

Women's empowerment drive rural eco growth

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Lucknow: The state govt said on Sunday that its push for women empowerment was steadily transforming the rural economy, with the UP State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) emerging as a key driver of change.

“Under the mission, nearly 10.5 million women across the state joined self-help groups (SHGs) and were now running their own enterprises, marking a significant shift towards financial independence at the grassroots level,” a state govt spokesperson said.

Officials said that sustained implementation of welfare schemes at the village level led to a noticeable rise in women's incomes and a surge in rural entrepreneurship. The

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flagship ‘Lakhpati Didi’ campaign, aimed at enabling women to earn at least Rs 1 lakh annually through sustainable livelihood activities, gained momentum across districts.

The spokesperson said that over the past nine years, the state govt focused on strengthening women-led self-help groups as engines of economic growth. Under the ru-

ral livelihood mission, around 1.85 million women were registered as ‘Lakhpati Didis’. The state aimed to link SHG members with stable income sources by assigning skill-based responsibilities and facilitating access to credit and markets.

A major innovation under the mission was the ‘One Gram Panchayat, One BC Sakhi’ initiative. The state set a target of deploying BC Sakhis (banking correspondent agents) in 57,000 gram panchayats. So far, 50,225 women were trained for the role.

Approximately 40,000 BC Sakhis handled financial transactions worth nearly Rs 40,000 crore, facilitating doorstep banking services such as deposits, withdrawals, pension disbursement and digital payments.