

Kalashnikov, BrahMos and more: How UP is turning into a defence powerhouse

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has described BrahMos manufacturing in Lucknow as a reflection of improved law and order, rising investor confidence and policy stability in the state.

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Uttar Pradesh has firmly established itself as one of India’s most important defence manufacturing centres, marking a decisive shift in a sector that for decades remained concentrated around coastal and legacy industrial hubs. Through the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor, the state is now producing supersonic cruise missiles, assault rifles and ammunition, reinforcing the Centre’s push for self-reliance in defence production.

Senior officials say the transformation reflects a sustained policy focus. “Uttar Pradesh was never traditionally seen as a defence manufacturing state. That perception is changing,” a senior state government official said. “The objective was to build a complete ecosystem rather than isolated factories.”

The defence corridor spans nodes including Lucknow, Kanpur, Amethi, Jhansi, Aligarh, Agra and Chitrakoot. Envisioned to strengthen India’s defence and aerospace self-reliance, the project has already allotted more than 977.54 hectares of land to 62 companies. These firms alone have paved the way for investments worth ₹11,997.45 crore and the creation of 14,256 direct jobs. Additionally, MoUs with over 110 companies are in the pipeline, bringing potential investments of nearly Rs 23,000 crore and more than 38,000 jobs.

At the centre of this shift is the BrahMos Aerospace integration and testing facility in Lucknow. Built at an estimated cost of Rs 380 crore, the campus functions as a fully integrated production and validation complex with advanced assembly and testing infrastructure. The facility is expected to produce 80 to 100 supersonic cruise missiles annually and generate nearly Rs 3,000 crore in revenue by the financial year 2027–28.

Officials associated with the project say the impact goes far beyond numbers. “This facility shows that complex, high-precision defence manufacturing can be done in the heart of the country,” a BrahMos official said. “It is not just about missiles, but about confidence in indigenous capability.”

The fiscal benefits are already visible. Each BrahMos missile generates roughly Rs 8 crore in goods and services tax. In October, BrahMos Aerospace handed over a GST cheque of around Rs 40 crore to the Uttar Pradesh government. “This is one of the clearest examples of how defence manufacturing directly strengthens state finances,” a finance department official said.

Raising indigenous content has been a central goal of both the Centre and the state. Current BrahMos production has achieved around 83 percent indigenous content, with a target of 85 percent by 2026. Components such as titanium castings, airframes, avionics and propulsion systems are increasingly being sourced from Indian firms. “MSMEs are no longer peripheral players. They are becoming integral to the defence supply chain,” an industry executive said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has described BrahMos manufacturing in Lucknow as a reflection of improved law and order, rising investor confidence and policy stability in Uttar Pradesh. He has said the initiative supports large-scale employment generation, advanced manufacturing and the development of high-technology ecosystems in the state.

“The presence of a strategic project like BrahMos shows that Uttar Pradesh is now a trusted destination for high-end defence manufacturing,” an official associated with the project said. “It signals confidence in governance and long-term policy certainty.”

Small arms manufacturing adds depth

Small arms manufacturing adds strategic depth to the corridor. In Amethi, the Korwa Ordnance Factory houses Indo Russian Rifles Private Limited, which is producing AK 203 Kalashnikov assault rifles for the Indian armed forces. A defence official said the project is crucial for reducing import dependence and meeting the Army’s long-term requirements.

Kanpur forms another major pillar with its ammunition manufacturing base. The city hosts a large ammunition complex operated by Adani Defence, along with several ordnance factories producing bullets and munitions, including 7.62 mm rounds compatible with AK 203 rifles. The ammunition centre is South Asia’s largest ammunition manufacturing complex.