



Photos: Sanku Kumar

We Transformed UP From 'Prashn Pradesh' Into A Growth Engine: Yogi

'Ended Nepotism, Regional Imbalance To Develop Governance Model For Growth, Security'

Reinforcing his govt's policy of inclusive development, chief minister Yogi Adityanath said growth and infrastructure expansion are no longer confined to Lucknow, Varanasi and Gorakhpur, but are reaching all 75 districts.

Speaking at 'Nine Defining Years of Transformation', a conclave organised by The Times of India on Thursday the CM said that the govt adopted a model of development without the practice of "pick and choose" and worked to eliminate nepotism and regional imbalance.

"We developed a governance model centred on development, security, growth and employment," he said.

Yogi added that understanding the socio-economic transformation brought



GROWTH JOURNEY: Chief minister Yogi Adityanath at the TOI conclave

CM CALLS FOR AUSTERITY

CM Yogi Adityanath said UP's transformation was achieved despite major challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic and global economic uncertainty arising from tensions in West Asia. Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal for austerity, he urged greater use of PNG instead of LPG and advocated promotion of gobar gas plants in cow shelters as an alternative energy source.

about in Uttar Pradesh over the past nine years would help people "safeguard" themselves from the factors that once "ruined" the state.

'Prashn Pradesh To Growth Engine'

The CM said Uttar Pradesh has been transformed from a 'Prashn Pradesh', marked by anarchy and mafia influence, into a state driven by 'niti, neyat aur ichhashakti' (policy, intent and willpower). "UP's large population reflected its historical significance, but previous govt's after Independence failed to harness its potential through effective policymaking," Yogi said.

The CM said the conclave was

important to acquaint the younger generation — many of whom were children nine years ago — with the changes witnessed in the state since 2017.

"Those who were 9-10 years old in 2017 are adult now. They must find out what was the state of affairs before 2017," the CM said.

"Before 2017, the state faced widespread lawlessness, identity crisis for youth, migration of traders, farmer suicides, communal unrest during festivals, nepotism in recruitments, weak infrastructure, declining industries and chronic power shortages," he remarked.

He said people placed their trust in the double engine govt led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi amid a sense of disappointment and insecurity prevailing at the time.

"Today, there is no policy paralysis. The parameter of development is Sakshat, Sabka Vikas," he said.

Roadmap For Infrastructure Push

Recalling the initial days of his govt in 2017, the CM said extensive departmen-

tal presentations and consultations were held to prepare a roadmap aimed at transforming UP into the country's growth engine.

"The state coffers were empty, and banks were unwilling to lend money. The state budget stood at around Rs 2.5 lakh crore, which was insufficient. Now, UP possesses one of the strongest networks of road, expressway, railway and metro in the country. The state accounts for nearly 60% of the country's expressway projects," he pointed out.

Fin Growth With No New Taxes

The CM said that the state budget increased from Rs 2.5 lakh crore in 2016-17 to nearly Rs 9.12 lakh crore in 2026-27, while the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) rose from Rs 12 lakh crore to Rs 36 lakh crore during the same period.

"This growth came without imposing additional taxes," he said, adding that welfare schemes and free ration programmes continued alongside large-scale development projects. Referring to a recent RBI report, he claimed Uttar

Pradesh had emerged as the leading state in terms of bank investments.

Law & Order Brought Transformation

Yogi said his govt introduced multiple reforms to strengthen law and order. "Today, women feel safe and can work in night shifts," he said.

Highlighting the transformation of the National Capital Region belt in western UP, the CM said the once crime-prone region had now become the country's "jewel" (ornament).

Agriculture & MSME Expansion

"The agriculture sector's growth rate increased from 8% in 2017 to 18% at present," Yogi said, claiming that the govt revived the sugar industry.

For the 2025-26 crushing season, he said, 62% of cane dues had already been cleared. On the MSME sector, Yogi said previous govt's hobbled industries with "inspector raj", whereas nearly 96 lakh MSME units were now operating smoothly in the state and providing employment to around three crore people.

Tourism, Jobs & Investment Push

Yogi said the state created a land bank of 75,000 acres and introduced policies for 34 sectors to boost investments and generate employment opportunities for youth within Uttar Pradesh.

He claimed the govt provided jobs to nearly nine lakh youth and took strict action against those involved in examination paper leaks. Highlighting tourism growth, Yogi said Uttar Pradesh attracted 166 crore tourists last year.

Referring to the Maha Kumbh, he said around 66 crore pilgrims visited the state during the event, boosting tourism and service-sector employment.

He added that the state's per capita income nearly tripled from Rs 45,000 in 2017 to around Rs 1.2 lakh annually.

