

ACCENT REGION

UTTAR PRADESH

Govt plans to prepare over 500,000 women as micro-enterprise *sakhis*

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Uttar Pradesh is planning to train and empower more than 500,000 women to lead micro enterprises and boost the rural economy.

The enterprises will take shape in the hinterland with the Yogi Adityanath government offering training, credit and marketing support across 75 districts.

Under the road map, over 13,000 women will be trained as micro-enterprise *sakhis*, and each of them in turn will groom 50 others with varied self-employment opportunities.

The UP government is targeting to facilitate the setting up of almost 650,000 women-led micro enterprises with institutional financial and marketing backing.

According to Mission Director, State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM), Deepa Ranjan, more than 9,000 micro-enterprise *sakhis* have already been selected.

In UP, women have been appointed as *sakhis* for several segments, includ-

ing banking, electricity, agriculture livelihood, livestock, silk, and solar.

“The SRLM is taking a step beyond livelihood to develop women’s self-help groups (SHGs) into micro-enterprise *sakhis*,” a senior official said on condition of anonymity.

Until now, women used to work to sustain their livelihood. However, through this initiative, they will become entrepreneurs and create employment and micro enterprise opportunities for other women, thereby becoming agents of positive transformation for other grassroots women.

With the help of bank *sakhis*, they will be provided with access to bank loans since the UPSRLM is aligned with the National Rural Livelihood Mission.

Meanwhile, the UP government has actively been partnering with non-profit and private organisations to catalyse the women SHGs and link them with the market. The UP government’s flagship One District One Product (ODOP) scheme, also provides a viable commercial platform to women entrepreneurs.