



MP's UNESCO Digital Innovations | Madhya Pradesh | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

In commemoration of **World Heritage Day (18th April)**, Madhya Pradesh Tourism is spearheading notable technological advancements across the state's [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) listed and tentative heritage sites.

Key Points

- These endeavors underscore a steadfast dedication to **heritage preservation** while aiming to elevate the visitor experience through cutting-edge technology.
- Renowned for its cultural richness and diversity, Madhya Pradesh proudly boasts **three UNESCO World Heritage Sites**:
 - The **Khajuraho Group of Monuments**, renowned for its intricate erotic sculptures;
 - The **Stupas at Sanchi**, among India's oldest stone structures symbolizing Buddhism.
 - The **prehistoric Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka**, adorned with ancient rock paintings depicting early human life.
- **Complementing these are 10 sites on the Tentative List, including:**
 - the picturesque [Bhedaghat-Lameta Ghat in Jabalpur](#), the architecturally significant **Mandu Group of Monuments**, the historical ensemble of **Orchha featuring grand temples and palaces**, the biodiversity-rich [Satpura Tiger Reserve](#), the storied [Gwalior Fort](#), the innovative water management system of **Khooni Bhandara in Burhanpur**, the **Rock Art Sites of the Chambal Valley** showcasing ancient artistic expressions, the monumental **Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple in Bhojpur**, culturally significant **Gond monuments** of Ramnagar and Mandla, and the historical ensemble of Dhamnar illustrating monastic traditions.
- **Among the notable advancements are:**
 - QR code-based audio guides offering in-depth narratives at major museums and monuments.
 - Captivating lights and sound shows have been introduced in various cities, including Sanchi, Orchha, Mandu, etc.
 - Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR & VR) experiences with Oculus devices, integration of WhatsApp for enhanced convenience, online ticket booking systems for streamlined access, and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping for meticulous documentation and preservation of the state's monuments.

Khajuraho Group of Monuments (1986)

- These temples were built during the **Chandella dynasty**, which reached its pinnacle between 950 and 1050.
- Only 20 temples remain, belonging to two different religions namely-Hinduism and Jainism, including the famous **Temple of Kandariya** decorated with intricately and beautifully carved sculptures.

Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)

- These shelters are located within the **foothills of Vindhya range**, on the southern edge of the **central Indian plateau**.

- Unearthed in the form of five clusters of natural rock shelters exhibiting paintings that date back to the Mesolithic, and other periods succeeding it.
- The cultural traditions of the inhabitants in surrounding areas are very similar to those displayed in the paintings.

Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989)

- It is the **oldest Buddhist sanctuary** in existence and was a major Buddhist centre in India **until the 12th century A.D.**
- Consists of monolithic pillars, palaces, temples and monasteries all in different states of conservation most of which **date back to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.**

Madhya Pradesh Rivers Pollution | Madhya Pradesh | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

[Pollution](#) is on the rise in numerous **major rivers across Madhya Pradesh**, presenting a grave concern for the **state's environmental health**.

Key Points

- The cleanliness of key rivers like [Narmada](#), [Kshipra](#), and [Betwa](#) has been a recurring issue in Lok Sabha, Assembly, and urban body elections over the past 15 years.
- Despite the implementation of various schemes such as the [Namami Gange Mission](#) and [National River Conservation](#), pollution levels continue to rise due to a lack of interest and commitment from regional public representatives and responsible officials.
 - The condition of the **Narmada River**, considered the lifeline of Madhya Pradesh, is particularly dire in terms of pollution.
 - In addition to the Narmada, other significant rivers like **Mahi, Tapti, Kali Sindh, Chambal, Parbati, Dhasan, Ken, Sindh, Kuno, Shipra, Betwa, and the Son River** - the largest tributary joining the Ganga from the south - are also experiencing increasing pollution levels.

Namami Gange

- Namami Gange Programme is an Integrated Conservation Mission, **approved as a 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014** to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution and conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
- It is being **operated** under the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, **Ministry of Jal Shakti**.
- The program is being **implemented by the NMCG and its state counterpart organizations** i.e State Program Management Groups (SPMGs).
- In **phase 2 of Namami Gange Programme (2021-26)**, the states will focus on expeditious completion of projects and preparation of bankable Detailed Project Report (DPR) for projects in Ganga tributary towns, cutting down delays.
 - Focus is also being given to the **revival of small rivers and wetlands**.
 - For the future, each Ganga district is to develop scientific plans and health cards for at least 10 wetlands and adopt policies for reuse of treated water and other by-products.

