Revival of Purvanchal Expressway

Why in news?

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Indian Prime Minister is about to lay foundation stone in Azamgarh for an expressway between Lucknow and Ghazipur.

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What is the plan of UP’s express highway?

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- Running 354 km, Express highway will complete a link by expressways between UP’s east and west.
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- Expressways from Noida in the west to Agra (165 km), and then from Agra to Lucknow (302 km), are already in place, before this extends to Ghazipur in the east, a total of over 800 km.
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- There is a proposal to link the expressway to Varanasi which will run through Azamgarh.
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- Being built at Rs 23,000 crore, it is expected to cut travel time between Lucknow and Ghazipur down to 4½ hours, from the current 6 hours.
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What is the status of the expressway?

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- Earlier in 2016 the then UP government has laid the foundation stone ahead of the Assembly elections, but the government had not acquired even half the land.
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- After the present state government took charge, it cancelled the earlier tender citing lack of land as the reason.
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- Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, the government has revived the project, making a few changes in the alignment, and replacing the name “Samajwadi Purvanchal Expressway” with simply “Purvanchal Expressway”.
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- When the first tender was floated in November 2015, the proposal was to connect Lucknow to Ballia on the Bihar border.
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- After a review, the plan was limited until Ghazipur in order to reduce the extent of clearances that would have been required.
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- The initial six packages (stretches) were increased to eight packages.
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- The new government changed the name and cancelled the tenders allotted on the ground that less that 40% land had been acquired.
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- The government, however, cancelled the process again, hoping to lower the construction cost further.
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- Ahead of the Azamgarh event, government sources said they expect to complete the tender process soon.
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Source: The Indian Express

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