

UP's development is faster than e-ways' rapid construction: PM



PM Narendra Modi and CM Yogi Adityanath at the inauguration of Ganga Expressway.

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LUCKNOW: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated the 594-km-long Ganga Expressway — built at a cost of around ₹36,230 crore — in Hardoi's Mallawan area, stating that the overall pace of development in Uttar Pradesh is exceeding that of its rapid expressway construction.

Calling it the identity of a "New Uttar Pradesh," the PM said the expressway will emerge as a new lifeline for the state's economy, connectivity and employment. Built within just five years, work has already begun on plans to extend it beyond Meerut, up to Haridwar. It will also be connected with other expressways to create a comprehensive network, said Modi.

"The Ganga Expressway is not merely a road project, but the foundation of Uttar Pradesh's economic, social and industrial transformation, where development is moving ahead even faster than the speed of the expressway itself," he said addressing the gathering at the inauguration of the expressway in Hardoi's Mallawan Nagar Palika.

"UP has received the gift of this expressway with the blessings of Maa Ganga. People can now reach the Sangam in a few hours and visit Kashi for darshan," said the PM. He expressed happiness that the expressway has been named after Maa Ganga, symbolising both the state's heritage and its development.

The PM noted that earlier, farmers' produce could not reach markets on time, but now,

through the expressway, products will reach markets faster, increasing farmers' income. Products such as sports goods from Meerut, handloom from Hardoi, leather from Unnao and amla from Pratapgarh will gain better market access.

He added that the expressway will attract industries across 12 districts and create employment opportunities for youth.

Highlighting the rapid infrastructure expansion in UP, the PM said: "There has been unprecedented progress in expressways, airports, industrial corridors and defence manufacturing. A total of 21 airports are being developed in the state, including five international airports."

"Major projects like the BrahMos missile are giving a new identity to the state's industrial strength. Once labelled a "BIMARU" state, Uttar Pradesh is now moving rapidly towards becoming a one-trillion-dollar economy. With new opportunities in investment, industry and employment, the state's image has transformed, and it has become a major destination for investors," added the PM.

Calling for Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India), he said, "You all are seeing how the entire world is caught in war, unrest, and instability today. The situation in major countries is dire, but India is progressing at the same pace on the path of development. External enemies do not like this, and some internal people, hungry for power, are trying to bring India down."

"Yet, we are not only safe, but are also breaking new records of development. We are moving for-

ward with the campaign for a self-reliant India. We are building the most modern infrastructure sector. The Ganga Expressway is another strong step in this direction," he added.

The PM slammed the Samajwadi Party and the Congress, saying that Uttar Pradesh, once known for its potholes and high crime rate, has turned into a state with the most expressways. He alleged that crime and "jungle raj" had become the identity of UP under previous governments. The BJP came to power in the state in 2017, and was re-elected in 2022. The state goes to polls in early 2027.

Modi criticised the SP, saying it can never rise above dynastic politics and casteism. He also labelled the SP as "anti-women", referring to the defeat in Parliament, of an attempt by the government to push through a delimitation bill, and an amendment in the women's reservation act passed in 2023. The government has sought to target the Opposition for this, and sought to paint it as anti-women, but not satisfactorily explained why the amendment did not simply seek to go ahead with the reservation with the current strength of Parliament.

Modi added that UP has immense potential due to its large youth population, and the government is using this strength to turn the state into a manufacturing hub.

"The Ganga Expressway not only connects one end of Uttar Pradesh to the other, but also brings immense possibilities of the NCR closer to the state," he added.