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# DISCUSSANT

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◆  
**A Critical Review on  
Five Years of  
Yogi Govt**  
◆

# THE DISCUSSANT

PEER REVIEWED REFEREED JOURNAL

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# EDITORIAL

## UNDOING HARM DONE TO EDUCATION SECTOR

The appointment of the formidable Dharmendra Pradhan as the new Education Minister is a clear indication that Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants an end to the backseat driving in the functioning of this major ministry. There has been an increasing feeling, with comparatively weak ministers in the saddle, about too much 'outside interference' in functioning of the educational institution under the aegis of the central government.

The Narendra Modi government in 2014 had inherited a rich legacy of education institutions, thanks to the vision of late Human Resource Development (HRD) Arjun Singh and his successor Kapil Sibal, a bouquet of central universities was created across the country which added handsomely to the list of already existing institutions built before and after independence. Despite the infrastructure, it also remains a fact that education in our country largely remained hostage to the whims and fancies of the left-leaning ideologues. Over the years there was an increasing desire to break education free from the left-leaning ideological parochialism.

Unfortunately, during the past seven years, in the absence of a 'mature' Minister at the helm of the HRD/Education Ministry, Modi government in this particular sector succumbed to parochialism of another kind. The left-leaning insularity came to be replaced by right-wing blinkeredness. The change has been for the worse, as during the Congress and coalition governments, an attempt was always made to create a countervail to Left's dominance, however, in the past seven years the so-called czars of cultural nationalism have had a free run.

Unfortunately, the implementation of the agenda of cultural nationalism has been limited to the appointment of the devotees of these czars, blessed with academic mediocrity, to plum positions. Expectedly, many of these appointees miserably failed to rise to the challenges of the office and ended up in situation which brought disrepute to the government. Charges of misuse of office and financial impropriety were levelled against several of these incumbents and some of them also dismissed from office.

This is the opportune moment for the Modi government to expand its ideological base beyond the limited cadres to those, as the late Arun Jaitley would say, waiting to be converted. This ideological blinkeredness so far has left the Ministry in pitiable situation with Pradhan's predecessor Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank being forced to cancel twice the conference of the Vice-Chancellors as 20 out of 40 central universities have been headless for past several months. These include prestigious universities like JNU, BHU, Delhi University and Hyderabad University.

Some of the other Central universities without its top functionary for more than a year are Central Universities of Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu, Manipur, Hari Singh Gour University Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Hyderabad, South Bihar University, the North East Hill University, Rajasthan, Kashmir, the Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad and the Guru Ghasidas Central University in Bilaspur. How does a government which announces the New Education Policy (NEP) with so much of fanfare seeks to implement it if the educational institutions remain in a dysfunctional state?

In an interaction with the heads of the IITs and IISc, earlier this week, Prime Minister Modi said that the country's higher educational and technical institutions need to prepare the youth for continuous disruptions and changes, keeping in mind the fourth industrial revolution. This is easier said than done. Prime Minister Modi is setting very high bench marks for such centres of higher education and it's for his government to ensure that these institutions have sufficient talent to execute his plans.

Supplementing to what the Prime Minister said, Pradhan at the same deliberation enunciated his plans saying, the government is committed to making students and the youth the primary stakeholders in propelling India towards an equitable knowledge society and that would foster an environment for creating a future ready India. The Minister saying that the government was committed to inculcating a culture of innovation, encouraging research, entrepreneurship and developing futuristic solutions in higher education, all sounds very good but the challenge lies in the implementation of this vision.

Implementation needs an efficient human resource structure, which unfortunately is non-existent as of now. The delay in affecting appointments of the Vice-Chancellors have had a cascading effect, with the recruitment of other teaching and non-teaching manpower of the universities and most of the colleges and institutions affiliated to them getting stalled. This has ended in giving the impression that education was not Modi government's priority, which Pradhan would now need work to alter.


Pandemic and its aftermath have thrown new challenges before the Education Ministry. The migration teaching-learning community to the digital platforms has to be real. The digital divide and digital deficit are real time challenges facing the education sector as it has given a huge advantage to the students residing in the urban sector. The seekers of education from rural India, living in lodges and hostels, have been forced to return to their pastoral hearths, which are mostly out of digital networks.

Pradhan's predecessor Nishank, maybe it was his lust for camera or otherwise, gave an impression of micro-managing even things which ordinarily should have been left to the officials. Once again recalling from a lecture by Jaitley, where he had said that camera likes sad pictures and working for the sake of camera could be counter-productive. Education is one area where diverse talent is available in plenty and one can use them provided one looks beyond the cadres and allows talents to function and flourish.

The vision of Modi government and its implementation would need participation of not just educated but a knowledgeable population. Having come up through the students' politics way, Pradhan is best placed to identify with the needs of the post-pandemic world. Challenges posed by Covid to our economy and society can only be overcome by having such an education system, to use the Pradhan's words, which is committed to inculcating a culture of innovation, encouraging research, entrepreneurship and developing futuristic solutions.

With these challenges and the promise to implement the New Education Policy, Pradhan has a clear road map to follow for his Ministry. There still is ample time and the Minister has a proven track record to carry the officialdom and other stakeholders together. Maybe he can change the perception of Modi government not being serious about education.

31 December 2021

  
Sidharth Mishra

# S E C R E T A R Y ' S   D E S K

If the year 2020 was a difficult year, 2021 was tougher. At a time when several journals have shut publication, *The Discussant* has kept tryst with scholarship. However, it was come at great cost as we lost a very dynamic and eminent member of our Centre, Dr Vidhan Pathak to Covid catastrophe.

It's with great humility and also sense of achievement that we acknowledge that *The Discussant* has completed the 8th year of regular publications and among its various achievements have been successful audition by an international agency for impact factor - International Scientific Indexing. We are going for fresh valuation now.

With equal humility we share the information that *The Discussant* was shortlisted by the Library of the US Congress as part of its India Collection and in due course awarded the LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number) and also will be catalogued online. In these years, this journal has proved to be an asset in promoting research among young scholars across the universities, and what better recognition for our effort than the one coming from the US Congress. *The Discussant* indeed has come to be recognized as journal of honest endeavour.

We have completed seven years of unbroken publication of *The Discussant* as an RNI registered quarterly periodical too. We had received the ISSN accreditation a year earlier. I am happy to share with you that our online edition too is crossing new frontiers and getting accessed from new territories, which gives our writers a global exposure unthinkable for any journal of our vintage. The online edition too has been successfully audited for impact factor. We continue with our endeavours to partner in intellectual exercises.

This is the 6th edition of *The Discussant* which is being brought out amidst very challenging situations. There have been lockdowns worldwide as the globe has been invaded by disease causing virus Covid-19. Though the process of unlocking has started, the signs of the pandemic being on wane is not in sight.

It would be sometime before the threat of the virus is fully erased. However, we have the example of Adityanath Yogi Government in Uttar Pradesh, which has worked overtime in these challenging circumstances and mitigated the pain caused by the virus. This edition is dedicated to the Yogi Government.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy new year

31 December 2021



Dr Sanjeev Kumar Tiwari

## UTTAR PRADESH: 2022

# FACETS OF CM YOGI ADITYANATH (2017- 22) GOVERNANCE, GROWTH, GLORY

Abdesh Kumar Jha\*

### Transformation of handicraft industry under Yogi regime

Yogi Adityanath has been a great supporter of handicraft industry and his regime gave due importance to maati kalakaar - an art form involving mud or soil sculpting.

A look at the Mati Kala Board, an initiative from the Yogi Adityanath government in UP that would eventually shape the livelihood prospects of an entire community, thus protecting local skills, expression and narrative in the form of state heritage.

On Deepawali this year, Dharamvir Prajapati, a senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from Hathras in west Uttar Pradesh, wanted to procure around 10,000 mitti diyas or earthen lamps that are used for celebrations and worship.

The number was hard to find. It so happened that there had been a huge demand for diyas and stocks were over in Agra this year as well. He told this author over the phone: "We tried looking for diyas in entire Agra and we got to know that all stocks were sold three days prior to Deepawali."

This could have been slightly upsetting, but it came as a source of happiness for Prajapati. For him, it was an indication that his hard work was showing results and that

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\* Social Media Executive, VIPs



the people of the Prajapati community were working towards better livelihoods and a good Deepawali.

It was a mission he had signed into under the Mati Kala Board, an initiative from the Yogi Adityanath government in UP that would eventually shape the livelihood prospects of his own community and protect local skills, expression and narrative in the form of state heritage.

Deities and faith have been central to the political landscape of Uttar Pradesh. The worship of Lakshmi and Ganesh became the initiation point for a new change led by Yogi Adityanath three years ago when the state government started the Mati Kala Board with the motive of encouraging artisans, communities and families engaged in making murtis, diyas, utensils and other objects out of terracotta and clay and improving their livelihoods. The worship and depictions of Lakshmi and Ganesh were at the core of this milestone initiative announced in 2018.

However, there was something else built around the emotion for Lakshmi and Ganesh that came as a pressing need for a board dedicated to Mati Kala. This was the presence of Chinese-made imitations of the original and the real.

These would include imitated depictions of Lakshmi and Ganesh, diyas, and other objects meant for decoration. The imitations would sprawl in the Indian market around Deepawali and reach customers and their homes and spaces.

For Yogi Adityanath, who comes with a unique temperament for culture and heritage, their presence was a cultural irritant, and certainly, not a mild one.

Perhaps, the appropriation of the existing art of making Lakshmi and Ganesh in terracotta and clay in the Chinese made imitations that “flood” the Indian market was garish and visible.

Yogi Adityanath announced the setting up of the board. Its objective made it clear that the celebration of Deepawali in Ayodhya would be marked by diyas from Uttar Pradesh. Advantage small traders. Advantage the chain of hands involved in maati kala.

This was one of the primary reasons for the Adityanath-led government to take a step towards a board that would in still opportunity, training guidance, a good market for real art, the real make, and Indic expression.

The Prajapati community in Uttar Pradesh, for generations, has taken pride in the art of shaping, moulding, sculpting terracotta and clay, giving the medium of mitti time tested expressions for worship and lives. Mati or mitti means soil. As an element or tattva, it has immense symbolic meaning in the Prajapati community’s interaction with the art. Diyas, utensils, curios, and other objects created by the artisans from the Prajapati community, with the depictions of the deities central to the body of their work, needed intervention. With an eye on improving sales and exports, training of the artisans

and a convergence into the one district one product (ODOP), the government actually broke silos that would help in giving maati products greater chance and visibility.

It automatically was fitting into Narendra Modi's Vocal for Local initiative. Uttar Pradesh is going to assembly polls in 2022. The good work of the Mati Kala Board may see the community playing a part in the emotion that goes towards Yogi Adityanath in the assembly polls next year.

A bit about Dharamvir Prajapati, first. He has served the party and the government in the past. When he got the responsibility of heading the Board as its president, it was time to use his organisational abilities in making the vision of the Board actually reach the ground.

Dharamvir Prajapati is known for his experience in working on the ground prior to the 2017 assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh and other poll bound states after 2017.

In the beginning of his tenure as president of the Mati Kala Board, Covid-19 appeared as the spoiler. Prajapati told author that it did not stop them from travelling across the state for collating ground responses from artisans who earn livelihoods from terracotta and clay work.

Prajapati, known for his organisational abilities, says he travelled across 60 districts of UP to get a closer look at the nuances associated with people of the community, the work they do and the problems they face.

A two-pronged awareness approach was made towards two important sets the community of "kumhaars" itself and the public as consumers. Spreading awareness on the importance of maati kala and mittibartan (utensils) became a priority task.

Exhibition facilities were given to the community to help the consumers have a direct access to the art. The task was to increase awareness and provide exhibition facilities to each district. The board was in the process of collecting data from the field in response at the different exhibitions after Deepawali.

Khadi Gramodyog would play a pivotal role in holding together interactions between the the artisan, the community and the consumer. The collaboration between the Board and KhadiGramodyog would ensure that each and every idea behind the interaction between the art, the artisan, the community and the consumer was woven effectively.

The community was told about how the entire family can engage in the making of mitti articles and support itself as a unit by taking charge of the desired change.

They were told about the programme, the loan facility for machinery and its benefits, and the resulting increase in operations and livelihood. They were told that 25 per cent margin money of the loan would be reimbursed by the bank. The training programme was designed for different needs. The first is a seven-day programme that trains the

community in various aspects related to the community's livelihood, for example, packaging, accountancy, marketing, etc.

There is a 15-day programme which provides training in finer aspects related to the art itself. Inter-district diversity is encouraged in artisans and awards are given on the basis of quality with entries coming from 18 mandals from across the state. Deepawali-centric sales at the 10-day exhibition at the Lucknow chapter was a good indicator when it came to response from the public. This exhibition alone featured work from Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Khurja and other districts at 70-72 stalls.

Here are some of the soft and effective tools used by the Board:

**One:** a documentary on maati kala heritage of Uttar Pradesh. This documentary would be shown across the state and fall under the responsibility umbrella of the Zila Gramodyog Adhikaris. Information on the facility of loan of Rs 10 lakh is spread alongside.

**Two.** A special dye created for the Ganesh and Lakshmi idols - this would not only add aesthetic and visual strength to the creations but help people to distinguish between genuine and beautiful depictions from cheaper China-made imitations.

**Three:** Directions were given to Khadi Gramodyog to keep the creations in a unique display in order to help increase demand.

**Four:** The importance of using new equipment and the value of old equipment were highlighted.

**Five:** A database was created of how many people are associated with maati kala in the state. Data collection is ongoing and around 46,000 people have been identified in the state.

