum, the Excise Investors Summit 2025 will be held on July 9 at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, Lucknow, in collaboration with Invest UP.

We aim to transform UP from a consumption-heavy state to a leading exporter—both domestically and internationally. The summit will bring together stakeholders across the alcohol and beverage ecosystem—manufacturers, equipment suppliers, industry bodies, and MSMEs. We are also seeking feedback on policy tweaks to further ease doing business.

What outcomes are you expecting from the Excise Investors Summit 2025?

We don't want to limit ourselves with specific targets. The goal is to create a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and investment. That said, we will quantify the outcomes post-event.

We have received enthusiastic responses, and I am optimistic that the summit will lead to tangible progress—not just in terms of MoUs, but also in shaping policies and partnerships that define the next phase of UP's excise ecosystem.

What kind of response have you received so far from companies, both domestic and international?

We have had a very positive response. MoUs have been signed with global giants like United Breweries and the Carlsberg Group during the UP delegation's visit to the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Bira91 has purchased land and is in the final stages of setting up its brewery. We are also in talks with AB InBev, Allied Blenders & Distillers (ABD), and others. The wine sector is another exciting frontier—we see UP's winery segment as the next big growth area.

We have also engaged with stakeholders from Singapore, China, Dubai, the UK, and Malaysia. A major highlight will be the push toward Alco-tourism. Our first winery tour near Malihabad was inaugurated on June 15, and brewery tours are next. We've aligned our excise and tourism policies to facilitate this.

Technology has played a major role in reforms. Can you walk us through some key digital initiatives?

The e-lottery system for retail license allocation—first introduced in 2018—has been significantly upgraded. This year, it was conducted on an unprecedented scale across all 75 districts, reinforcing transparency and fairness.

We have also made consistent efforts to digitize all investor-related clearances. Today, nearly every clearance required is available either through our departmental portal or the Nivesh Mitra platform. Additionally, we have set up a dedicated help desk to assist investors with inter-departmental coordination, such as land allotment, which may involve the industrial department.

These interventions ensure ease of doing business and encourage private investment in the sector.

What are the department's key priorities and future goals?

Our foremost priority is revenue generation, as that's the most direct metric of our performance. In FY 2024–25, we collected ₹52,574.51 crores—15.3% higher than the previous year. It's the highest-ever revenue and the first time we've crossed the ₹50,000 crore mark.

Beyond revenue, we are focused on things like eliminating illicit liquor networks to ensure public safety, diversifying excise operations, promoting ethanol, industrial alcohol, and exports, generating employment and boosting foreign exchange, especially through alcohol exports, and building a robust export ecosystem, positioning UP as a manufacturing and exporting hub.

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