

‘Purvanchal emerging as a major investment hub’



By leveraging its location, skilled workforce, agricultural base, and rapidly improving connectivity, the Uttar Pradesh (UP) government is positioning eastern UP as a major industrial and investment hub. Additional Chief Secretary (Industrial Development) and Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner **Deepak Kumar**, in an in-person interview with **Siddharth Kalhans**, speaks of industrial growth in Purvanchal. Edited excerpts:

Eastern UP, particularly Varanasi, has been receiving significant investment proposals. How will the government address the matter of land availability in this region?

■ Land is not a constraint in UP. It is a competitive advantage. The state has developed an industrial land bank of over 75,000 acres. To leverage its extensive expressway network, UP is developing 27 “Integrated Manufacturing & Logistics Clusters” (IMLCs) along major expressways and economic corridors. In the Purvanchal region, IMLCs are being developed in nine places including Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Varanasi, and Gorakhpur.

Which industries does the state government wish to promote in eastern UP?

■ We are building on the region’s strengths. The state is positioning its eastern part as an industrial and investment hub by leveraging its location, workforce, agricultural base, and rapidly improving connectivity to attract investment, create jobs, and drive balanced regional development. Priority sectors include food processing and agro-based industries; textiles & apparel (including the Varanasi silk and Bhadohi carpet clusters); tourism & hospitality; energy;



logistics & warehousing; and information technology and information technology-enabled services (IT and ITes), global capability centres (GCCs), data centres and digital infrastructure. To support investment in these sectors, the state offers a comprehensive policy ecosystem.

What is attracting investors to Purvanchal? Why do they find this region investor-friendly?

■ Infrastructure creates confidence and confidence translates into investment, which, in turn, creates jobs. Purvanchal has witnessed a remarkable transformation in recent years and is increasingly emerging as one of India’s most attractive investment destinations, supported by world-class connectivity, policy support, and improved ease of doing business. Major factors are driving investor confidence, such as the Purvanchal Expressway and expanding expressway connectivity, including the upcoming Ganga Expressway, National Waterway-1 and the Multi-Modal Terminal in Varanasi.

Besides connectivity through the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor and an extensive railway network, reducing logistics costs and improving market access are also major factors.

What are the prospects for technology industries, particularly GCCs and data centres, in eastern UP?

■ Talent is distributed, and so should be opportunities. The next generation of technology investment will not be confined to metros. Technology follows talent and infrastructure. UP has aligned all three and the eastern region is emerging as a promising technology and knowledge-services hub, supported by the GCC Policy 2024, IT & ITes Policy 2022, and Data Centre Policy, which provide differentiated incentives for the Purvanchal region and create a strong foundation for technology-led investment. The region offers significant competitive advantages, including a large talent pool from Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), and other

leading institutions; lower operating costs; improving multimodal connectivity; and investment-ready industrial infrastructure.

These strengths support UP’s hub-and-spoke GCC model, enabling companies to access high-quality talent while optimising costs. Growing investment in IT/ITes and data centres in Prayagraj, Unnao, Jhansi and Bundelkhand demonstrates that the state’s technology ecosystem is expanding beyond the National Capital Region. With policy support, talent, competitive costs and improving infrastructure, eastern UP is well positioned to attract the next wave of GCCs, digital services, technology, analytics, health care, and banking and insurance, apart from research & development.

What is the current preparedness for the next ground-breaking ceremony (GBC), and how many projects from eastern UP are expected to be rolled out?

■ The story of UP is one of converting investor confidence into factories, jobs and economic growth. Last year alone, the state added 4,860 factories, taking the number of registered units to 32,332. Our success is measured not by proposals but by investment translated into operational enterprises and employment opportunities. This momentum is reflected in the success of the UP Global Investors Summit (GIS) 2023 and GBC 4.0. GIS 2023 attracted investment proposals worth over ₹33.5 trillion, while GBC 4.0 saw the launch of 14,701 projects worth more than ₹10 trillion. UP continues to witness strong investment momentum, and further announcements will be made by the chief minister. Eastern UP is expected to play a significant role in this next phase.