**Six:** Pattas (patches/stretchers of land from where the maati is dug for use) are the backbone of the community involved in maati kala. Nearly 14,000 pattas have been identified in the state. The work of the Board includes ensuring that people in the communities find the pattas and that the use of the pattas takes place in a smooth way without disputes. Every district has a patta target in each financial year and the Board keeps a watch on how many pattas are given to people in each district. Pattas are given for 10 years and they are subject to renewal. Nearly 26,000 were given access to pattas; work is ongoing and information is being collated on how many people are without use access to pattas. The Board is working on making the reach better and coordinates with the district administration when the need arises. The programme was named "adhunik upkaran sanchalan prashikshan". They were introduced to equipment needed for preparing the maati, for sifting it. They were also introduced to a variety of furnaces, including those run on electricity and diesel.

"People dependent on art and related livelihoods have been satisfied. Those involved

in black pottery have witnessed a rise in incomes. I know of a person from Azamgarh who returned to his village from Maharashtra to embrace his generational art of maati kala. He had given it up and set up a street food stall in Maharashtra for livelihood. When he heard of the work of the Mati Kala Board, he felt assured.”

A set of articles and utensils of clay in the existing hubs, such as Khurja, Kannauj, Gorakhpur and Azamgarh, have been identified for the focus and pitch in production and sale (with added focus on exhibitions in the districts).

Yogi Adityanath’s experiment to harness the available human and heritage strengths is an underrated cultural prototype that states, especially the BJP-ruled ones, can look towards in the coming years.

He has been able to build a true connection between art, aesthetics, people, culture and local economies in a result oriented approach using just one element - Maati.

## UP : Tale from health laggard to vaccination leadership

Uttar Pradesh has achieved various milestones of development in the last four-and-a-half years. Making its mark as a front-runner in sustainable, equitable and inclusive growth, the state government not only successfully handled the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic but also converted the disaster into opportunity by pursuing the goal of ‘Lakshya Antyodaya, Prana Antyodaya and Path Antyodaya’. The government’s model of Covid management has been acknowledged not only in the country but also globally, Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath has transformed Uttar Pradesh into a safe, prosperous, advanced and self-reliant state

Living up to the aspirations of 24 crore people, the government led by Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath has transformed Uttar Pradesh (UP) into a safe, prosperous, advanced and self-reliant state. The state has witnessed a complete transformation from the past with welfare schemes now reaching the deserving and the needy. The government adopted Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s mantra of ‘SabkaSaath-SabkaVikas-SabkaVishwas’ in letter and spirit and implemented its policies accordingly. With the consistent efforts of Shri Yogi Adityanath who took oath as the Chief Minister on March 19, 2017, the state has risen to the number-two position in the Ease of Doing Business rankings nationally. In terms of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), the state has surpassed Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu to become the second largest economy in the country through innovative, development-friendly policies and their ground-level implementation by the Yogi government. Further, as a result of the government’s commitment, Uttar Pradesh is moving from ‘Ease of Doing Business’ to ‘Ease of Living’.

## **MITIGATING PANDEMIC PAINS**

The UP government has received all-round praise in handling the COVID-19 pandemic efficiently. Its initiative to ensure maximum inoculation has made the vaccination drive a stupendous success in the country's most populous state. The state's 'TeekaJeetKa (vaccine of victory)' campaign carried information about the steps to defeat COVID-19 along with the precautions that people need to take to avoid contracting the Coronavirus. The Yogi government's multi-pronged strategy succeeded in breaking the chain of corona infection on one hand and on the other, minimised sufferings of people by accelerating economic development and employment opportunities.

The state's strategy to deal with Corona has been widely praised from WHO and NITI Aayog to the global media. The government managed to contain the virus with maximum testing and maximum vaccination in the state. UP's positivity rate, fatality rate and active Covid cases were lowest in the country, whereas the state tops the country in conducting sample tests and administering Covid vaccine doses.

## **STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW**

Good governance has been the guiding mantra of the state government. It has struck at the root of the mafia and paved the way for a safer and secure state. It has put the criminals in jail, and confiscated their properties. It has been dealing with criminals and mafias with strictness under the framework of law irrespective of their caste, place and religion. Besides demolishing illegal encroachments by criminals, the state government also seized illegal properties in the mafia possession worth more than Rs 1800 crore. Not a single communal riot took place in Uttar Pradesh in the past four and a half years unlike in the past when there used to be communal clashes every 3-4 days. For a state which was in the grip of communal riots every day, a major achievement in four and a half years has been to realise the dream of a riot-free Uttar Pradesh. The government has given high priority to the security of women and set up Anti-Romeo squads, pink booths for women and launched the third phase of Mission Shakti to empower women on all fronts.

## **EMPOWERING THE WEAKER SECTIONS**

During the last four-and-a-half years, the state government has laid emphasis on inclusive growth making it a point that the growth benefits reach all, especially the lowest strata of the society. The common people have got the direct benefit of having BJP government at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh. After the formation of Yogi Adityanath government in 2017, there has been a great bonding of the state government with the central government. Now whether it is PM KisanYojana or Swachh Bharat Mission,

Ujjwala and UjalaYojana or food grains distribution, Uttar Pradesh is at the top position in all. Under the ‘Saubhagya’ scheme, houses of 2 crore 94 lakh people have been illuminated by giving electricity connections. Under ‘Ujjwala’, 1.67 crore women were saved from smoke-borne diseases by getting free gas connections.

The Yogi government’s multi-pronged strategy achieved the desired results and the state’s pandemic control model has been highly successful. It succeeded in breaking the chain of coronavirus infection on one hand and on the other, minimised sufferings of people by accelerating economic development and employment opportunities. During the recent past, many policy initiatives taken by the government have directly addressed the problems of socio-economic backwardness and focused on the development of the masses at the bottom of the pyramid. It is working for all classes and communities without any discrimination.

### **FURTHERING THE CAUSE OF FARMERS**

Farmers and agriculture have been given utmost priority. Arrangements have been made to ensure that the farmers get seeds and fertilizers on time, at low cost and receive suitable price for their produce. In the year 2020-21, the total food grain production of the state was a record 618.49 lakh metric tonnes. Along with this, record purchases were made on MSP by the government. In the payment of sugarcane price, the Uttar Pradesh government also did a great job in the interest of the farmers. During this period, not only new sugar mills were opened in the state, but the capacity of old ones was also increased. So far, 1.44 lakh crore has been paid to sugarcane farmers.

The state government has focused on farmers so that Uttar Pradesh can be recognized as an export-oriented agro-economy while going beyond self-sufficiency in food production. A system has been developed by the government to resolve the problems related to payments to the farmers that were lingering since 2010- 11. UP stood second in sugar production in the country for the second time in a row. New units have been added, leading to the expansion of capacity of the Munderwa, Pipraich and Ramala sugar mills.

### **INCENTIVISING INDUSTRIAL GROWTH**

The geography and nature of Uttar Pradesh endow it with multi-dimensional possibilities of prosperity and development. Despite this, it continued to be counted as a Bimaru State. Leaving behind the identity of a backward or BIMARU state, a new and capable The Yogi Adityanath government has devoted itself to the security, prosperity and welfare of all sections including farmers, workers, youth and women, while on the other hand it has prioritised infrastructure and industrial development.

As infrastructure is the growth engine for any economy, without which economic growth cannot be rapid, sustainable and competitive, the UP government has taken a decisive step by developing a network of expressways, waterways and airways. The state has come visibly ahead in terms of infrastructure and human capital development. There has been a considerable rise in the number of industrial clusters/hubs and Public Private-Partnership (PPP) projects. Uttar Pradesh has emerged on the national stage in these four and a half years.

The government is establishing a defence corridor in the state. Jewar airport at Greater Noida and Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi are being developed. Prime Minister has recently inaugurated a state-of-the-art airport at Kushinagar, where Lord Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana. Investment of Rs 50,000 crore in Defence Corridor will not only develop the infrastructure in the state but will take UP towards defence manufacturing economy. This will not only bring huge opportunities for migrants and workers but will also create better opportunities for start-ups.

### **ACCELERATING EMPLOYMENT GENERATION**

The unemployment rate in Uttar Pradesh till 2017 was up to 17 per cent whereas today it has come down to 4 per cent. The state government has opened various doors of employment opportunity despite the pandemic that has delayed many projects. It has given jobs to 4.5 lakh youths and set up a transparent system for this. By the end of this financial year, 50 lakh youth will be enabled for employment and self-employment. With the investment of about Rs 3 lakh crore through first and second ground-breaking ceremonies and other events, over 33 lakh people have been provided with direct and indirect employment. The state has ensured employment of more than 57 lakh unskilled workers who are now engaged in various projects under MGNREGA. With over 40 lakh migrants and their families having returned to the state during lockdown, the government is looking forward to generating sufficient employment to retain the workforce in the state. With 57.2 lakh people involved in one or the other project, it was decided to make every village and every district self-sufficient. Reviving traditional industries through the ODOP scheme, with the “Swadeshi to Swavalamban” and “Vocal for Local” mantra, millions of units of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) were provided with loans on easy terms. This gave an impetus to the economy and paved the way for job creation.

The state has been successful in implementing various policies in line with the PM Narendra Modi’s path of “SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas, SabkaVishwas”. During the recent more than four-year period, there has not been a single scheme that was based on caste or religion. Farmers, youth, women, and the poor all have been at the centre

of the policies made by the present government. The state hosted the KumbhMela, Deepotsav in Ayodhya, Rangotsav in Mathura, Investors' Summit and the ChauriChauraUtsav and won accolades for the impeccable arrangements. The government is pursuing its goals with good intent and conviction and there is no doubt that its success in achieving the state's continuous development will be giving rise to a self-reliant or Aatmanirbhar UP. All this is going to give a new identity to Uttar Pradesh on the world map.

## “Development for All” The mantra of UP Saint CM

**A**fter taking over the reins of governance in Uttar Pradesh on 19th March 2017, Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath has set about the task of a complete overhaul of the state in every sphere. By effecting vast improvement in law and order, agriculture, education, and health sectors, besides reviving the industrial landscape, CM Adityanath has put the state on a fast trajectory of economic growth in the land of Ganga and Yamuna. No wonder, UP has become a model state in terms of good governance and inclusive growth. A close look at the salient achievements of the Yogi government in the last around five years

### THE HIGH ROAD TO GROWTH

Purvanchal Expressway connecting state capital Lucknow to Ghazipur, the eastern tip of the state is the country's longest expressway. It will be a boon for the people as it will cut travel time between Lucknow and Ghazipur to a mere four hours. The expressway also boasts a 3.2 km long airstrip with a canal passing underneath, making it the first airstrip in the country constructed on the bridge.

### BRINGING UP ON THE WORLD AVIATION MAP

On October 20, the Kushinagar International Airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Built at a cost of Rs 260 crore and spread over 589 acres, the Airport provides direct international connectivity from Kushinagar, the Mahaparinirvana site of Lord Buddha. It has a 3200 meters long and 45 meters wide runway, which is the largest runway in the state. With the opening of this airport, the tourism sector has got a fillip besides opportunities for strengthening of India's cultural ties with other nations. Significantly, the state government is working on 11 airports, including two international airports one at Ayodhya and another at Jewar, Gautam Buddh Nagar.



### **IMPROVING FARMERS' LIVES**

The state government has announced an increase of Rs 25 per quintal in the state administered price of sugarcane for the crushing season started from 1st October. As per this, the early maturing variety which was being purchased at the rate of Rs 325 a quintal will now be purchased at Rs 350 per quintal. Similarly, the price of the common variety cane has been raised from Rs 315 to Rs 340 per quintal. The government will also buy the rejected variety of sugarcane, of which barely one per cent is left, at an increased price of Rs 335 per quintal from Rs 310 per quintal. Entailing an additional payment to the tune of Rs 4,000 crore, the hike will provide enhanced income to 45.44 lakh sugarcane farmers in the state.

### **GIVING A NEW LEASE OF LIFE TO SUGAR MILLS**

The sugar mill of Munderwa dating back to the British period was restarted by the Yogi government in a big relief to the farmers of Basti who were agitating for its reopening for the last two decades. The mill was shut down due to apathy of previous governments. Apart from this, the expansion and repair of sugar mills have been undertaken on a war footing to benefit more than five lakh farmers. The expansion of 13 sugar mills is already underway, which will increase the crushing capacity of the sugar mills. The state's sugarcane department has constituted a committee for physical inspection of the expansion work. The expansion takes into account the increase in sugar cultivation land by 27.75 lakh hectares in the state

### **BRINGING TECH TO THE FARM**

Apart from the above measures, farm machinery banks including for crop residue management have been setup in all 146 cooperative sugarcane and sugar mills societies of the state. Under the agricultural expansion programme, sugarcane farmers have been connected to M Kisan portal and Kisan call centre of the Central Government for familiarising them with scientific techniques. Training is also being provided to 75000 sugarcane farmers annually with the help of Ganna Kisan Sansthan. The toll free number 1800-121-3203 has been provided at sugar cane commissioner office level for resolving the problems of sugarcane farmers 24×7.

Sugarcane farmers are availing the benefit of modern technology portals and mobile apps. Instead of paper slip, they are getting all acknowledgments on their mobile through enterprise resource planning, besides timely information of payments, slip, calendar, satta and survey with the help of online portal: [www.caneup.in](http://www.caneup.in) and E-Ganna app.

## **EMPOWERING HOMES WITH PNG**

Carrying and refilling LPG cylinders is soon going to be a thing of the past for the people of UP as the Yogi government is all set to provide piped cooking gas directly to their kitchens. The government is going to lay a 2,050 km long gas pipeline from Haldia in West Bengal to Jagdishpur in UP to provide PNG connection to almost 20 lakh families of eastern UP. The project is being run under the Urja Ganga Yojana of the Centre. PNG will be an economical and secure energy source and will also rule out the possibility of shortage and gas theft. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath presided over the commencement of the supply of PNG in Gorakhpur on 3rd October by providing connections to 101 people. The supply of LPG through pipes is being started in many cities of UP, including state capital Lucknow.

