

UP- First State to Fully Adopt GeM Platform | Uttar Pradesh | 12 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India to fully integrate the **Government e-**Marketplace (GeM) platform, enhancing transparency and efficiency in public procurement.

 This move is projected to save Rs 2,000 crore annually while fostering fair practices and empowering small businesses.

Key Points

- Prior tendering systems in Uttar Pradesh lacked uniformity and were vulnerable to misuse.
- GeM resolves these issues by enforcing standardized rules, thereby reducing the chances of violations or loopholes.
- The state government aims to scale up GeM usage across all state departments, ensuring compliance and enhancing accountability.
- Demonstrated Success:
 - The Uttar Pradesh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board used GeM to procure materials for 18 <u>Atal Residential Schools.</u>
 - These schools, serving students from Class 6 to intermediate level, now offer exemplary learning environments, including support for children orphaned during the <u>Covid-19 pandemic</u>.
- Policy Reforms and Compliance:
 - **Strict guidelines:** Policies prohibit practices such as offline contracts, price discovery bids, quantity-based bids, and unnecessary requests for samples during bid evaluations.
 - All state departments must procure at least 25% of their annual goods and services through GeM, with penalties for non-compliance.
 - Support for Small Enterprises: Relaxed tender eligibility criteria (e.g., turnover and past performance) create opportunities for micro and small enterprises (MSEs).
 - Worker Welfare Provisions: Policies mandate minimum wages, <u>Employee Provident</u> <u>Fund (EPF)</u>, and <u>Employee State Insurance (ESI)</u> benefits for outsourced employees.
 - Service providers cannot arbitrarily replace outsourced employees after hiring, ensuring job stability and fairness.
 - Anti-Collusion Measures: Collusion or bid manipulation incurs severe penalties, with provisions for reporting cases to the GeM team.
 - **Complaint Redressal Mechanism:** High-level committees, chaired by the Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary, review compliance-related grievances submitted via dedicated emails.
- Alignment with National Initiatives:
 - GeM adoption promotes the vision of <u>"Digital India"</u> by enhancing transparency and accountability in governance.
 - The platform supports local suppliers and fosters fair competition, aligning with the <u>"Make</u> <u>in India" initiative.</u>

Government e-Marketplace (GeM) Platform

 GeM facilitates online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organisations / PSUs.

- The initiative was launched in August 2016, by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
- The current version of GeM, i.e., **GeM 3.0 was launched on January 26, 2018.**
- It provides the tools of e-bidding, reverse e-auction and demand aggregation to facilitate the government users, achieve the best value for their money and aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.

Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah Dispute | Uttar Pradesh | 12 Dec 2024

Why in News?

A <u>Supreme Court</u> bench headed by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna is set to hear the case on <u>Krishna Janmabhoomi</u>-Shahi Idgah dispute in Mathura.

 It is among the oldest temple-mosque conflicts in India, with Hindus seeking to reclaim places of worship they allege were converted into mosques during invasions by Muslim rulers.

Key Points

- Background of the Dispute:
 - Mathura, considered the birthplace of Lord Krishna, had a temple built in 1618.
 - The Hindu side alleges that the temple was demolished in 1670 by <u>Mughal ruler</u> <u>Aurangzeb</u> to construct the Shahi Idgah Mosque.
 - The Hindu side claims the mosque **contains Hindu religious symbols and features**, including a lotus-shaped pillar and an image of the deity Sheshnag.
 - Also contends that the mosque was built on a part of the 13.37-acre
 - land belonging to the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust and has filed a suit seeking the mosque's relocation.

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- The Shahi Idgah Mosque Committee and the <u>UP Sunni Central Waqf Board</u> argue that the mosque does not stand on disputed land.
- Key Developments:
 - Court-Monitored Survey:
 - On 14th December 2023, the Allahabad <u>High Court</u> ordered a court-monitored survey of the Shahi Idgah Mosque.
 - The court appointed a commissioner to oversee the survey, based on claims that signs of the site's past as a Hindu temple exist on the mosque premises.

• Supreme Court Intervention:

- The Committee of Management, Trust Shahi Masjid Idgah, filed a petition challenging the High Court's order for the survey.
- On 16th January 2024, the Supreme Court stayed the High Court's order for the survey, citing vagueness in the Hindu side's application.

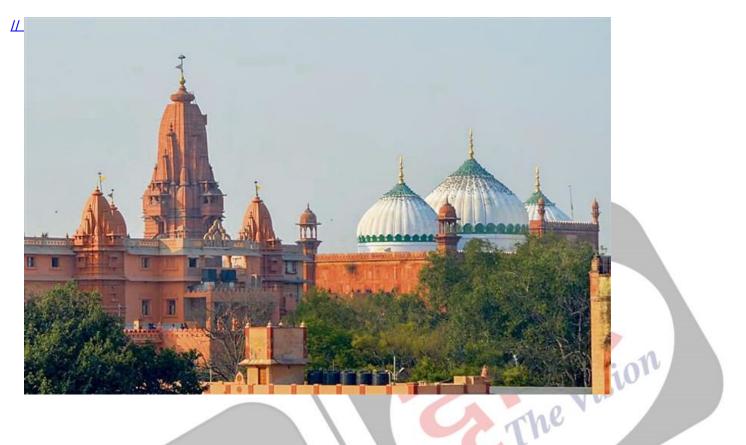
Arguments:

• Hindu Side's Position:

- They demanded that the High Court conduct an original trial, similar to the <u>Babri</u> <u>Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi case.</u>
- The Hindu side has urged the Supreme Court to allow the High Court to determine the modalities for the commission survey.
- Mosque Committee's Position:
 - The committee argues that the High Court's order for a survey is invalid as the suit

is barred under the Places of Worship Act, 1991 which prevents changes to the character of religious places as of 15th August 1947.

• The committee has also challenged the High Court's 26th May 2023, order transferring all dispute-related cases from the Mathura court to itself.



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