

UP govt inks MoUs with Google, ITC

To Boost Agri
Prodn, Increase
Farmers' Income

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: UP govt on Wednesday signed MoUs with Google and Network for Humanity, ITC, and Aquabridge to boost agricultural productivity in Bundelkhand and eastern UP and enhance farmers' incomes.

The initiatives will be implemented under the Uttar Pradesh Diversified Agriculture Support Project (UPDASP), part of the World Bank-funded UP Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprise Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES) programme.

Chief minister Yogi Adityanath, who presided over the event, described the initiative as a step towards transforming agriculture from a productivity-driven sector into one centred on prosperity.

"The objective of these Mo-

Us is not only to increase production but also to strengthen farmers' incomes, climate resilience, value addition and rural entrepreneurship. These partnerships will play an important role in enhancing agricultural productivity and improving the incomes of farmers across 21 districts of eastern UP and seven districts of Bundelkhand," he said.

The CM recalled that the decision to launch the UP-AGREES project was taken during the visit of the World Bank president to Uttar Pradesh in 2025. The Rs 4,000-crore project aims to unlock the agricultural potential of eastern UP and Bundelkhand.

He said the project is being implemented across 123 development blocks in 28 districts, with a target of benefiting 10 lakh farmers, 35,000 fish farmers and 3 lakh women.

Under the programme, 1.75 lakh hectares have been covered during the Kharif 2026 season. For the upcoming Rabi season, the state has set a target of boosting productivity of



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

wheat, peas, gram, lentil and mustard across an additional 1.75 lakh hectares.

Highlighting efforts to improve farm productivity, Yogi said, in partnership with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) is being piloted on 3,000 hectares during the 2026 Kharif season. Paddy, maize, millet, sorghum, pigeon pea, sesame, urad and groundnut have been included in the action plan.

The CM said govt is also working with Google and Network for Humanity to develop an open agriculture network that will serve as a digital public infrastructure platform. The platform will provide far-

mers access to weather forecasts, market prices, soil-related information, advisory services and other agritech solutions through a single interface.

Yogi said the state has partnered with ITC to develop climate-resilient commodity clusters for paddy and wheat. The proposal envisages expanding climate-smart agriculture across more than 2 lakh acres through modern practices such as zero tillage, direct-seeded rice, climate-resilient seed varieties and nutrient management systems.

He said a 1,500-acre paddy cluster is proposed in Bahraich, with targets of raising per-acre farm incomes by 20-30%, reducing urea consumption by 25% and cutting labour and irrigation costs by 25-30%.

"Under UP-AGREES, partnerships are also being forged with private companies for crops such as paddy, wheat, chilli, maize, green peas and tomato. This will improve market access and procurement arrangements for far-

mers while strengthening production, collection, storage, processing and marketing across the value chain," he said. The CM also announced plans to develop a blue economy ecosystem in the state by integrating aquaculture with science, technology, processing and entrepreneurship. Through its partnership with Aquabridge, govt plans to connect fish farmers, cooperatives and entrepreneurs with modern technologies and training programmes, with a special focus on AI-based aquaculture management, automated feeding systems and capacity building.

He said an integrated aquaculture project spanning 60 acres is being developed under the IMC Industrial Corridor in Unnao. The project includes proposals for a hatchery, feed manufacturing unit, processing facility and a dedicated training centre.

Govt has proposed setting up a mega food park and agri-export centre near Noida International Airport.