## **IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONING OF ASHA WORKERS**

Considered as the backbone of the health system in rural areas, Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) popularly known as ASHA Behan have been given smartphones for their daily routine works. This effort is in recognition of the inspirational work of ASHA and Anganwadi workers at ground zero during the Covid period.

## **ABHYUDAYA COACHING TO HELP STUDENTS**

Chief Minister Abhyudaya Yojana 2021 has been extended to all 75 districts of the state. In all the districts, free-of-cost coaching will be provided for different competitive exams including NEET, CDS, JEE, NDA and Civil Services. The platform has over 500 IAS officers, over 450 IPS officers, over 300 IFS officers and several experts on various subjects who contribute by creating educational content through physical classes and virtual sessions for civil services and other competitive exams' aspirants. The youth are also provided tablets so that they can utilise digital tools for their competitive exams.

## Yogi's Population policy a progressive step for Empowerment

**I**N A DRAMATIC step on July 11th, Uttar Pradesh (UP) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced a state population policy. The occasion was fitting: The World Population Day. The policy that emphasised a two-child norm in the state was released at the same time as a draft Bill-the Uttar Pradesh Population (Control, Stabilization and Welfare) Bill, 2021. The UP state law commission invited comments on the draft Bill.

Since then, these measures have provoked controversy and all shades of opinion have opposed it in one way or another. On July 12th, just a day after the population policy and

the Bill were released, the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) objected to sections of the draft Bill that it said went beyond the objectives of stabilising the state's population. VHP felt that these sections (in Chapter II of the Bill that deals with incentives to public servants and the general population to adopt a one-child norm) would lead to a contraction in UP's population, a development with negative consequences. On the other hand, liberal and Muslim opinion feels the Bill targets minorities in the state. The fact that the Bill proposes disbaring people from contesting local body elections in case they violate the two-child norm has also been labelled as an "anti-democratic" feature.

The step has also been interpreted as a move furthering the political goals of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) by the Adityanath government, keeping in mind the forthcoming Assembly election.

These assertions may have some truth to them but they ignore a very different reality. If one steps back from immediate political concerns and controversies and considers the state's population problem and its effects on the rest of the country, the population policy and the population control Bill acquire a very different colour.

By the 2011 Census, UP had a population of 20 crore. This has risen to 23 crores in 2021 by some estimates. In economic terms, the state remains a laggard. In 2019-20, the state's per capita income was roughly half of the national figure. In terms of relative economic performance with top-ranking states like Gujarat and Maharashtra, the state is way behind. The state government's ability to provide decent employment is limited at best.

These problems are well known and so are their consequences. In 2011, the Census recorded 27 lakh migrants from UP in Maharashtra. In Gujarat, the figure was 9.29 lakh. In Punjab, it was 6.5 lakh. These figures are not to be scoffed at; they represent the dire economic situation that would be the fate of any state in UP's position. But what this does is to accentuate political strains in India in many different ways. In Maharashtra, opposing the migration of "outsiders" is now a firmly established political plank for local parties. One cannot even blame these parties for an "illiberal" position. It is one thing for a state to absorb some migrants but a wholly different proposition to see wave upon wave of people come in search of a better life. It is not surprising that the same day Adityanath announced the population policy, Sharad Pawar, a politician who knows Maharashtra best, highlighted the need for population control.

There are other, more severe, ways in which imbalances in population and the need to sustain poorer states economically lead to political strains. Back in 2018, southern states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu objected to the use of the 2011 Census figures to determine the Finance Commission's (FC) award. These states felt that they were being penalised at the cost of northern states like UP and Bihar among others. The reason? The southern states had experienced a demographic shift as their populations moved to a lower

fertility trajectory while population continued to rise unabated in the north. Soon enough, this acquired a north versus south dimension. Thereafter, the 15th FC changed the formula for the division of taxes by giving a weight of 12.5 per cent for demographic performance and another 2.5 per cent for tax effort. Forest and ecology were also given a 10 per cent weight. Thus, the FC's award placated the southern states for the moment and what could have been a serious political flashpoint was averted. That is just one part of the problem. The sheer weight of the two most populous states-UP and Bihar-in Parliament shifts the balance of political power in their favour. The fact of highly populous and economically backward states having far greater political influence than low-population but economically better-off states is inherently destabilising.

It is against these far more momentous political factors that UP's population policy and its draft population control Bill ought to be evaluated and not the shrill politics of "secularism" and "liberalism". Seen from that vantage, UP has indeed stolen a march over its peers. Historically, in any country, it is the "progressive" and "advanced" states that set the political and economic agenda. In Germany, it was erstwhile Prussia; in India, it was states like Maharashtra and West Bengal. In this process, states like UP were followers. But in a bold reversal, UP has seized upon the problem and taken a progressive step. It is also quite possible that the weight given by the 15th FC to demographic performance may have spurred UP into action. The 2011 census recorded 27 lakh migrants from UP in Maharashtra. In Gujarat, 9.29 lakh. In Punjab, 6.5 lakh. This dire economic situation would be the fate of any state in up's position

Here the contrast with those who sport the label of "progressivism" is stark: practically all of them have opposed the population policy in the name of the poor and on ideological grounds like secularism. Even VHP-a conservative Hindu organisation-is opposed to the population policy for a complementary-but unstated-set of political calculations. It is interesting to note that many influential politicians, especially those from southern states, who never miss an opportunity to say that India lacks "true federalism", have been silent on the policies being adopted by UP. Ideally, these "federalists" should be cheering UP's chief minister but because one aspect of their politics is based on "secularism", even a policy that goes in their favour is greeted by total silence. Such is the nature of "progressive" and "federalist" politics in India.

The two-child norm and the idea of controlling population have sparked vague fears of "Malthusianism" in certain quarters. From their perspective, the status quo, whereby poor states continue to get financial and economic support regardless of its cost along with political imbalances from much higher populations, is acceptable. In an ideal, "first-best" world, this would be a costless option. But as any economist knows, all real world situations require "second-best" optimisation. The political costs of these imbalances

were growing in India and the ever-rising crescendo of demands for “true federalism” had a sinister ring to them. It took a chief minister from a so-called backward state to seize upon the problem boldly. There was once another option to solve the “UP problem”. The sheer size of the state and its population-fifth largest in the world if UP were a nation-state-required that some steps be taken for its better management.

In 2011, Mayawati, the then chief minister, presented a resolution in the UP Assembly recommending the splitting of the state into four parts. While the Assembly passed the resolution, nothing came of it as the Centre took no further steps. With the new population policy and the associated efforts to stabilise UP’s population, the four-state option seems to be finally off the table. That option may have warmed the hearts of “federalists” who favour smaller states to achieve some sort of “balance” between different parts of India, but it would have been ruinous economically.

None of the four successor states was likely to be economically viable. The pressure on the Centre for “special packages” and a continuous drip of financial help would have been extremely stressful. That bad outcome has been averted.

## Yogi government calligrapher of mega Defence Corridor

**I**n what can be seen as a major accomplishment, the Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh has taken a steady lead, going on to become the first out of the 6 nodes or centres to get its first lease deed done in the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor project. The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), the state government-run nodal agency for the defence corridor project, has completed the first lease deed in Aligarh and allotted more than 55.4 hectares of land to 19 defence manufacturing companies, which would be investing more than Rs 1,245 crores in the district. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will soon lay the foundation stone for it.

Meanwhile, the work of constructing boundary walls, building a powerhouse, and a 4-lane road at a cost of Rs 10.21 crore has kick started in Aligarh, confirmed Avneesh Awasthi, the Additional Chief Secretary Home and Chief Executive Officer of UPEIDA. Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh becomes the first district in the country to get its first lease deed

According to reports, the first lease deed was done with Aligarh’s Allen & Elvon Private Limited (drone maker). In Khair Tehsil, the officers of UPEIDA gave the company certificate of land on lease for 30 years. Besides, Anchor Research Lab LLP, a strong player in the Defence and Aerospace Industry, has been allotted 10 hectares of land in Aligarh. The company will be investing Rs 550 crore in the district.

The UP Defence Industrial Corridor projects were announced in Aligarh in August

2018. Land for this ambitious project was set aside in Andla village in Khair Block in Aligarh District of Uttar Pradesh. Defence Industrial corridor: BJP Govt's ambitious step towards making country's defence sector self-reliant

After opening up private investment and liberalizing foreign direct investment (FDI) in defence production, the BJP government, during the 2018-2019 national budget announced the establishment of two Defence Industrial production corridors. Indigenous Defence manufacturing is one of the key focus areas of PM Modi's 'Make in India' initiatives. The first Defence Production Corridor is planned to be established in Tamil Nadu and the second one in Uttar Pradesh. The first corridor called as Tamil Nadu Defence Quad will extend from Chennai, Hosur, Coimbatore, Salem and Tiruchirappalli.

The second defence industrial corridor was announced on the occasion of the Uttar Pradesh Investors Summit 2018. At the summit, PM Modi had said: "of one of the two defence industrial corridors mentioned in the budget, one is proposed in the Bundelkhand region of the state which will bring an investment of Rs. 20,000 crore and generate employment avenues for 2.5 lakh people."

The project envisages building land banks for defence companies to set up their production plants around six nodes in the state, notably in the backward Bundelkhand area too. The 6 nodes - Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Agra, Aligarh and Chitrakoot - will be connected to various upcoming expressways which would provide better connectivity to these places.

Since the announcement, the Yogi Adityanath government has been consistently working towards making the success in the state.

Until now, the world's top defence manufacturing companies have stepped in to invest in Uttar Pradesh. It's worth noting that the BJP government's ambitious Defence Industrial Corridor running through Uttar Pradesh has garnered more than Rs 50 thousand crores worth of investments in pledges and commitments from both national and foreign private investors. The project was announced with the aim of spurring job creation as well as encouraging foreign and domestic companies to support defence manufacturing in India. Now with this accomplishment, India can be seen inching closer to becoming self-reliant in the defence sector as well.

## Evaluating yogi's governance? Ascetic turned Administrator

**W**ith fast-approaching elections in Uttar Pradesh, the question frequently being asked in the context of BJP winning the elections again is about whether Yogi Adityanath is governing well? The short answer is yes!

Impressive work done by the Yogi Adityanath government is reflected in the state's ranking in the SKOCH State of Governance. The state posted a commendable improvement in its ranking during 2020 rising to sixth place from 11th position in 2019. Uttar Pradesh moved to the 'Star' states category in 2020 from the 'Performer' category in 2019. There is a consistent improvement in the state's ranking. Uttar Pradesh was ranked at the 12th position in 2018.

After taking charge as the 21st Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in March 2017, Yogi Adityanath listed improving law and order and inclusive development among his top priorities. It required an extraordinary effort as the state's law and order situation was in shambles. How Yogi Adityanath planned to achieve the development targets and improve the law and order situation? He expressed it in five words: "Na bhaitunga na bhaitne dunga." He knew it very well that the task was enormous and required tireless efforts not only from the chief minister but also the other stakeholders involved in governance.

Four years down the line the change is visible. There is a big improvement in the law and order situation. How did he manage to do this? Yogi Adityanath government worked on two fronts - empowerment of police and improving the infrastructure and working conditions. In several serious cases, police were given the freehand. On SKOCH State of Governance 2020 charts, in Police & Safety category, the state made progress to the eighth position, up from 11th position in 2019.

The result is seen on the ground as also in the numbers. Dacoit cases in the state have dropped by 66 percent, rape cases declined by 45 percent and murder cases by 19 percent in the last four years, as per a document titled "Sewa and Sushashan ke 4 Varsh", listing the major achievements of Yogi Adityanath government in four years. Communal riots had been a common feature in Uttar Pradesh. No riots have happened since Yogi Adityanath took charge.

There is a big improvement on the economic front as well. The size of the state economy has almost doubled to Rs 21.73 lakh crore from Rs 10.90 lakh crore four years back.

## GOVERNANCE PROGRESS

Yogi Adityanath's performance is commendable not only in improving the law and order condition but also in implementing innovative governance measures. The state acquired a numero uno position in the Governance (General Administration) category during 2020. Considering the previous records, Uttar Pradesh topping the Governance category may seem a surprise to many. However, for me, this is the reflection of the extraordinary work done by the state in this category.

Uttar Pradesh is also the leading performer in Skill Development and Urban Development categories. In the District Administration category, it has jumped from the eighth position in 2019 to the fourth position in 2020. In Transport, it improved its ranking to eight from no rank during the same period.

## HANDLING OF COVID-19

The impact of Covid-19 on Uttar Pradesh was far more complex when compared with other states. On the one hand, the state has to deal with the spike in cases in the cities like Noida, Ghaziabad, Agra and Lucknow and on the other, there was a crisis due to migrants.

When the pandemic hit, most politicians choose not to venture out due to the fear of getting infected by the deadly virus. However, Adityanath faced the challenge from the front. His commitment and dedication to the people of Uttar Pradesh were evidenced by the fact that the Chief Minister opted not to go for the last rites of his father due to his involvement in the handling of the Covid-19 crisis.

Praising Yogi Adityanath on this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said: “Whichever government or system was in place, the circumstances were such that they would have avoided the challenge but Yogi Adityanath government took it seriously and worked on a war footing.”

When it came to the handling of the Covid-19 crisis Yogi Adityanath came true to his commitment made before taking charge as chief minister in 2017, “Na bhaitunga na bhaitne dunga.” He not only himself worked tirelessly leading from the front but also ensured that all departments of Uttar Pradesh put in their best efforts in handling the crisis.