National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)

- NRCP is a **centrally funded scheme** launched in 1995 aimed at preventing the pollution of rivers.
 - Programs for river conservation are being implemented under **National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) and NGRBA (National Ganga River Basin Authority)**.
 - The National Ganga Council, also known as the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga, has replaced the NGRBA.
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Authorities to Suspend Cross-Border Transit | Uttarakhand | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

Authorities plan to temporarily close the border between **Uttarakhand State in India** and [Nepal's Sudurpaschim Province](#) from the evening of 19th April as a **routine precaution ahead of India's general elections**.

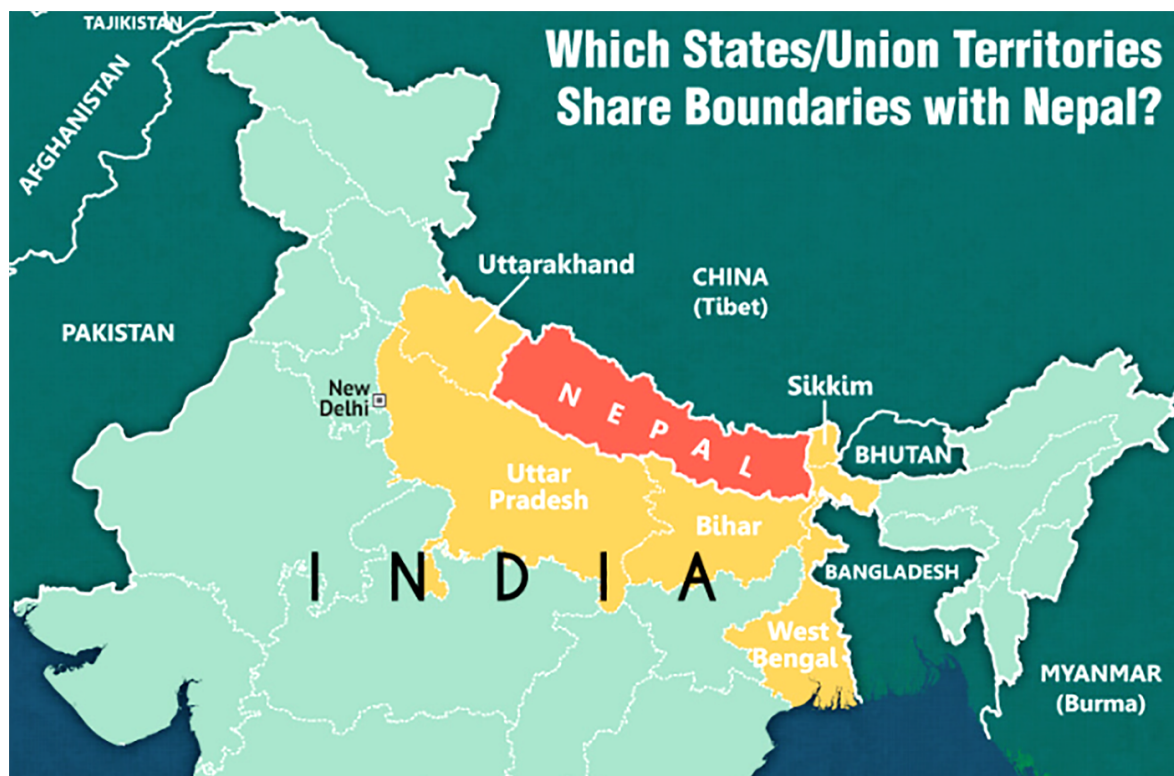
- The closure will not impact **cross-border emergency services**.

Key Points

- An **increased security** presence will be in place across India with **heightened vigilance** likely being exercised on both sides of the border.
- Disruptions to **cross-border freight and passenger traffic** could extend for several days after the closure is lifted as transport companies and customs officials clear their backlogs.

India-Nepal

- Nepal **shares a border with 5 Indian states**- Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim and Bihar. Hence an important point of cultural and economic exchange.
- The importance for India **can be studied from two different angles**:
 - Their strategic importance for India's national security.
 - Their place in India's role perception in international politics.
- Nepal is right in the middle of India's '**Himalayan frontiers**', and along with Bhutan, it acts as a **northern 'borderland' flanks** and acts as buffer states against any possible aggression from China.
- Rivers originating in Nepal **feed the perennial river systems** of India in terms of ecology and hydropower potential.
- Many Hindu and Buddhist religious sites are in Nepal making it an **important pilgrimage site** for a large number of Indians.



