

# FM lauds UP's skill model, backs early work exposure for students

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Lucknow:** Union finance minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** on Friday praised Uttar Pradesh's integrated skill development model, descri-



bing it as an effective initiative built on inter-departmental coordination.

Commenting the Yogi Adityanath govt's proposal to introduce on-the-job training, internships and industry visits for students of Classes XI and XII under the Integrated Scheme in Skilling Architecture (ISSA), Sitharaman said the initiative would help connect students with industry at an early stage.

At a review meeting where representatives of Andh-

ra Pradesh, Odisha, Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh presented detailed reports on ISSA, Sitharaman said, "The Yogi govt's proposal to make English a qualifying subject in ITI education is a visionary step that will enhance communication skills and employability."

The Centre has selected Uttar Pradesh for a pilot project under ISSA and allocated Rs 500 crore for its first phase. Inspired by Germany's model of early career orientation, the scheme proposes a compulsory career guidance and aptitude assessment programme for all students from Class VI onwards.

Under the proposal, career counsellors will be engaged on a session basis from Classes VI to VIII in coordination with the Uttar Pra-

desh Skill Development Mission (UPSDM). A dedicated counselling module is expected to help around 1.1 crore govt school students choose electives, projects and activities aligned with their aptitude while keeping both academic and vocational pathways open.

The model also envisages the participation of industry experts in school management committees (SMCs) to mentor students and align classroom skilling with workplace requirements.

For Classes IX to XII, vocational education will be strengthened through trainer capacity-building, infrastructure development, curriculum revamp and the introduction of new-age and locally relevant courses aligned with emerging industry demand.