Independent analysts and economists have hailed Yogi Adityanath’s handling of Covid-19. Commending the vaccination drive, Shamika Ravi, Senior Economist and Former Member PM’s Economic Advisory Council, tweeted: “Vaccination drive is impressive in largest cities across India, including in UP. Noida (Gautam Buddha Nagar) has vaccinated (first dose) 60 percent of the eligible population. But Rae Bareilly consistently remains one of the least vaccinated districts in the country. “Kannauj district of UP used to be one of the bottom five, but is now reporting a much-needed pickup in vaccination over the last few weeks,” Ravi wrote in another tweet.

Commendable efforts were made by Public Works Department (PWD) in providing support to migrant workers. The control room set up by the PWD worked 24×7 to address the problems of labourers and workers of Uttar Pradesh who were staying in camps set up by the Government of Maharashtra after the imposition of lockdowns. National Health Mission, Uttar Pradesh, launched innovative capacity-building initiatives to deal with Covid-19 challenges.



## TRANSPORT SERVICES IN TIME OF CRISIS

Swatantra Dev Singh, President of BJP State Unit, Uttar Pradesh received SKOCH Award for Transport Minister of the Year in 2018. He is a fantastic administrator and a strategist, he synergises well with Yogi Adityanath.

Migrant workers became the worst victim of the nationwide lockdowns imposed in March 2020. The biggest challenge in front of them was how to reach their native places safely. Tens of thousands of workers gathered at Delhi-UP borders a couple of days after the imposition of lockdowns. UP State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) rose to the occasion and played important role in taking such workers to their respective native places. The emergency operations carried out by UPSRTC provided much-needed transport services to a huge number of workers and travellers and helped them to reach their homes during the lockdown period. UPSRTC has started inhouse manufacturing of masks and provides them on a “No Profit-No Loss” basis (only Rs 6 per piece) to the passengers.

The sector has evolved under the guidance of Swatantra Dev Singh, now UP President of BJP, who held independent charge of the sector after Yogi’s government was formed. From a once-dilapidated entity to the digitised powerhouse it now is, the Transport sector in UP has come a long way. The UPSRTC is proof that real leadership is transformative. In 2017, UPSRTC expanded rural connectivity, bringing 10,000 villages into the fold. In 2018 VTS was introduced for raising speed control, safety and traffic-related litigation standards. In 2020, UPSRTC provided emergency services to migrant labourers and other stranded persons return home in keeping with safety protocols

## INITIATIVES BY DISTRICTS

Etawah is something of a trailblazer in terms of performing districts and the push for women’s empowerment. In 2017, the administration helped 200 women under SHGs improve their stitching skills and earn money by making uniforms. In 2018, this number grew to 2,800. Economic empowerment has directly been linked to lower domestic violence rates in the region.

2020 has been a wonderful year for District Administration in UP. SKOCH studied 37 ranking projects of which 11 were found to be notably impactful. Mirzapur made news for its Covid-response as did Sambhal and Unnao. The phenomenal women tailors of Basti turned strife into success by manufacturing masks and PPE kits. Ambedkar Nagar also worked with SHGs for mask manufacturing. Noida Authority did a remarkable job retrofitting 74,000 street lights with Energy Efficient LED Lights in Noida City. Chitrakoot, Shravasti and Siddharthnagar are Aspirational Districts that have done well in Water Resources, Education and Upgradation of Government Schools respectively.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SKILL

In 2020, the Gorakhpur Industrial Development Authority launched the Industrial Entrepreneurship Skill Development programme in the electronics products manufacturing niche and helped over 5,000 people. The Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission is planning foreign training for its youth, tie-ups with industrial houses and laying a strong financial foundation for resource management. The programme has already helped 12 lakh youth and has set its sights on certifying 6 lakh traditional artists this year and another 10 lakh youth for 2022.

As per the NITI Aayog Sustainable Development Goals India Index & Dashboard, Uttar Pradesh is classified as a Performer state. UP has done well in the Aspirational Districts Programme, Ease of Doing Business feedback and Affordable and Clean Energy category. Yogi Adityanath government is also ticking all the right boxes with the Centre's flagship schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Swasth Bharat Abhiyan. The administration has also set up dedicated programmes to benefit vulnerable groups; these include empowering and educating girl children through the Kanya Sumangala Yojana financial aid, and housing scheme for the EWS in the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana.

## POTENTIAL TO TOP

The SKOCH State of Governance is the only independent study of the state of governance based on primary data. The independent rigorous process followed to evaluate and study the projects makes this annual report the most sought after among the governments and policymakers across the country.

Uttar Pradesh has made steady progress and secured its position in the 'Star' state category. But the true potential of the state is still not realised.

Only those projects are analysed that are submitted for evaluation by the concerned departments or organisations. To secure a high ranking for the state, all departments and organisations of the state including our Focus Areas must showcase their innovative measures taken to improve the public service delivery and make governance more efficient and transparent. I hope to see Uttar Pradesh among the top in 2021. However, it would depend largely on the enthusiasm of the concerned departments and organisations in sharing and showcasing their best performing projects.

## Decoding: What Yogi did 'RIGHT'?

**D**R ABLE LAWRENCE, professor of clinical immunology and rheumatology at Lucknow's Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, is stingy with praise. However, an insider, he says that the Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh (UP)

government's Covid-19 strategy has been remarkable not only in terms of spending on public health but also in empowering nodal officers who can now think and act on their feet. "I give full marks to the chief minister," says he, emphasising that the problems the state faces have less to do with availability of medical equipment and more to do with trained personnel in the hinterland. Another physician, based out of Kanpur, agrees: "My visits to some districts convinced me that the state government is moving heaven and earth to fight the pandemic. In villages, if there are some hurdles it is not because the government is reluctant to spend money on equipment and healthcare facilities but because of the long legacy of not having enough trained hands. In fact, money is not a problem. We have here a story of success that is often not what people expect typically from Uttar Pradesh, which has had the image of being a backward state."

A Gorakhpur-based doctor, who is from a storied family of Shia Muslim spiritual leaders, avers: "Complaints about Covid management are sure to come from anywhere in the country or the world where good news gets overshadowed by bad news for all the right reasons, but I can say from my experience that the state government has been prompt in whichever way it could to stop the spread of Covid-19 and to add capacities, perhaps also because of political reasons." He adds that the government doesn't want to "leave any stone unturned" in its anti-pandemic efforts because it is being careful not to court any criticism of its governance in the run-up to the Assembly election due next year.

The UP government can fall back on numbers to lap up its successes on multiple fronts. As of July 5th, the state has vaccinated upwards of 2.8 crore people (first dose), which is the highest for any state. More than 48 lakh residents of the state have been given the second dose of the vaccine, as of that date. Contrary to general perceptions about UP being a laggard on such initiatives, the Adityanath government, for its part, is preparing itself for a possible third wave of Covid-19 by training medical staff and facilitating easy availability of proper medical treatment and Covid-related medicines. According to a government statement: "The ambulance staff has been trained to adopt a sensitive approach towards parents or guardians of children and the ambulances have been equipped with all life-saving equipment for the treatment of children." The statement quoted Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as saying: "The state must be equipped to serve all its citizens. Improve the response time and bring down the number of cancelled calls due to non-availability of ambulances for various reasons."

Developmental measures of the UP government just got a shot in the arm from Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the crucial polls next year in the Cabinet rejig that, for all practical reasons, closed options for the opposition in the state to chase any aggrieved community. As if complementing the state's efforts to attract more people into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) through its schemes and good governance, the Centre

offered a big slice of the pie in the national scheme of things to a range of caste groups, some of whom were never considered for ministerial posts in the past. While BJP had famously wooed those that were left out among the OBCs and Scheduled Castes as powerful groups like Yadavs and Jatavs cornered the gains of the post-Mandal shift in politics, this latest masterstroke from Modi saw intermediate and marginalised castes making it to his Council of Ministers. While some of them were from UP, the caste groups that found representation from across the country included Nats, Khatik, Meitei, ModhTeli, Darzi and so on. This accommodative stance is sure to dispel notions that upper castes and powerful caste groups with larger population shares will garner more seats of power in BJP's scheme of things. The rules of engagement have changed forever as far as political entrepreneurship is concerned, with more people likely to shed their inhibitions about BJP.

The twist in the tale, of course, is that the country's most populous state is in the news for all the good reasons, unlike in the past, although the burden of unlearning is heavy considering its poor performance over the decades. In UP, "102" and "108" emergency ambulance services have been serving as "frontline warriors" to ensure immediate admission of patients. Going forward, the government envisages these services to cover children against a likely third Covid wave. The ambulance services are all equipped with oxygen cylinders and many of them with ventilators.

It is not that the state government-UP sends 80 members to the Lok Sabha, the highest for any single state-is lining up measures in a public-relations exercise to win any war of perception. It had already earned praise from the Supreme Court recently for rising to the occasion when people who had migrated from the state to cities returned during the Covid-induced lockdown over the past 15 months. The court said on June 28th: "The state of UP is maintaining a robust system of registration of such migrant workers as they come into the state. A portal...has been created on which all relevant details of all migrant workers are to be uploaded in real-time. As per the data available with the director, training and employment, Uttar Pradesh, as many as 37,84,255 migrant workers have returned to their native places during the entire Covid-19 pandemic period." The court also lauded the initiatives taken by the state to map the skills of people who returned and that it has provided more than 10 lakh people employment with various departments of the government. Many of these migrants also received monthly sustenance allowance through bank transfers, the court pointed out.

Covid management is only one of the feathers in its cap for the Yogi Adityanath government, avers an official who had occupied key positions in successive dispensations in UP. "There has been a departure in the way things are being done in the state whether you want to accuse it of political expediency or not, a charge that can be levelled at any

performing state. The sum total of the performance of any state is that it is performing. Period. People stand to benefit,” he points out.

Kamlesh Maurya, who lives in the Babatpur area of Varanasi and does odd jobs for a living, tells Open that life around him has changed rapidly since Adityanath took office in 2017 after a spectacular win in the polls, later battering the combined strength of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and its arch-rival Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in 2019. “Many of my relatives have found jobs in government and it is easier to get things done from government offices which were dens of corruption. Daily interferences from big and small mafia groups are now a thing of the past,” Maurya says. He points out that BJP’s triumphs even in the recently concluded zilla panchayat chairman elections are an indication of how the state thinks. The ruling BJP and an ally won 67 of the 75 seats. It won unopposed in 21 seats. SP-backed candidates won only five seats while the remaining three seats were won by the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Janshakti Party and an independent candidate.

Elections are an important marker of political success, but then Adityanath and his party have been on a winning spree since 2014. More importantly, UP has posted huge gains on several economic and social indicators compared with those dull years of low indices in the past. Politically, BJP has been on an upswing and it is pulling out all the stops to ensure that the people who have voted it to power are rewarded too.

The state government is striving to make UP a big attraction for tourists, including religious tourists. It is working on a plan to develop Ayodhya as a big centre of tourist, economic and religious activity. UP is also promoting Kumbh Mela and pilgrimage tourism in Kashi, Mathura and Vrindavan

Adityanath has often displayed the courage to take on such leaders even when he was not in power. When Mulayam was chief minister from 2003 to 2007, there was one occasion when he started off from Gorakhpur in a car only to be joined by hundreds of others by the time he reached Mau 100 km away where Ansari had called for rioting. Government figures tell the story of the decimation of goonda raj in the state. So far, the Adityanath government has managed to target and jail 24 mafia dons. Over 135 notorious criminals have died in encounters with the police, their arm licences have been cancelled and properties worth Rs 1,000 crore they owned have been seized. The state filed 11,930 cases under the UP Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act in four years to clamp down on mafia activities.

The thrust of the Adityanath brand of politics has been zero-tolerance towards corruption. He had been a hard taskmaster as the head priest of the Gorakhnath math where he had disciplined erring members even for minor transgressions that he thought were unacceptable. He had once transferred a close relative of his mentor and

predecessor Mahant Avaidyanath from accounts management at the math and put him in charge of the goshala (cow shelter)-on a charge that most others would have taken as a mere aberration at work.

An employee of an oil marketing company tells Open that the biggest change she sees now from what it was before 2017 is the ease of living. “People, irrespective of party affiliations, talk about it everywhere. They all admit that the sway of gangsters and corrupt officials has disappeared,” she says, adding that the smooth running of various departments during the Covid pandemic is proof of that. She adds that despite the lockdown, fewer people are unemployed now than before when the state’s economy was in a bad shape. Mohandas Pai, former Infosys director who is currently chairman of Aarin Capital and Manipal Global Education, recently captured the change on Adityanath’s watch in his column in The Economic Times: “UP has made strides-a jump of 12 positions to second in the last three years-in the Business Reform Action Plan ranking of states by GoI’s Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on ‘ease of doing business’. UP’s state GDP-accounting for 8.7% of India’s GDP, second after Maharashtra-stood at Rs 12,88,700 crore in 2017, and has grown to Rs 17,05,593 crore in 2020-21.” The Bengaluru-based top executive, like many other analysts, also lauded Adityanath for empowering women and the marginalised by offering them jobs and job opportunities.

The government has launched ambitious projects to build new roads, Metros, airports and various industrial corridors. Besides Lucknow, it will launch more Metro rail projects in Kanpur, Meerut, Varanasi and Gorakhpur Official figures re-emphasise those assertions. While the unemployment rate in the state in 2017, when Adityanath was initially dismissed by at least some pundits as an inexperienced hand in administration, stood at 17.5 per cent, the figure has touched 4.1 per cent as of March 2021, signalling a phenomenal change. Data accessed by Open shows that four lakh young people got government jobs in the past four years as Adityanath braces to meet the growth target of \$1 trillion for the state’s economy in the next five years.

