UTTAR PRADESH
THE POWERHOUSE OF INDIAN ECONOMY

JULY 2021

Building UP through investment, reforms and process simplification

The Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) is one of the most important government agencies engaged in making UP attractive for potential investors. The authority's performance in the Covid-hit year 2020-21 was exemplary as it achieved more than 100% growth when most sectors were struggling. We spoke at length with the CEO of UPSIDA, **Mayur Maheshwari**, *IAS. Excerpts:*

In the past four years, UPSIDA has emerged as the key agency in ensuring a pro-investment environment, attracting industries in the state. What are the main responsibilities of the authority and what is it doing to attract industries?

The Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) and the Department of Infrastructure and Industrial Development are responsible for the development of industrial infrastructure in the state. Core responsibility of UPSIDA is acquiring land and developing it into industrial areas and townships equipped with all infrastructural facilities required to run industries. In its endeavour to provide an ecosystem of healthy investment environment UPSIDA is reaching out to investors by providing developed plots at competitive prices in strategically located industrial areas equipped with Geographical Information system. With a transparent online allotment system, the Authority ensures availability of electricity and water connections, industry-specific CETPs/STPs and other post-allotment online industrial area services. It also has a dedicated Investors facilitation cell.

What is the volume of investments coming to UP through UPSIDA in last four years? Also, what is the kind of direct or indirect employment created through these ventures?

In the past four years, i.e. April 2017 to March 2021, the UPSIDA has facilitated 1,039 firms to set up their operations in different parts of the state. These industries have cumulatively brought in investments worth Rs. 6,326 crore. These new industrial units have created around 65,000 direct and indirect job opportunities.
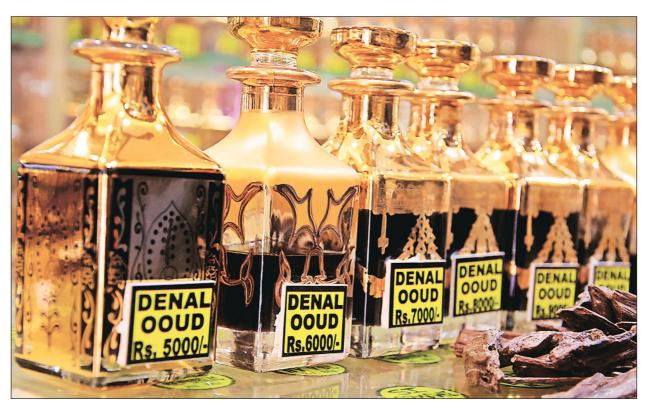
The UPSIDA business more than doubled in FY 2020-21, that was largely marred by COVID

WITH A TRANSPARENT ONLINE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM, THE AUTHORITY ENSURES AVAILABILITY OF ELECTRICITY AND WATER, AND OTHER SERVICES

lockdowns, when activities in many sectors came to a halt. How did you achieve that?

Thanks to commitment and hard work of the UPSIDA team, during the Covid-hit year 2020-21, the UPSIDA facilitated 441 new industrial units in the state marking a more than 100 per cent increment on number of units in the previous financial year. These industries have brought in investments of Rs. 2,694 crore which marks a 68 % growth on previous year. Currently in different stages of commencement of operations, these new units have a potential of 35,545 direct employment opportunities and that marks a more than 244% growth. The authority could achieve the feat largely due to offering all its 31 services to the entrepreneurs online and in a time-bound framework. Policy reforms and process simplifications in consonance with the Chief Minister's thrust on incentivizing entrepreneurs too contributed significantly in attracting more investors.

What exactly is UPSIDA's role in the state's new single-window system for investors and industries in the state? Has it made UPSIDA more accessible to existing industries and potential investors?

The single-window policy for investors and industries was the outcome of the government's interaction under leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with the industrialists and investors in 2018. The exercise was undertaken as pre-cursor to the efforts of attracting investments in a big way for rapid industrialization of the state. In order to ensure a hassle-free experience to potential investors in getting necessary clearances for setting up industries, a new single-window system was developed as an exercise under direct control of the office of the Chief Minister. The portal, Nivesh Mitra, that started with facilitating new investment and industrial proposals soon grew into a truly single-point outlet for all industrial and investment requirements for all classes of investors and industries. Services offered by various departments were integrated with the Nivesh Mitra. As the state's premium authority for development of industrial infrastructure, integration of all 31 UPSIDA services with the Nivesh

INTEGRATION OF ALL 31 UPSIDA SERVICES WITH THE NIVESH MITRA WAS OF VERY HIGH VALUE TO THE INVESTORS, HELPED ACCELERATE STATE'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mitra was of very high value to the investors. Though UPSIDA services were already digitally accessible, yet accessing those opportunities through the Nivesh Mitra means easier access for investors. It has definitely helped accelerate state's economic growth.