Uttar Pradesh Government Investment in Hospitality Sector | Uttar Pradesh | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

According to the officials, The Uttar Pradesh government might **invest Rs 32,000 crore** in the **hospitality and [tourism sector](#)**.

- The state's **annual tourist footfall** is estimated to reach **850 million by 2028**.

Key Points

- The investment would likely create an **additional 80,000 accommodation units** by way of hotels, and resorts to bridge the deficit in room availability.
- The state is focusing on ramping up hospitality units in **tourism hotspots** such as **Varanasi, Ayodhya, Prayagraj, and Agra**.
- The heritage properties, including forts and palaces, are being offered to the private sector for development.
- Under the **[Tourism Policy 2022](#)** the state is also providing subsidies for **setting up unique countryside farm stays**.
 - Homeowners are encouraged to enlist their properties for homestays, while the owners of heritage properties are being invited to convert their precincts as heritage hotels for discerning tourists.
- The state is aiming to develop **multi-experience circuits** such as wellness centres, and improving the connectivity of Buddhist destinations, such as Sarnath and Kaushambi.
- It is also focusing on diversifying tourism experiences and creating contemporary tourism products

by developing **adventure tourism**, [MICE \(meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions\)](#), **wellness**, and **ecotourism**.

Special Cover on Ram Navami | Uttar Pradesh | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

In a programme organized under the aegis of **postal department** and **Prayag Philatelic society**, postmaster general of Prayagraj region released a special cover on the eve of **Ram Navami**.

Key Points

- Stamp collections featuring iconic cultural figures such as **Lord Ram serve as a bridge between people and their heritage**.
- These stamps are not only popular in India but also in over 20 other countries worldwide, where they depict characters and tales from the **epic Ramayana**.
- The unique **Ram Navami-themed stamp** will be on **sale for Rs 25 at the Philatelic bureau** situated in the head post office of Prayagraj.

Prayag Philatelic Society

- It was **formed on 21st July 2017** as a registered society under the **Societies Registration Act 1860** at Allahabad.
- Its objective is to promote the cause of philately among all age groups, it invited membership from all over India.

Rama Navami

- It is a **spring Hindu festival**.
- The festival marks the **birth of Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu**.
- The day is the **ninth and last day of Chaitra Navaratri**. This typically occurs in the Gregorian months of March or April every year.

29 Maoists Killed in Massive Chhattisgarh Encounter | Chhattisgarh | 17 Apr 2024

Why in News?

According to the sources, in one of the largest operations by security forces in Chhattisgarh, 29 [Naxalites](#) have been killed in the **Kanker area**.

Key Points

- Before this, **Greyhound commandos** had eliminated 30 Naxalites in an operation **in 2016**.
 - In another **operation in 2021**, top Naxal leader along with 25 others was eliminated.
- On April 16, a search operation by a **joint team of Kanker District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Border Security Force (BSF)** was launched in the Chhottebetiya police station limit area in Kanker district.
 - There was an exchange of fire between Maoists and security forces near Binagunda-Koragutta jungles of the Chhottebetiya Police station area.

The Greyhounds

- It is an elite **anti-Maoist force raised in 1989** by IPS officer K.S. Vyas to combat the growing Maoist threat in Andhra Pradesh.
- The members are **well-trained in guerilla and jungle warfare**.
- Members of the force **cannot be over 35 years**.
- Once they cross 35, they are drafted into the civil police until retirement.
- This special police force became the root cause for the downfall of **Left Wing Extremism** in Andhra Pradesh.
- It also inspired other similar forces to fight the Maoists.

Naxalism in India

- The term Naxalism derives its name from the village **Naxalbari of West Bengal**.
- It originated as rebellion against local landlords who bashed a peasant over a land dispute. The rebellion was initiated in 1967, with an objective of rightful redistribution of the land to working peasants under the leadership of **Kanu Sanyal** and Jagan Santhal.
- Started in West Bengal, the movement has spread across Eastern India; in less developed areas of states such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
- It is considered that Naxals support **Maoist political sentiments and ideology**.
 - Maoism is a form of communism developed by Mao Tse Tung. It is a doctrine to capture State power through a combination of armed insurgency, mass mobilization and strategic alliances.