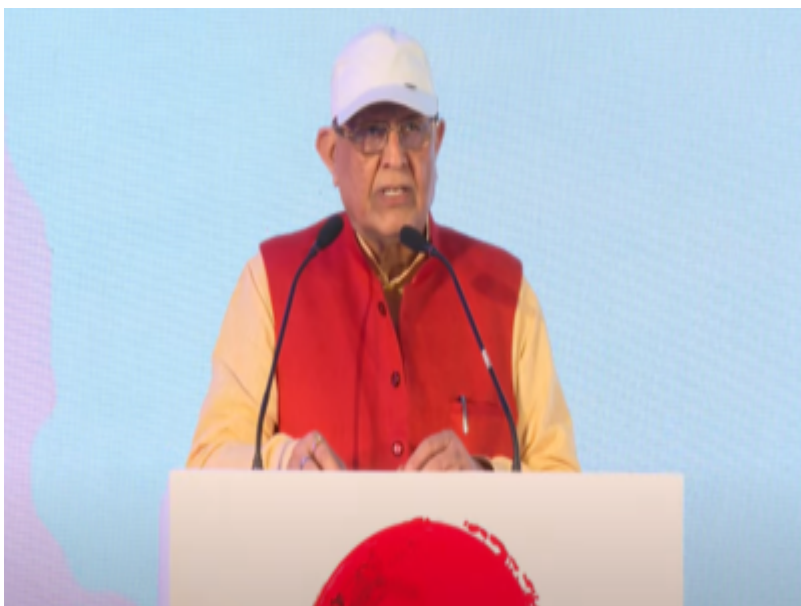


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# TOI Dialogues – Infrastructure Chapter: Minister Suresh Khanna highlights UP's growth leap under CM Yogi rule; charts state's \$1 trillion ambition

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Uttar Pradesh's finance minister Suresh Kumar Khanna on Thursday said the state has firmly left behind its "BIMARU" image and is now being recognised nationally and internationally as a model of development, powered by strong leadership and sustained infrastructure push.

Delivering the keynote address at the TOI Dialogues – Infrastructure Chapter, Khanna said, "There's a clear difference between the UP of 2016-17 and today. This transformation has been made possible due to the firm leadership of our Hon'ble Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and guidance from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. What was once unthinkable—UP becoming a developed and investment-attracting state—is now the new

normal."

He credited improved law and order, rapid infrastructure development, and major strides across the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors as the foundation for this change. "From expressways to airports, from irrigation to food grain production, every sector has seen progress," said Khanna, noting that the state currently contributes significantly to the national economy, and is on track to meet the ambitious \$1 trillion economy target set by the

Chief Minister.

Highlighting the investment momentum, he said nearly Rs 15 lakh crore worth of investments have been grounded in the state since the Yogi government came to power, backed by actual implementation and groundbreaking ceremonies.

“The numbers speak for themselves. The manufacturing sector, supported by 16 airports and a growing network of expressways, now contributes 26.5 per cent to the GSDP, while services—especially tourism and transport—account for 42.5 per cent. Even the long-pending irrigation schemes in rural areas have been delivered after decades of neglect,” the minister said.

Khanna also said that Uttar Pradesh is now a secure destination for investors. “We rank 20th in the country in terms of crime rate despite being the most populous state. This is a result of the CM’s unwavering commitment to law and order.”

Earlier, delivering the opening address, Shri Awanish Kumar Awasthi, retired IAS officer and advisor to the Chief Minister, set the stage with real-world anecdotes of global investor interest and on-ground impact of infrastructure initiatives in Uttar Pradesh.

Citing examples from recent global outreach, Awasthi spoke about a healthcare entrepreneur of Indian origin who signed MoUs to build five multi-specialty hospitals across the state within a month of discussions. “This is the new perception of UP globally—one of growth, opportunity, and good governance,” he said.

Awasthi also discussed his recent visit to Japan, where the UP delegation explored green hydrogen collaborations and defence sector ties with the Yamanashi prefecture. “The warmth and interest shown by the Japanese were remarkable. From infrastructure to energy, the potential for collaboration is immense,” he added.

Reflecting on UP’s rapid growth, he shared that the state is already nearing Rs 30 lakh crore in Domestic State Product, roughly \$343 billion, within just two years of launching the one trillion economy mission.

“Our expressways—Purvanchal, Bundelkhand, and soon the Ganga Expressway—are not just roads, they are economic corridors,” he said, highlighting how places like Badaun and Shahjahanpur are being rapidly transformed due to better connectivity. The upcoming Jewar Airport, expected to be operational by August or September, was also described as a “game-changer.”

Awasthi underlined four key pillars for future growth: quality education, transparent governance, ease of doing business, and power sector reforms.

Held in Lucknow, the TOI Dialogues – Infrastructure Chapter brought together policymakers, bureaucrats, industry leaders and experts to deliberate on UP's development roadmap, with sessions on defence-linked infrastructure, Maha Kumbh 2025, police modernisation, healthcare, and heritage revival.

This edition of TOI Dialogues builds on the success of earlier city editions in Kanpur, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, and Varanasi. It aims to provide a platform for dialogue and collaboration on UP's infrastructure-led growth model, with discussions ranging from urban development to investment opportunities under Invest UP 2.0.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from state government officials, real estate developers, infrastructure consultants and industrialists, underlining UP's emergence as a key investment destination.