

# Top Current Affairs of 18 August 2020

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

**PM Narendra Modi delivered its 7th consecutive speech on 74th Independence Day; Announced Launch of New Projects**



On August 15, 2020, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi announced new projects in his 86 minutes speech (1 hour 26 minutes) during the 74th Independence Day from Red Fort, New Delhi. It was his 7th consecutive Independence Day speech and focused on the themes of “Aatma Nirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India)”, “Vocal for local” and “Make in India to Make for World”. The announcements are as follows:

- PM announced launch of National Digital Health Mission; rolled out in 6 UTs
- PM Modi announces optical fibre link connecting Lakshadweep, mainland India
- PM announced project for conservation of Gangetic Dolphins
- Launch of Project Lion to conserve Asiatic Lion announced by PM
- Committee set up to reconsider minimum age of marriage for women
- Ladakh, Leh, Kargil to be India’s first large carbon neutral region

## MP CM: Gwalior Chambal Expressway will be Named Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Chambal Progressway



On 16th August 2020, Addressing the gathering on the 2nd death anniversary of the former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan, announced that **the Gwalior Chambal Expressway** will be named as **Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Chambal Progressway**. Chouhan also stated that a grand statue of Vajpayee will be set up in Bhopal.

**Key People:** -VD Sharma, the state BJP president and Lok Sabha Member(Khajuraho), Suhas Bhagat, State general secretary of Madhya Pradesh paid the floral tribute along with the CM at the BJP party office.

## Indian Railways Constructing World's Tallest Pier Bridge Across River Ijai in Manipur



As a part of 111 kilometre-long Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal line project, Indian Railways' **North East Frontier Railway zone** is constructing world's tallest pier bridge, having height of **141 metres**,

across river Ijai in Manipur with an outlay of Rs 280 crore. After completion, it will surpass the existing height record of 139 meters of the Mala – Rijeka Viaduct, Montenegro in Europe. The 703 meters long bridge is located at the hilly terrain of **Marangching village** in Noney district, about 65 km west of Imphal, Manipur. The project will be completed in March 2022.

### **M/o SJ&E Launched ‘Nasha-Mukt Bharat’ Campaign; National Institute of Social Defence Building Inaugurated in New Delhi**



On August 15, 2020, the State Governments and the 272 District Collectors launched a seven-month-long anti-drugs campaign namely “Nasha Mukt Bharat” or “**Drug-Free India**” by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (SJE)** which will run till March 31, 2021. In order to give impetus to this launch, Union Minister of SJE Thaawarchand Gehlot addressed 272 district collectors, 31 State Secretaries as well as doctors, NGOs (non-government organizations) and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officers through videoconferencing. mNotably, the financial allocation of Rs. 43 crore in 2017 has been enhanced to **Rs. 260 crore** in 2020 to curb drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

## Union Minister Nitin Gadkari lays foundation stone for 13 highway projects in Manipur among other measures for the NE states



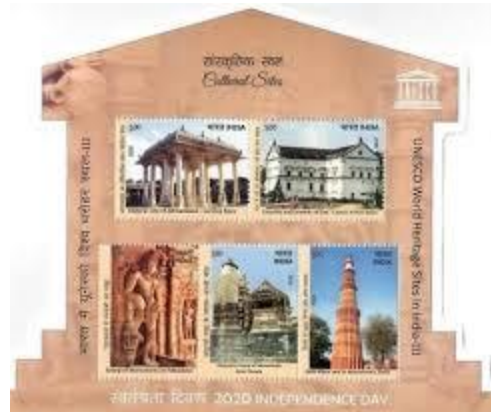
On 17th August, 2020 Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways Nitin Jairam Gadkari laid the foundation stone for 13 highway projects and inaugurated a Road Safety Project in Manipur through video conference. The meeting was presided by Manipur Chief minister **Nongthombam Biren Singh**, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North East Region Dr Jitendra Singh & Minister of State (MoS) for Road Transport & Highways General (Retd) V K Singh.

## UK Launched £3 million Innovation Challenge Fund for India to Tackle Covid-19 Challenges & Climate Change



On August 17, 2020, the government of United Kingdom (UK) launched a £3 million “**Innovation Challenge Fund 2020**” in India to support scientists in academia and industry to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. In this regard, tech innovators with connections to the AI-Data cluster in Karnataka and the future mobility cluster in Maharashtra will submit research and development proposals for tackling COVID-19 or which promote a greener planet till August 31, 2020. At least 6 grants up to £250,000 are expected to be awarded for projects lasting 12 months, with a proposed start in January 2021.

## India Post Issued 5 Commemorative Postage Stamps and 1 Miniature Sheet on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India-III



On August 15, 2020 **India Post** has issued **5 Commemorative Postage** Stamps namely: Historic City of Ahmedabad- Sarkhej Roza, Churches and Convents of Goa- Church of Bom Jesus, Group of Monuments at Pattadakal, Khajuraho Group of Monuments Javeri Temple and Qutb Minar its Monuments, Delhi. It also issued **1 miniature sheet** consisting of all the above stamps on **UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India-III.**

### Note:

- Group of Monuments at Pattadakal- Karnataka
- Khajuraho Group of Monuments Javeri Temple- Madhya Pradesh

## Piyush Goyal Virtually Inaugurated 4th edition of NPPC 2020: Digital Exhibitions and Conferences



**Piyush Goyal**, Union Commerce and Industry & Railways Minister virtually inaugurated the 4th edition of 2 day ‘**National Public Procurement Conclave (NPPC) 2020: Digital Exhibitions and Conferences**’, on August 9, 2020(the anniversary of GeM Establishment Day) under the theme “Technology enabled Govt Procurement -Towards efficiency, transparency, and Inclusiveness”.

- It is organized by Government e Marketplace (GeM), in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) through CII Hives Digital Platform.
- Digital Exhibitions & conference will be held from August 9 – September 30,2020.

## **BANKING & FINANCE**

### **PNB Launched ‘DIGITAL APNAYEN’, a Campaign to Promote Digital Banking**



On August 15, 2020 **S S Mallikarjuna Rao**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Punjab National Bank(PNB) launched a **campaign, ‘DIGITAL APNAYEN’** to encourage customers to use **digital banking channels** and participate in the noble cause of donating to PM CARES Fund for COVID-19.

- The campaign begins on 15th August 2020 and runs till 31st March 2021.

**Rs 5 towards the PM CARES Fund:** -The bank under the campaign will contribute Rs 5 towards the PM CARES Fund on behalf of each customer who conduct the 1st financial transaction to activate the following:

- RuPay Debit card either on point of sale (PoS) or e-commerce platform.

- AePS account through fund transfer, AePS account through BHIM Aadhaar Merchants payment and activation of UPI service.
- Download and Registration for UPI facility will also be eligible for contribution.

## **ECONOMY & BUSINESS**

### **Google Partners with CWC of India for Flood Forecasting Initiatives**



On 14th August 2020, Google in association with the Central Water Commission (CWC) of India launched the flood forecasting initiatives across India for the past several months. Central Water Commission is the **first governmental partner of Google** to measure water levels on an hourly basis using around 1000 stream gauges across India. Under the flood forecasting initiatives, google has sent out numerous public alerts to people in flood impacted regions of India.