

## Uttar Pradesh | The Gorakhpur model

The home base of CM Yogi Adityanath is emerging as the industrial nerve centre of eastern UP



BUBBLING GROWTH The PepsiCo bottling plant of Varun Beverages in Gorakhpur



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Once dismissed as the “badlands” of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Gorakhpur, the home district of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, is now seeing an industrial transformation, with many high-profile infrastructure projects coming to the region. The Gorakhpur Industrial Development Authority (GIDA) has played no small part in this. CEO Anuj Malik says Rs 12,500 crore has come just in the past three years. “Proactive policy support, subsidies and easy availability of land are the key drivers in eastern UP,” she says. GIDA says it has 3,500 acres in its land bank, with 250 acres ready for immediate allocation.

Indian Glycols Ltd, Gallant Ispat Ltd, Ankur Udyog, Varun Beverages, Keyan Industries... the list of big-ticket companies that have set up shop here is long. Altogether, 1,167 industrial units, currently operational under GIDA, have generated employment for some 42,000 people. Akeel Khan is one of the lucky ones, working with Keyan Distillery, which has invested over Rs 1,200 crore and employs over a thousand people. “Earlier, there were no jobs here, which is why I had to leave Gorakhpur and UP in search of work. Now, nearly every family in my village has someone working at one of the industries,” says Khan.

The Keyan distillery, which began ethanol production earlier this year, was one of the first large units to start operations. And, according to Ankur Gangwar, AGM (project and maintenance), the company is already planning an additional unit. “We had the bhoomi puja in August 2023, and with the raw material availability, uninterrupted electricity and connectivity, things moved faster than expected,” says Gangwar.

### EVOLVING LANDSCAPE

The pace at which Gorakhpur’s industrial landscape has evolved reflects in the numbers. Anupam Mishra, officer on special duty at GIDA, says the region’s Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) has more than doubled, from Rs 22,000 crore in 2017 to around Rs 47,000 crore now.

Especially heartening is the fact that 20–30 per cent of the skilled workforce now comes from within the region. Malik says the presence of institutions like the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology, which has trained more than 700 students, has helped. “We did a skill gap analysis and are now aligning training programmes with industry demands,” she says.

Next up is a 5,500-acre industrial zone in Dhuriyapar, among the region’s most underdeveloped areas, where land is being acquired across 17 villages. Industries such as Adani Cements have already shown interest, helped by the new rail links and its location near the Purvanchal Expressway. Indeed, both Mishra and Malik stress Gorakhpur’s logistical advantages. “We sit at a geographic crossroads, connecting eastern India, Bihar, Nepal and the rest of UP. This benefits local industries and positions Gorakhpur as an alternative to more saturated hubs,” points out Mishra.

GIDA is also working to attract sector-specific investments. “We are developing UP’s first plastic park, with space for 90 industrial units. Over 70 units have been allotted,” says Malik. Beyond the industrial infrastructure, Gorakhpur’s urban transformation is also playing a role. With two five-star hotels already functional and two more under construction, the hospitality industry is expanding. State-backed infrastructure and urban projects are also reshaping the city. In FY25, CM Adityanath laid the foundation for projects worth over Rs 3,500 crore, including the Rapti Nagar Expansion Township and Sports City, and the ‘new Gorakhpur city’.