UPSIDA has created a 'Land Bank' in the state. How much land is available in this bank and how has it helped UPSIDA? Is it related to the idea of regional balancing in UP which has some industrially backward pockets?

Being a premier industrial promotion and infrastructure development authority of the government of UP, it is dedicated to development of Industries in the state. Currently it has more than 50,000 acres of land in 154 industrial areas across 52 Districts of Uttar Pradesh. In the past four years it has added 3,186 acres of land for industrial investments in Hamirpur, Prayagraj, Shahjahanpur, Badaun, Agra, Kanpur, Pilibhit and Kannauj. All these land parcels are situated in developed and under development Industrial areas and Integrated Industrial Townships or special Infrastructure schemes such as Plastic Park, Leather Park, Textile Park, Perfume Park, Agro Park etc.

In the recent past, the Authority has developed in-

frastructure in under-industrialized regions like the Bundelkhand and eastern UP to attract industries and investors to take benefit of various concessions available on establishing operations in these areas.

The UPSIDA is the nodal agency for implementation of some highly important projects and policies across the state. Would you please throw some light on these projects.

Besides being the nodal agency for industrial infrastructure in the state, UPSIDA is responsible for Warehousing and Logistics sector. The sector holds a lot of promises as UP is strategically located on the golden quadrilateral and has an intricate network of highways and expressways, largest rail network spanning over 8949 kms, national and international airports and access to India's first Waterway connecting Haldia in West Bengal to Prayagraj. Multi-modal Logistic Parks are being developed at strategic locations like Greater Noida which is intersection area for the Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC) and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC). An international Greenfield airport is also coming up in the area. Another multi-modal logistics hub is being developed near Varanasi. Warehousing facilities are also being created at many places. The Authority is developing two Integrated Manufacturing Clusters (IMCs) of more than 1,000 acres area along the AKIC. These are Agra Theme Park in Agra district and Saraswati Hi Tech City, Prayagraj.

The Authority is also the nodal authority for development of Private Industrial Parks that are being promoted with a view to create an infrastructure that fosters and attracts entrepreneurs of all scale and size. Such Private industrial parks are of high value in area-specific industries. UPSIDA appraises such Industrial Parks projects and approves grant of incentives and benefits under the state policies.

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Recently, the UPSIDA decided to establish an oxygen-grid across the state. What is the whole idea and how will it be benefiting the state in the long run.

The decision was taken in view of the high demand for medical oxygen in treatment of Covid-19 patients. Actively contributing to the government decision of setting up more than 400 oxygen plants, the UPSIDA planned to create an oxygen grid covering all regions of the state. Units in the grid shall ensure undisrupted supply of the life saving gas to hospitals in the state. Surplus oxygen may later be made available to industries and other states.

Under the scheme, highest priority was assigned to the investors coming up to set up medical oxygen units. The organization accepted online applications 24x7 and issued all required NOCs in record time. So far, 14 oxygen plants have been approved, while 16 others are in the pipeline. These units are going to invest more than Rs.750 crore. Units at Prayagraj, Rae Bareli, Badaun, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Kanpur Dehat, Kanpur City, Basti, Aligarh, Etah, Barabanki, Hardoi and Rae Bareli/Lucknow are likely to go operational very soon.

UPSIDA has also been working on creating green industrial areas. What initiatives has UPSIDA taken to make it sustainable and popular?

Ans: The authority has adopted futuristic approach by actively promoting zero carbon footprint and encouraging industries to adopt roof-top solar systems as well as rain water harvesting systems. Of late, the authority has been ensuring green cover in contemporary environment-conscious industrial areas and townships. The authority keenly ensures that no untreated industrial effluence is drained out and helps industries adopt environmentally sustainable practices.