FOLLOWING THE UP INVESTORS Summit of 2018, the first of its kind in the state, UP attracted 1,045 intents with investments worth Rs 4.28 lakh crore in sectors such as renewable energy (16.8 per cent), infrastructure (15.4 per cent), power (14.7 per cent), IT & electronic manufacturing (10.2 per cent), tourism (10.1 per cent) and so on. Of these, officials tell Open, 215 projects worth Rs 51,240 crore are under commercial production and have created 1.2 lakh jobs while 130 projects worth Rs 37,479 crore are under implementation and are expected to generate more than two lakh new jobs. A government statement added: “The state has also attracted more than 96 investment intents, including intents from companies from around 10 countries such as Japan, US,

UK, Canada, Germany, South Korea, Singapore and so on worth around Rs 66,000 crore through a dedicated help desk set up in April 2020.” The Adityanath government has identified some of the least developed areas of the state for development and creation of industrial bases, they say, adding that 22,000 acres of land has been identified along expressways for industrial development.

To make what it calls “world-class infrastructure”, the UP government has launched a number of ambitious projects to build new roads, Metros, airports and various industrial corridors. Having launched the Delhi-Meerut link expressway, it is coming up with the 341-km Purvanchal Expressway connecting Lucknow to Ballia. “The project is almost complete and will be launched by the end of 2021. Besides, an elevated National Expressway (NE6) over Lucknow-Kanpur National Highway (NH27) has been proposed,” says an official statement. Other proposals include a 290-km Bundelkhand Expressway connecting Chitrakoot to Agra; the Lucknow Expressway; an 88.5-km Gorakhpur link expressway; and the 600 km-long Ganga Expressway connecting the National Capital Region to Prayagraj via Meerut, Kannauj, Shahjahanpur and Hardoi. The government has already announced the creation of National Waterway 1 (Allahabad-Haldia Inland Waterway) to link exporting hubs in eastern UP. The Haldia-Varanasi part of the waterway is currently in operation. The Adityanath government says that it will boost regional air connectivity further by setting up more domestic airports. “The upcoming international airport at Jewar (GB Nagar) will be one of [the] largest airports in North India spread over 5,000 hectares of land,” says a statement.

Besides Lucknow, the state government says it will launch more Metro rail projects in towns such as Kanpur, Meerut, Varanasi and Gorakhpur. “India’s first ‘freight village’, spread over 100 acres is coming up at Varanasi. The village will serve as a trans-shipment hub for inbound cargo from eastern ports to North India,” an official statement says, adding that for the proposed Defence Industrial Corridor, 3,796 hectares of land has been identified and a total 1,369 hectares of land has been acquired in Jhansi, Chitrakoot and Aligarh. “The state government has renewed its focus to promote new industries as well such as bulk drug and medical devices manufacturing,” according to a statement.

Among a raft of other initiatives is a flagship programme titled “One District One Product” (ODOP) which was launched in 2018 to protect and promote the local industries of the state. Under this scheme, the government offers facilities such as marketing support, technical and skill upgrade support, training and easy loans to entrepreneurs and artisans. Under the programme, one product each is selected across 75 districts of UP. Artisans are provided margin money subsidies of up to Rs 20 lakh per unit. The scheme currently covers more than 20,000 people. Entities called Common Facility

Centres are being developed in each district of UP to help artisans and ODOP units on issues related to design, raw materials, packaging and so on.

An official close to the matter told Open that, for the chief minister, water conservation and drinking water projects are also priority areas. Recently, he announced drinking water projects across 50,000 villages and appealed to the people to save every drop of water. After he took office, the government set up a record number of check dams and ponds in various districts. He had rolled out a Rs 3,000-crore project to offer piped water supply to some of India's most water-scarce regions in Bundelkhand and Vindhya. Over time, the water table has shrunk massively in these areas bordering Madhya Pradesh. People living there often have to walk long distances for water and, every year, people as well as cattle die due to water scarcity. "Yogi Adityanath wants all that suffering to end," says a Lucknow-based senior government official.

The chief minister, who had represented Gorakhpur in the Lok Sabha for a long period, had often raised the case of a large number of deaths from encephalitis in the state, especially his hometown, which was the epicentre of the ailment. UP had, since the 1980s, reported outbreaks of encephalitis, a disease with a fatality rate of close to 30 per cent. Ever since Adityanath has taken over and launched the Dastak campaign in some of the most affected districts of UP, cases have fallen rapidly. The campaign was all about spreading awareness about the disease, sanitisation and vaccination. It was a huge success and the state government won plaudits from UNICEF. Earlier this year, the chief minister was quoted as saying in the media that "UP government and the state health department have successfully controlled 95% of Japanese Encephalitis cases in the state. We plan to achieve the rest this year."

As with ensuring the safety of women in a state that had acquired great notoriety in gender crimes, Adityanath had said that women officers in different districts interact through webinars with different sections of society. "We will be setting up secret classrooms in police stations across the state which would help women complainants speak freely to women police personnel. We have also co-opted the Green Gang (a large group of women volunteers fighting patriarchy across the state) in Mission Shakti," he had said.

EVEN DURING THE PANDEMIC, when all industries were facing closure, the sugar mills of the state continued operations, according to the chief minister. He said that it was due to the commitment of the government to safeguard the interest of farmers that the supply of their sugarcane remained uninterrupted during the lockdown. "Though the sugar sale remained negligible during the lockdown, in spite of that cane price payment of Rs 5,953 crore was made to farmers in this period," he said.



The Adityanath government is also striving to make the state a big attraction for tourists, including religious tourists. It is working on a plan to develop Ayodhya as a big centre of tourist, economic and religious activity. “We also aim to develop Ayodhya as a solar city in order to ensure a clean and green environment there. Ayodhya is known worldwide as the land of Lord Ram and has an immense mythological significance. Therefore, all the development works in the town will be executed keeping its ancient culture and mythological significance intact. All ghats (paved riverbanks) of Ayodhya will be conserved and beautified,” he said. UP is also promoting KumbhMela and pilgrimage tourism in Kashi, Mathura and Vrindavan and other such spots.

As a force multiplier for Modi’s “the meek shall inherit the earth” political message in the Cabinet reshuffle, Yogi Adityanath’s tenacity will most likely give BJP a clear electoral edge in a state where OBCs, Dalits and Tribals together account for 61 per cent of the population.

## Yogi’s Effort amid Covid-19 crisis in managing migration

**S**upreme Court lauded UP governments efforts for managing migrant crisis amid Covid-19 pandemic

On June 29, the Supreme Court acknowledged the Uttar Pradesh government’s efforts to manage the migrant crisis during the Covid-19 pandemic. A government spokesperson said that the apex court praised the government for establishing a “robust system of registration of migrant workers” when they returned to the state after the lockdown was imposed across the country in 2020.

On May 22, 2021, the UP government had submitted a detailed affidavit in which the steps govt took for the migrants were mentioned. The affidavit was mentioned in the order passed by the court while disposing of two petitions related to the migrant crisis last year. The court said, “A portal of the Relief Commissioner has been created on which all relevant details of all migrant workers are to be uploaded in real-time.” In its observation, the court quoted the data submitted by the director, Training and Employment (UP).

The data states that 37,84,255 migrant workers came back to their native places during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Based on the data, the court noted, “Their skill mapping has been completed, and 10,44,710 labourers have already been given employment under different schemes of the state government.” It further noted that as per the data available from April 1, 2021, to June 8, 2021, details of 3,79,220 migrant workers have already been registered and their skills mapped on the portal

(rahat.up.nic.in) launched by the UP government. Notably, the Uttar Pradesh government is also providing financial support to migrant workers under DBT. The Relief Commissioner's portal is being used to ensure the money reaches the migrant workers. The decision about the fund transfer was taken by the state cabinet on May 15.

Uttar Pradesh achieved several milestones while providing support to migrants

Since the pandemic kicked in, the Uttar Pradesh government acted swiftly to ensure support is provided to all migrant workers who come back to their native places amid the nationwide lockdown. In May 2020, when migrant workers started to return to UP, CM Yogi set up a migrant commission to find ways to provide jobs to the workers. He also directed the officials to ensure no migrant have to leave UP once things get normalized. A lot of steps were taken for the benefit of migrant workers.

In November 2020, it was reported that UP ranked number one in providing jobs to migrant workers by generating ten crore person-days under Gareeb Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan. The said scheme was announced by PM Modi in May 2020 to provide jobs to migrant workers.

In May 2021, CM Yogi Adityanath had directed officials to start community kitchens to provide food for the poor amid lockdown. He asked them to ensure there is no scarcity of food for labourers, daily wage workers, street vendors, handcart pullers and others and that they are provided with proper meals during the course of lockdown.

## Yogi-Raj, Proud proclamation of UP wallah Bhaiya:

In March 2017, when BJP named Yogi Adityanath as the Chief Minister after their landslide victory in UP, many political pundits wrote him off even before he took the oath of the CM's office. Analysts thought a saffron-clad mahant can only teach lessons in dharma and governance is not his cup of tea. This was a lazy analysis or hate for his saffron attire at best. Four years in office - Yogi proved them all wrong.

What the Yogi Adityanath government has achieved in the last four years in a state like Uttar Pradesh, which was at the bottom of all the development indices is not short of a miracle. The only index UP topped in the times of Akhilesh Yadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati was 'crime'. Yogi, a five-time member of parliament knew that for bringing prosperity back to UP, for re-instating the trust of entrepreneurs in the state, he needs to fix the law and order of the state on priority. He took the task head-on. By adding 1.5 lacs police staff in the rank and file of the police force, strategically bringing history sheeters to book in each district, protecting businesses from land grabbers and extortionists, he was able to convince industrialists to come back and expand in UP.

A safe UP under Yogi started getting investment proposals to the order of Rs 5 lac crores every year and a high percentage of them starting seeing groundbreaking ceremonies. In the last 4 years, UP jumped miraculously to the 2nd spot in Ease of Doing Business ranking, beating industrialized states like Tamilnadu, Maharashtra and Telangana.

Tightened law and order was coupled with the fast-paced development of infrastructure, increased availability of power and de-cluttering the red-tapism faced by entrepreneurs. This resulted in massive job creation in the state. The per capita income in the state has almost doubled and the unemployment rate has come down to 4.1% in February 2021, compared to 17.5% in 2017, when Akhilesh Yadav left the office. Large scale government recruitment done in a robust and fair fashion and impetuous to MSME through an innovative scheme like One District-One Product (ODOP), added to the employment generation drive of UP govt under Yogi. As a result, Uttar Pradesh is now rapidly moving towards becoming the biggest economy in the country.

Many people find ‘double engine kisarkar’ as political rhetoric, whenever PM Modi says it in state election campaigns while urging people to elect BJP in the state, to work on the same frequency with the central government. But Yogi proved that ‘double engine’ means ‘double growth’ for the states. All the development schemes of the centre worked superbly well in UP and succeeded the targets under Yogi Govt. Yogi constantly brought senior cabinet ministers to the state to iron out pending issues and take steeper targets for his state to complete. Now be it Gas Stove distribution, or construction of toilets or the construction of houses for the underprivileged UP is among the top achievers.

Decoding elements behind Yogi’s success can give us useful lessons. Yogi was brought up in a very hard working-class family, where his late father was known for his incorruptible reputation as a forest officer in Uttarakhand. During his tenure as a member of parliament from 1998 to 2017, he was among India’s top-performing parliamentarians on the count of attendance, number of questions asked, number of debates participated in and number of private member bills presented.

During those two decades as an MP, Yogi trained himself meticulously on governance and policy frameworks. His daily 3-4 hours of Janta-Darbars in Gorakhpur for the last 20 years, kept his ears close to the ground and he exactly knew the pain areas of the people. In these two decades, Yogi also managed more than three dozen educational, health and social institutions of the Gorakhnath Mutt, almost like a super CEO. With such a rich wealth of experience and grounding, Yogi hit the ground running in 2017 and shook the slumber of Uttar Pradesh and catapulted it first among the equals in last four years. It speaks volumes about Yogi’s style of working, when a senior bureaucrat from Uttar Pradesh, mentioned Sanjay Dixit, his IAS friend from Rajasthan cadre -

“Saloobaad, UP mein kaam karne ka maza aa rahahai” (After a long long time, it is such pleasure to work in Uttar Pradesh).

Uttar Pradesh used to be the theme for many mafia movies of Bollywood. UP residents were teased as uneducated bhaiyas, in many parts of the country. Yogi has turned the tables in the last 4 years. Yogi Adityanath is the best thing that happened to UP in the last two decades. Like PM Modi has enhanced the value of Indian passport across the globe, Yogi has added pride to be a UPite. Today as an UP-Walla, born in Bareilly, I feel proud to be a bhaiya from Yogi’s UP.

## Yogi: Infrastructure is secret of my Governance

**I**t has been claimed that Yogi Adityanath has little to show as achievement when it comes to infrastructure development.

Four years into his first term as Chief Minister of India’s most populous state, the English media remains as hostile and prejudiced against Yogi Adityanath as it was in 2017. His record as Chief Minister is seldom discussed. And when it is, facts are conveniently ignored to reach a preconceived notion. The most recent example of this was the claim that Adityanath has done little to improve Uttar Pradesh’s infrastructure over the past four years.

“If you look at Adityanath’s tenure, there’s not much that stands out in terms of infrastructure creation, in terms of big tangible projects, nothing to show for unlike his predecessors, Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav, who did create these expressways, these parks, which became a symbol of what they did during their tenure,” she says.

Nothing can be further away from the truth than this claim when it comes to Adityanath’s record on infrastructure over the past four years. When he came to power in 2017, Uttar Pradesh had two functional expressways - the 165 kilometre long Yamuna Expressway, which links Agra with the National Capital Region, and the Lucknow-Agra Expressway, stretching 302 km.

These projects, taken up by two governments, were completed over a period of 10 years between 2007 and 2017. But when it completes five years in office in 2022, the Adityanath government would have finished work on three expressways - the 340 km long Purvanchal Expressway, the 296 km long Bundelkhand Expressway and the 91 km long Gorakhpur Link Expressway. Work on the state’s sixth and longest, the 594 km long Ganga Expressway, is likely to have begun by then. For the record, the Purvanchal Expressway, which links Lucknow to Ghazipur, was conceived under the Samajwadi Party government led by Akhilesh Yadav, which had also built the Agra-Lucknow

Expressway. However, it was mostly a project on paper when the Samajwadi Party lost power to the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2017. Construction of the expressway began only in the third quarter of 2018 and nearly 80 per cent of the work has already been completed.

The main carriageway of the expressway is likely to be opened for traffic in April this year, less than three years after construction began.

Unlike Mayawati and Yadav, Adityanath has not remained fixated on one project. In fact, UP under Adityanath is building the longest expressway network in the country. Two more expressways, the 91 km long Gorakhpur Link Expressway and the 290 km Bundelkhand Expressway, are also under construction in the state, and are likely to be operational before the 2022 assembly election.

UP's operational and under-construction expressways. The Ganga Expressway, envisioned by the Mayawati government, was struck down by the High Court due to environmental concerns. While the Akhilesh Yadav government kept the project in the cold storage to focus on the Agra-Lucknow expressway, which passes through Samajwadi Party strongholds like Etawah and Kannauj, the project was revived by Adityanath last year with a new alignment to address environmental concerns. Land acquisition for the Ganga Expressway has already begun.

“The Chief Minister is very clear that expressways will bring a complete change in the infrastructure status of the state. They will open up the backward areas for industry, and improve connectivity. He has stressed on the importance of expressways repeatedly,” Awanish Awasthi, the Chief Executive Officer of the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority, told Author in December. “If you want to bring industrialisation in a large state like UP, you need to have expressways so that connectivity to the areas concerned is good. For example, no industry will go to Bundelkhand unless there is good connectivity.”

“If someone can travel to Chitrakoot from Delhi in five and a half hours, why wouldn't he go there, spend time as a tourist and come back? If going to Chitrakoot from Delhi takes nine hours, then the person going there has to plan for three days - one day for going, one day for seeing the place and one for the return journey. That, generally, people will not accept. That's why we have gone for expressways,” Awasthi says.

By the time Adityanath ends his current five-year term, he would have delivered more on expressways than not only his predecessors but possibly any other chief minister in the country. When all the expressways that UP is working on are complete, almost every second district of the state will have an expressway passing through it.

PRS Legislative Research says that the Yogi Adityanath government, in the 2020-21 budget, allocated 6.3 per cent of its expenditure for roads and bridges. This was higher

than the average allocation for roads and bridges by states at 4.2 per cent Spending on roads and bridges as a percentage of total expenditure. (PRS Legislative Research)

The Adityanath government is also working on other ambitious projects, like the Jewar International Airport and the UP Defence Corridor, with the Centre.

The first phase of land acquisition for the Jewar airport, which had been in the cold storage since it was proposed in 2001, has already been completed. A concession agreement for designing, building and operating the Noida International Airport has been signed with Switzerland-based Zurich Airport International. Rs 2,000 crore had been allocated in the 2020 budget for the project. When complete, the Jewar airport will be the country's largest.

The UP government has been focusing on developing Ayodhya and other tirthas in the state, such as Mathura, as major revenue-generating tourism centres. The government is also upgrading the existing airstrip in Ayodhya to a full-fledged airport for better connectivity. In the 2020 budget, the government had allocated Rs 500 crore for the construction of the airport. Rs 200 crore had been released in 2019 to acquire land for expansion around the existing airstrip.

Within the city, multiple other existing facilities and tourist attractions, including the city's bus station and the ghats along the Sarayu River, are being revamped. A 1,200-acre area in the town will be developed as 'Smart Ayodhya'



# CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY IN UTTAR PRADESH: USURPING THE LEADING POSITION

Dr Praveen K Singh\*

India has become the third-largest civil aviation market in the world in the year 2020-21, in terms of number of operational airports and flights. Correspondingly, in terms of number of passengers, India will beat United States, United Kingdom, China and others by 2024 and will usurp the leading position on account of surging demand for air travel. As per official sources, the central government is likely to invest for India's airport infrastructure an estimated INR 420-450 billion (\$ 6 billion) in the year 2021-2022. This paper details out the key strategies of the state of Uttar Pradesh in terms of making it an aviation hub. How the state is charting out its plans and creating carve on the global aviation map, giving India an ascent manifold.

**Keywords:** Aviation, Infrastructure, Airports, Travel, Tourism, Business, Economy, Investment, Market

The rising working class and mounting disposable incomes are expected to raise the domestic demand for travel and tourism. There is also a healthy competition between low-cost carriers building up at leading airports. Indian airports recorded a total air traffic of about 131 million passengers in 2016, out of which 100 million were domestic passengers. This number rose to 180 million in 2020-21.

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The Government of India has been working towards increasing the number of airports from 153 to 200 by FY40. The largest state Uttar Pradesh is at the forefront of facing this rising demand given its total population and the number of foreign tourists it attracts for visiting the ‘Taj Mahal,’ Kumbh Mela and Varanasi, Ayodhya and other pilgrimage centers.

### **PLANNING FOR UTTAR PRADESH - AIRPORTS**

UP is focusing on the ‘Civil Aviation Promotion Policy’, as a means to attract investments into tourism of the state. Flagship airport projects - ‘Jewar International airport’ (Noida) and Kushinagar International airport are going to be among the top choices for tourists once completed and are also expected to free up much burden from Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International airport (IGIA). The Uttar Pradesh government’s move to promote 11 new airports is being praised for its futuristic vision and modern facilities. The idea is to connect the state capital city Lucknow with almost 75 other Indian cities and is a great step towards equitable economic development of UP’s districts.

From the year 1947 to 2015, only two airports were functional in Uttar Pradesh. While Lucknow and Varanasi were the main economic centers and handled large crowds, the airports at Agra and Gorakhpur seldom had flights before 2017. As part of the revamp, the state will soon have five international airports, the maximum in any state of the country. In just three years, five other airports including Gorakhpur, Hindon, Agra, Prayagraj and Bareilly have become functional in UP.

### **IMMINENT PROJECTS**

The top tourist destinations in Uttar Pradesh are Agra, Vrindavan, Mathura, Varanasi, Kushinagar, Allahabad, Lucknow, Ayodhya, Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Sarnath, Dudhwa, Mahoba and Deogarh. The major projects that the UP government is focusing in the aviation sector are:

Jewar International airport in Gautam Buddha Nagar district, is situated 80 kilometers from Indira Gandhi International airport (IGIA), New Delhi. The growing demand and passenger traffic created the need for a second airport in NCR. It is estimated to be the largest aerodrome in the country, billed to be around INR 29,560 crore with all the modern facilities. With two runways planned, the airport is expected to handle footfalls of 12 million passengers annually.

Kushinagar International airport has become operational as the 9th operational airport of the state. It was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently. Built at a cost of INR 260 crore, it has a runway length of over three kilometers



and is an important site for tourists from Buddhist countries as it is the place where Gautam Buddha attained 'Mahaparinirvana.'

Ayodhya International airport has been constructed at one of the most important Hindu pilgrimage site at Ayodhya and is among the most coveted and awaited projects in Uttar Pradesh at the moment. The central and state governments are preparing to start international airlines from Ayodhya from 2022.

Besides these, work on 10 new airports is progressing fast with the state government actively working on developing and operationalising airports at Jhansi, Azamgarh, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, Moradabad, Sonbhadra, Shravasti, Lalitpur, Bareilly and Saharanpur. Through these projects, Uttar Pradesh will play an important role in further fueling the national aviation sector. The state has invested Rs. 2307 crores in the civil aviation sector for upgrading the air strips as well as developing aerodromes in the upcoming three-years. The vision is to open the defence airbase for civil use, reducing the distance on various air routes and making 50 airbases available operational under the UDAN scheme reforms.

### **OBJECTIVES OF CIVIL AVIATION POLICY 2017**

**Create robust infrastructure:** Provide adequate incentives for business development, foreign tourism and robust infrastructure. This will help in realizing the untapped potential in the aviation sector for domestic industries as well as trade from Uttar Pradesh.

**Improve air connectivity:** Development of new routes to facilitate inter-connectivity of airports of the state of Uttar Pradesh by linking major pilgrimage and tourism spots within the state.

**Boost agro-exports and air cargos:** Perishable goods, manufactured products and e-commerce businesses in UP will gain by the mushrooming cargo hubs and fulfillment centers that come up with the development of new airports.

**Foreign Direct Investments in aviation:** The policy aims to leverage on liberal FDI norms in India's aviation sector to attract more investments into the upcoming projects in UP.

### **WORKFORCE GENERATION**

Growth in civil aviation industry will also lead to demand for more trained work force including pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, cabin crew, IT and support service professionals, airport related professionals etc. The state government will be promoting aviation related courses in premier institutes / universities in U.P. including IITs, NIT and universities like Lucknow, Allahabad, Aligarh, Agra, BHU, Meerut to generate

skilled work force and professionals to meet the growing demands in the state's civil aviation sector.

At present, Uttar Pradesh is home to IGRUA in Amethi and six other private flying training academies (3 at Aligarh, 1 at Faizabad, Sultanpur and Kanpur each) and are conducting commercial pilot license (CPL) courses approved by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). UP also has the Aeronautical Training Institute (ATI) at Lucknow, which is a state-owned entity and provides diploma courses for AME in Airframe and Engine, avionics, helicopter operations and power plant trainees.

As seen since 2017, the government in Uttar Pradesh has made rapid strides in ensuring better governance, availability and creation of new infrastructure such as roads, rails and airports to help the country's largest state to meet its immense potential and position Uttar Pradesh as a major investment hub in India. The state's transforming aviation sector is a shining example of this upward trajectory.

### **JEWAR: ON THE LIMELIGHT**

The civil aviation hub at Jewar, which includes the upcoming Noida International Airport on 5,000 hectares along Yamuna Expressway, is set to get bigger as the Yamuna expressway industrial development authority (Yeida) has decided to add another 1,000 hectares to the project by merging three proposed industrial sectors with the airport plan.

The airport is billed to be the largest in India, and will be the National Capital Region's third, after the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) and the civilian terminal at Ghaziabad's Hindon airport. In December 2020, the Uttar Pradesh government approved the design of the airport at Jewar.

"Earlier, we planned the aviation hub on 5,000 hectares. But now, due to demand for more industrial land and other requirements, we have decided to merge three industrial cities planned in sectors 8, 30 and 31 with this project. These three sectors were planned on around 1,000 hectares. Therefore, now the aviation hub, which includes the Noida international airport, will be developed on 6,000 hectares. We are revising the master plan of the civil aviation hub accordingly," tells Arun Vir Singh, chief executive officer of Yeida and NIAL, the nodal agency of the UP government to monitor the airport project.

The three sectors were among four proposed industrial cities to be built along the periphery of the Noida international airport. Officials said the fourth city, Sector 7, will now be built as a separate project.

"It was merged with the aviation hub as we realised MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) of aircrafts has a huge potential to create millions of jobs in this region for skilled workforce," says Singh.

MRO units ensure service worthiness of an aircraft with facilities for inspection and maintenance. The upcoming MRO facility at Jewar will be the first of its kind in Uttar Pradesh, explains officials.

Yeida and NIAL have already handed over 1,334 hectares of the total 6,000 hectares to Yamuna International airport private Limited -- a special purpose vehicle set up to undertake the airport project -- which has begun constructing boundary walls and levelling the land. The airport project is expected to be completed by 2024 and will entail an investment of around ₹20,000 crore.

Further, the authorities also plan to develop a smart city -- modelled on European cities -- on 1,400 hectares of land near the airport.

“In the European model, we have commercial spaces on the ground and residential condominiums above it. The smart city near the airport will be a one of its kind urban development with all world-class facilities, zero waste discharge into soil, and best commuting options,” informs Singh.

## **BOOSTING ECONOMY**

Singh describes the airport project will boost the local economy, creating jobs for residents and business opportunities for investors.

“The local economy will witness a seven-fold jump as huge investment is being made by foreign and domestic investors after the airport project picked up pace at Jewar. We have received around ₹15,000 crore in the last three years. This region (along Yamuna Expressway) will generate around 500,000 jobs in the next three years,” explains Singh.

He further elucidates that several new projects, including warehouses, entertainment zones, amusement parks, apparel parks, logistics hub and film city, will come up once the airport becomes operational in 2024.

“The airport will create rental incomes for farmers and other stakeholders because MNCs and industrialists are on way to set up their businesses. The airport at Jewar will fuel growth just like the IGI airport did for south Delhi and Gurugram,” says Singh.

## **STUMBLING BLOCKS**

Land acquisition for the project was a challenge initially as farmers refused to part with their land and demanded compensation four times the existing circle rate. Officials said that with negotiations running into a stalemate, Jewar MLA Dhirendra Singh held multiple meetings with farmers to push for acquisition.

The MLA explains, “We are also requesting the government to set up a skill university for creation of jobs for the local youngsters.”

In his comments last month when the state government finalised the airport’s design,

Christoph Schnellmann, CEO of the Yamuna International Airport Pvt Limited, said, “We are committed to developing the aviation ecosystem in India, with an investment of ₹5,700cr for phase I of the airport development. The Noida International Airport will hold strategic importance and will be an economic engine for growth in Uttar Pradesh and India.”

In November 2019, Zurich Airport International AG (ZAIA) won the contract to build and operate the airport in Greater Noida for a period of 40 years, which includes the phase one construction period of four years.

Last year, a consortium of Nordic Office of Architecture, Grimshaw, Haptic and consultants STUP were selected to design the airport. The new passenger terminal is aimed to be ‘India’s greenest airport’ reaching the goal of carbon-net-zero targets as well as efficient and enhanced passenger flows and digital services.

Officials have said that Jewar, situated along the Yamuna Expressway, will be connected to the Eastern Peripheral Expressway, the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway and also have a Metro link to Greater Noida besides the ambitious high-speed Delhi-Varanasi bullet train with a station at the Noida airport.

## CATCHING UP

Uttar Pradesh has allotted Rs 2,307 crore for civil aviation sector. India’s aviation sector has been growing rapidly over the last decade. In 2018, the domestic passenger growth was at a whopping 18.6%. Leading the domestic market in aviation is Uttar Pradesh.

Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in India in terms of both land area and population has allotted Rs 2,307 crore for the civil aviation sector while compared to Rs 347 crores in 2016. Till the year 2017, only Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur and Agra airports were operational in the state, over the next 03 years, Prayagraj, Kanpur and Hindon Airport have been given operational status and a total of 63 cities have been connected to air services from 25 cities.

A total of 21 airports will be operated in UP in the coming years. Construction work of selected Aligarh, Azamgarh, Shravasti, Moradabad, Chitrakoot and Myorpur (Sonbhadra) airports under RCS will be completed by April 2021. Development of new airports in Jhansi, Lalitpur and Saharanpur districts is underway.

Surendra Singh, Secretary, Civil Aviation, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said “The remarkable growth of the civil aviation sector in the past 4 years is due to Hon’ble Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s commitment and vision to make Uttar Pradesh a civil aviation hub. We have been focused on the development of the airports in every division with the aim to provide air connectivity to every resident of the state. We are further

promoting training institutions in the field of civil aviation and also attracting investments in the Manufacture, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) sector. Uttar Pradesh is at the stage where it will further fuel the national aviation sector.”

By 2025, Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of operational airports both domestic and international. From 1950 to 2017, the state only had 4 working airports.

Uttar Pradesh govt is planning to make Ayodhya a tourist hub with Ram Mandir coming up there, for this govt released Rs 625 crore and 183 acres of land has been purchased to develop Ayodhya Airport for Airbus-321 and Boeing-787 aircraft.

### **CM YOGI'S PET PROJECT**

The NIA will have passenger terminals with 70 million capacity, 186 airport stands and a cargo terminal with one million tonne capacity. With NIA, Uttar Pradesh will have five international airports, the highest for any state in India. The state has eight operational airports while 13 airports and seven airstrips are under development. The state has three international airports - Lucknow, Varanasi and Kushinagar.

The Kushinagar airport was inaugurated by Modi on October 20, 2021. The work on Ayodhya airport is in full swing and it is likely to be completed in early 2022. The chief minister said there will be an investment of Rs 10,000 crore in the first phase and the total investment was estimated to be Rs 34000 crore. He said the project would help boost developmental activities in the entire western region of UP.

The NIA will be developed as an aviation hub with provision of all modern, efficient and high-tech facilities. After becoming fully operational, the NIA is to have aero and non-aero activities along with maintenance, repair and operation facilities. In close cooperation of the central and UP governments under the public private partnership model (PPP), the NIA will be executed by Zurich Airport International AG. The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) has been appointed as the nodal agency by the UP government for managing the project. Phase -1 of the airport will have a capacity to serve 12 million passengers a year and is slated to be completed in 36 months. The airport is a key infrastructure project of the Uttar Pradesh government. The NIA is located about 72 kilometres from Delhi's IGI Airport and 40 kilometres from the multi-nodal logistics hub at Dadri. The airport is close to the Yamuna Expressway which connects Greater Noida to Agra, Eastern Peripheral Expressway and it will have a link with the Delhi Expressway at Ballabgarh and Khurja-Jewar NH 91. It will also have a link to the dedicated freight corridor, Metro extension from Noida and a link to the proposed high-speed rail service between Delhi and Varanasi. The necessity for this prestigious project came up because of the problems being faced by IGI in terms of catering to increasing demand from the region. Sources in the Civil Aviation Ministry said

increasing air traffic and a spurt in the rate of domestic and international passengers have stretched the operations of IGI in terms of facilities and space. The NIA would require 3500 acres of land and in the first phase 1327 hectares of land would be developed. According to sources, while the project will have the potential to become a key air cargo gateway to north India, it would also develop an ecosystem consisting of the state-of-the-art infrastructure and product offerings supported by best-in-class procedures". NIA will be developed as India's first net-zero emissions airport and arrangements are being made for a dedicated forest park along with preservation of all native species.

### **ONLY STATE WITH FIVE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS**

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Noida International Airport (NIA) in Jewar on November 25, UP spread its wings to have five international airports - the highest in the country.

This comes days after the PM inaugurated the Kushinagar international airport to put east UP on a global tourist map.

The Yogi Adityanath government also seeks to fast track the Ayodhya international airport even as the state gears up for the assembly elections in the next few months.

Earlier, only Lucknow and Varanasi were categorised as international in UP. Chief Minister Yogi, who is scheduled to visit the inauguration ceremony site in Ruhi village on Tuesday, will hold a meeting to oversee preparations.

Touted as one of the flagship projects in the National Capital Region, the Jewar airport is projected to come up as a big civil aviation hub with four helipads and five runways. Constructed over an area of more than 3,000 acres, the airport will be built and operated by the Switzerland-based Zurich Airport International AG.

In the first phase, which is scheduled to be completed by 2024, the airport will have the capacity to handle 12 million passenger passengers per annum. The airport is also projected to ease out air traffic congestion at the IGI international airport in Delhi.

Projected as India's largest airport after its completion, Projected as India's largest airport after its completion, the NIA is located about 72 km from the existing IGI airport in New Delhi, 40 km from Noida and about 40 km from the multi-modal logistics hub at Dadri.

It will have multi-modal connectivity as it is close to the existing Yamuna Expressway (Greater Noida to Agra), close to Eastern Peripheral Expressway and it will have link with Delhi-Mumbai Expressway at Ballabgarh, Khurja-Jewar NH 91, link to dedicated freight corridor, Metro Extension from Noida to dedicated freight corridor, Metro Extension from Noida to NIA and link with the proposed High Speed Rail (Delhi-Varanasi) at the airport terminal.

A state government spokesperson said that the state has managed to put in place a “world-class connectivity” and infrastructure in a short period of less than five years.

“The state had only two international airports since 2012 when Varanasi got the distinction after Lucknow,” he said.

At present, UP has eight operational airports, while 13 airports and 7 airstrips are being developed. The operational airports handling commercial flights in UP are Lucknow, Varanasi, Kushinagar, Gorakhpur, Agra, Kanpur, Prayagraj and Hindon (Ghaziabad).

“This is also in sync government’s commitment to ensure uninterrupted multi-modal connectivity on land, railways, water and air.

Indian Civil Aviation is counted among one of the fastest-growing Civil Aviation industries in the world. It is the world’s third-largest domestic aviation market.

As per a report by the International Air Transport Association, the Indian Civil Aviation market is expected to overtake China and the United States as the world’s third-largest air passenger market by 2030. This might not even be too far, given the scale and speed of investment that is being undertaken by the government of India since the past few years.

As per data by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, “between April 2000 and June 2021, FDI inflow in India’s air transport sector (including air freight) reached US\$ 3.06 billion.

## **GRADUAL, BUT ROBUST**

The air connectivity to Uttar Pradesh has increased 3-fold in the last four years, with as many as 68 connections now to domestic destinations from eight functional airports in the state, against just four operational airports four years back.

The sustained efforts of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have started showing positive results as far as regional air connectivity is concerned and consequently, the number of passengers also increased by 27.2 percent in the year 2018-19 as compared to the year 2016-17.

By 2025, Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of airports both domestic and international with a total of 21 airports including 5 international airports

The remarkable growth of the civil aviation sector in the past 4 years is the outcome of UP CM Yogi Adityanath’s commitment and vision to make Uttar Pradesh a civil aviation hub. The Yogi Government focused on the development of the airports in every division with the aim to provide air connectivity to every resident of the state.

The thrust to air travel emanates from the Centre’s regional connectivity scheme and the proactive stance taken by the Adityanath government to boost the aviation sector for tourism and industrial development.

In the last four years, there has been a rapid expansion of air services with development of 17 new airports. Till the year 2017, only Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur and Agra airports were operational in the state.

Over the next 3 years, Prayagraj, Kanpur and Hindon Airport have been given operational status and a total of 63 cities have been connected to air services from 25 cities.

Under the Udaan-4 scheme, the state has got 18 new routes. The government has provided an incentive of Rs 34 crore under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).

Construction work of selected Aligarh, Azamgarh, Shravasti, Moradabad, Chitrakoot and Myorpur (Sonbhadra) airports under RCS will be completed by April 2021. Development of new airports in Jhansi, Lalitpur and Saharanpur districts is underway.

Kanpur, Saharanpur, Jhansi and Lalitpur airports will be completed soon. New civil terminals and new 4-lane runways are being constructed on 48 acres of land in collaboration with AAI to expand the air services at Kanpur Airport. For the construction of a civil enclave at Sarsawa Airport in Saharanpur district, an area purchased at a cost of Rs 64 crores has been given to AAI. Besides, the development of Jhansi and Lalitpur airports is also underway. These projects will also accelerate the development of bulk drug parks and the Defence Industrial Corridors. With this, 12 other airports are also being developed by the government.

To expedite the completion of the much-touted infrastructure project- Noida International Airport, the UP government has acquired 1334 hectares of land from its own resources. In addition, 48.097 hectares of land was acquired through rehabilitation and resettlement.

Under phase-1, 1,334 hectares of land was already handed over to the Switzerland-based Zurich International AG which has been roped in as the developer of the project

According to the plan of the project, under phase-1, the company would lay down two runways, commercial space, halls and other supporting facilities for the passengers so that the operations can be started by 2023-24 and in phase-2 passenger capacity will be increased and an additional runway will be constructed through which the state will get a revenue of Rs 400.97 per passenger.

To facilitate the services of Airbus-321 and Boeing-787 aircrafts, the UP government has released a total of Rs 947.91 crore to purchase 600 acres of land desired in order to develop the Maryada Purushottam Shriram Airport, in the city of Lord Rama, Ayodhya. So far, a total of 230 acres of land has been purchased.

## **BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE**

The Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh has got the necessary clearances from aviation regulator DGCA to operate international flights from the facility. Kushinagar



airport's status as an international facility, will offer improved connectivity to the important Buddhist pilgrimage site. Once this airport begins operating international flights, it will become the third functional international facility in the state.

A total of 590 acres of land was purchased by the state government and it sanctioned an amount of Rs 210 crore for the construction of the airport and got the development works done at a rapid pace. The operation of the airport will create many employment opportunities in the eastern region of the state and will ensure the social and economic development of the entire region.

Kushinagar is an important Buddhist pilgrim destination, and is believed to be the final resting place of Gautam Buddha. It is also at the centre of a Buddhist tourist circuit, which includes Lumbini (Nepal), Sarnath and Bodhgaya.

Other Buddhist destinations nearby include Nalanda, Sravasti and Kapilavastu.

An inaugural flight of Sri Lankan Airlines landed at the airport earlier in the day, bringing a large contingent of Buddhist monks and Sri Lankan Ministers, including Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa, nephew of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and son of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. They met Mr. Modi at an event at the Mahaparinirvana Temple here.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated the Kushinagar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh, which will help connect key Buddhist pilgrimage sites.

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“There is a special focus on the development of places associated with Lord Buddha through better connectivity, and creation of facilities for devotees. Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha, is not far from here. Sarnath, where Lord Buddha gave the first sermon, is also within a radius of 100-250 km. Bodh Gaya, where Buddha attained enlightenment, is also a few hours away. With the launch of this airport, I, as a representative of Poorvanchal, have also fulfilled one of my commitments to this region,” Modi said.

With the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election slated for early next year, several Union Ministers had also flown in from Delhi.

Apart from Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi, Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal were present.

In his first comments on Air India since privatisation, Modi said, “the decision on Air India will give new energy to the aviation sector in the country.”

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said, “This will be Uttar Pradesh’s ninth airport, seven of which have been developed in the past seven years alone. The State will get 11 more airports in the years to come, including two international ones.”

Though the airport is yet to be connected with international destinations, Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Rajiv Bansal, told that Thailand sends the largest number of tourists to this region, and he expected charter flights from there.

On the sidelines of the Kushinagar airport inauguration, Namal Rajapaksa presented to Modi a Sinhala-Tamil-English translation of the Bhagavad Gita.

The Sri Lankan delegation also brought relics from the ‘Rajaguru Sri Subhuthi Maha Vihara’, a famed Buddhist shrine located 40 km south of Colombo.

## SETTING UP AIRCRAFT MRO HUBS

The state government is in advanced talks with the Centre for setting up two maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) hubs in Jewar and Meerut.

The state government has actively been pursuing setting up an MRO hub with the Centre as a competitive domestic MRO industry, which will cater to civil as well as defence aircraft and help airlines reduce maintenance expenses.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced measures to boost the domestic aviation sector and steps to make the country a hub for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of aircraft.

The Uttar Pradesh government is in talks with an American and a French company regarding setting up MRO facilities. Both the companies are ready, but have been asking for incentives such as GST relaxations. For this, the Centre needs to tweak its policies on MROs.

The MRO in Jewar will cater to bigger aircraft, while the facility in Meerut will cater to smaller ones.

Also, there is no issue of shortage of land parcel in the state; so accommodating both the companies is not going to be a problem.

Also, Jewar International Airport in the National Capital Region has been conceived as the biggest civil airport project in Asia. An MRO complex has already been incorporated in the techno-feasibility study conducted by PWC and was the basis for global bidding of this PPP. The airport project has been awarded to Zurich Airport

International for development and is expected to generate revenue of Rs one lakh crore in 30 years post operational in 2023.

Presently, most of the MROs in India provide only basic A&B check services. For advanced services, airlines use MRO hubs in South East Asia, Sri Lanka and West Asia. Most of the scheduled commercial airlines in India have long-term contracts with MRO service providers abroad.

## **HUMONGOUS INVESTMENTS**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Noida International Airport (NIA) in Gautam Buddha Nagar, the airport is being developed by Yamuna International Airport Private Limited (YIAPL), a 100 per cent subsidiary of the project's Swiss concessionaire Zurich International Airport AG.

Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd (YIAPL) is developing Noida International Airport under the PPP model in close partnership with the Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Government of India.

The airport is spread over more than 1300 hectares of land and the completed first phase of the airport will have a capacity to serve around 1.2 crore passengers a year and work on it is scheduled to be completed by 2024.

The airport will be located almost 72 km from Delhi's Indira Gandhi airport - and about 40 km from Noida.

The airport is being made in line with PM's vision towards boosting connectivity and creating a future-ready aviation sector and help establish Uttar Pradesh on the global map.

This inauguration will make Uttar Pradesh the only Indian state with five international airports. The Noida International Airport will be the second international airport to come up in the national capital region, after Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport.

India's first net zero emissions airport will also have the provision of multi-modal seamless connectivity.

The projected cost of the proposed project is estimated at around ₹15000- 20000 crore and the development of the first phase of the airport is being done at a cost of around ₹10,050 crore.

Speaking on the occasion of the foundation laying stone ceremony of Noida International Airport, PM Modi said, "The Noida International Airport will become the logistic gateway of North India. It will act as one of the pillars of the National Gati-Shakti Master Plan."

The Prime Minister further said that be it poor or middle-class farmer or trader, labourer or entrepreneur, everyone gets a lot of benefits from it.

Modi took to Twitter to say that the airport will significantly boost commerce, connectivity and tourism in the state.

Jyotiraditya M. Scindia while addressing the gathering at the Inaugural event said that, “Noida International Airport will be a multi-modal connectivity hub. It will create employment opportunities for more than 1 lakh people. Soon we’ll see 17 airports including an international airport at Ayodhya in the state” and thanked the Prime Minister.

Civil Aviation Minister added, “The Jewar airport will host multi-modal connectivity and bring in investments worth ₹60,000 crore to UP.”

According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the International Airport near Jewar will be developed as an Aviation Hub which is conceived to provide all the modern, efficient and hi-tech facilities. The airport area when fully operational is expected to have Aero and Non-Aero activities along with MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operations) facilities.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had also said that he expects investments of ₹10,000 cr after the first phase and to ₹35,000 crore once the airport is fully built.

The airport has run into controversy earlier when farmers claimed that the proposed construction took over their cultivable land. The protesting farmers have camped in tents 700 metres from the airport. Also in a surprise turn of event a local BJP MLA had admitted to acquiring land in a hurry.

## **AS A DRONE MANUFACTURING HUB**

In a bid to boost Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Uttar Pradesh government is planning to set up several drone manufacturing units in the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that drones could be useful in various sectors such as agriculture, disaster management, health, maintenance of law and order, among others.

He directed the Infrastructure and Industrial Development Department to take necessary action for the establishment of drone manufacturing units.

Chairing a high-level review meeting, the CM said, “Considering the importance of ‘drones’ in various fields including disaster relief, agriculture, maintenance of law and order, a concrete action plan should be prepared to establish a drone manufacturing unit in the state.”

The Chief Minister has also asked the state to prepare its own manual. At present, there are no clear rules for flying drones in the state.

Instructing the officials, the CM further said that drones due to their accessibility, ease of use, can make a significant contribution to employment and economic development in remote and inaccessible areas. Also, there is also huge employment

potential in the field of drone manufacturing. Many companies want to set up their units in Uttar Pradesh, he said.

The CM asked the officials to approach other investors too and suggested that the Defence Corridor can be a useful area for this industry.

Stating the need for a clear policy for private or commercial use of drones, the Chief Minister directed the Home Department to prepare drone manuals. The CM said that the Union Civil Aviation Ministry has issued a policy in this regard. Accordingly, the state government should also prepare drone rules.

The manual should have clear provisions regarding the issuance of a drone airworthiness certificate, maintenance certificate, acceptance of existing drones, operator permits, student remote pilot license, remote pilot instructor authorization, etc. to the drone users, said the CM.

He also directed to start diploma/certificate courses for training drone technology in ITIs and polytechnic institutes. "If necessary, the help of IIT Kanpur should be taken," he added.

As drones can be controlled remotely and can be flown at varying distances and heights, they make perfect candidates to take on some of the trickiest jobs in the world.

In the agriculture sector, drones would be useful in spraying pesticides in an effective way like a mist so that the pesticides will deposit only on the plants or crops. During manual spraying, more quantity of pesticides is used which sometimes harms the soil as well as plants.

Drones can also be used in maintaining law and order and doing surveillance for VIP movement as these devices have the innate ability to hover around locations without drawing much attention from the people. Thus, this can be used for surveillance or for public safety.

Drones were used to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, especially for surveillance and spraying of disinfectants, among others.

### **TOTING UP 12MN PASSENGER TRAFFIC EVERY YEAR**

The Union civil aviation secretary has said that a traffic of 12 million passengers each year is expected between the first phase and the final phase of the Noida international airport in Uttar Pradesh's Jewar, which is expected to be ready for flight operations by 2024.

"The traffic of 12 million passengers per year is expected in the first phase and by the completion of the final phase, i.e. between 2040 and 2050, the capacity of Jewar airport will be to handle 70 million passengers per year," civil aviation secretary Rajiv Bansal said.

The statement was made in the backdrop of the announcement that international passenger flights may be normalised by the end of this year. Bansal, however, clarified that the Jewar airport will start with domestic flights.

“Project cost of phase 1 is Rs8,916 crore. The UP government is spending Rs4,326 crore on acquisition of land, rehabilitation and resettlement. PM Modi is personally monitoring the project,” the aviation secretary said.

The Jewar airport is being built on 1,334 hectares of land, Bansal said. “It’s a greenfield project that’ll be implemented in four phases. The construction of the first phase is to be completed in 36 month and the operational period of the first phase will be 2023-27,” he added.

Earlier on Tuesday, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath said that the proposed airport in Jewar would be ready for flights to take off and land by 2024. With this, Uttar Pradesh would be the only state in India to have five international air transit hubs.

The airport in Gautam Budh Nagar district will be located 72km from the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, 40km from Noida and about the similar distance from the multi-modal logistics hub at Dadri, and is conceived as the multi-modal connectivity hub owing to its proximity to the existing Yamuna Expressway and the Eastern Peripheral Expressway and will also be linked to Delhi-Mumbai Expressway at Ballabgarh in Haryana’s Faridabad district.

## **AS NEW INVESTMENT HUB**

Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the new investment hub in India with some of the biggest businessmen, industrialists and entrepreneurs showing their interest in investing in the state.

In pursuit of creating an investor-friendly environment, Uttar Pradesh has climbed up to the second rank in Ease of Doing Business (EODB) index. The state government has also launched a single-window system named Nivesh Mitra Portal where there are over 70 services of about 20 departments. Moreover, the state does not have any dearth of resources or labour. With the kind of population Uttar Pradesh has, the investors already have a gigantic consumer base to target.

The state government has been successful in facilitating investment in defence, health, MSME, agriculture, handloom, power and other sectors. Besides, the policy of the government has been to pursue eco-friendly solar power. Also, Uttar Pradesh has been successful in implementing 186 out of 187 reforms suggested under BRAP 19 (Business Reform Action Plan) by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) of the Central government.

Many major investment plans have also come to the state government for the next few years. The defence manufacturing corridor has an investment potential of Rs 50,000 crore. New and improved MSME policies are promoting industrial development at all levels across UP.

Defence, aerospace, warehousing, data centre, electric vehicles and pharma are fast emerging as new investment sectors in Uttar Pradesh. Similarly, traditional sectors like electronics, information technology (IT), food processing, dairy, textiles, tourism and film are also attracting investment. There is also investment potential in solar energy, bio-fuels and civil aviation. Most economists believe that the way to make India a five trillion dollar economy passes through Uttar Pradesh.

### **LEADING DOMESTIC MARKET IN AVIATION**

Uttar Pradesh has allotted Rs 2,307 crore for civil aviation sector. India's aviation sector has been growing rapidly over the last decade. In 2018, the domestic passenger growth was at a whopping 18.6%. Leading the domestic market in aviation is Uttar Pradesh.

Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in India in terms of both land area and population has allotted Rs 2,307 crore for the civil aviation sector while compared to Rs 347 crores in 2016. Till the year 2017, only Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur and Agra airports were operational in the state, over the next 03 years, Prayagraj, Kanpur and Hindon Airport have been given operational status and a total of 63 cities have been connected to air services from 25 cities.

A total of 21 airports will be operated in UP in the coming years. Construction work of selected Aligarh, Azamgarh, Shravasti, Moradabad, Chitrakoot and Myorpur (Sonbhadra) airports under RCS will be completed by April 2021. Development of new airports in Jhansi, Lalitpur and Saharanpur districts is underway.

Surendra Singh, Secretary, Civil Aviation, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said "The remarkable growth of the civil aviation sector in the past 4 years is due to Hon'ble Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's commitment and vision to make Uttar Pradesh a civil aviation hub. We have been focused on the development of the airports in every division with the aim to provide air connectivity to every resident of the state. We are further promoting training institutions in the field of civil aviation and also attracting investments in the Manufacture, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) sector. Uttar Pradesh is at the stage where it will further fuel the national aviation sector."

By 2025, Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of operational airports both domestic and international. From 1950 to 2017, the state only had 4 working airports.

Uttar Pradesh government is planning to make Ayodhya a tourist hub with Ram Mandir coming up there, for this government released Rs 625 crore and 183 acres of

land has been purchased to develop Ayodhya Airport for Airbus-321 and Boeing-787 aircraft.

### **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF INDIAN AVIATION INDUSTRY**

Civil Aviation is emerging as one of the major pillars to boost India's economic growth and is currently on the path to becoming one of the world's most lucrative aviation markets. It has set numerous milestones by overcoming many challenges to achieve this status.

Civil Aviation Industry - one of India's best shields against COVID19 Pandemic

The Government of India undertook the Vande Bharat Mission during the COVID19 pandemic, to repatriate Indian nationals and also to facilitate the travel of passengers between India and various parts of the world.

In terms of medicine delivery, the government waged war against COVID19 by introducing the 'Lifeline Udan' flights that transported essential medical cargo in remote parts of the country. Under this scheme, around 600 flights flew more than 5 lakh km and transported about 1,000 tons of essential cargo during the COVID19 period. The Aviation Industry combatted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by carrying enzymes, PPE kits, masks, medicines, and cargoes when states and union territories needed it the most during the nationwide lockdown.

### **REACHING TO THE FAR EAST**

One of the major goals of India's Civil Aviation Ministry is to bring benefits of Civil Aviation to the common people and provide affordable air connectivity to all. For this, the Government of India had announced Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) and UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) on 21st October 2016.

Currently, some 387 routes connecting 62 Airports including 6 Heliports and 2 Water Aerodromes have been made operational under RCS-UDAN Scheme.

### **CIVIL AVIATION WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Keeping the objective and goal of sustainable development in mind, the government of India has operationalised some Six Greenfield Airports in the last 3 years, while 5 are still under construction. The six greenfield airports are; Kannur Airport in Kerala (2018), Pakyong Airport in Sikkim (2018), Kalaburagi Airport in Karnataka (2019), Kurnool Airport in Andhra Pradesh (2021), Sindhudurg Airport in Maharashtra (2021) and Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh (2021).

Further, the construction of Greenfield airports at Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra, Mopa in Goa, Hirasar in Rajkot, Jewar(Noida) in Uttar Pradesh and Hollongi in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh are in progress.



Earlier in September, JetSetGo announced plans to make its flight operations carbon neutral by 2024 through a carbon management programme. Along the same lines, SpiceJet in June announced a target to fly 100 million domestic passengers on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) blend by 2030.

The government of India launched the “Krishi UDAN” scheme in August 2020 with an objective to aid farmers in transporting agricultural products on international and national routes to would improve the value realisation.

In the Union Budget 2021-22, the government of India furthered the scope for ‘Krishi Udaan’ in convergence with the “Operation Green Scheme.” Under this, an air freight subsidy of 50% for agri-perishables will be provided to North-East states and 4 Himalayan states/UTs.

The expansion of product coverage will boost the ‘Krishi Udaan’ scheme, further improving the air cargo transportation from these states.

In addition to this, the government is planning to start 14 more water aerodromes across the country. This comes after the successful launch of seaplane service by Prime Minister Modi in October 2020 between the Statue of Unity near Kevadiya in Gujarat’s Narmada district and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.

Instrumental initiatives for continuous growth of Civil Aviation Industry

Airports Authority of India and FICCI in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs will organise Wings India 2022 from 24th to 27th March 2022 at Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad.

The theme of the event will be India@75: “New Horizon for Aviation Industry” which aims to bring together the key stakeholders of the Global Aviation market, International regulators, States Governments and business associations as a group representing airlines. This would facilitate direct interaction with various airlines, airport operators, cargo operators and other players at a common platform.

To conclude, we can say that the Indian Civil Aviation industry has witnessed robust growth over the past few years, contributing significantly to the economic development of the nation. It is expected to play an instrumental role in connecting Indians to the farthest corners of the country and around the globe while also bringing people from across the globe to discover and invest in the huge business and tourism opportunities to the country.

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भयमुक्त समाज हमारा संकल्प  
**सुरक्षित नारी**  
**इसका पहला विकल्प**



मिशन शक्ति से प्रदेश की नारियां  
हो रहीं सुरक्षित और सशक्त

**सोच ईमानदार, काम दमदार**





# 1 करोड़ टैबलेट/स्मार्टफोन का उपहार

## युवाओं के साथ योगी सरकार



सोच ईमानदार, काम दमदार

