

# PM statement in India: 22 April 2022

Good afternoon,

before turning to the topic of visit we have had, the fantastic visit we've had here in India,

I just want to say something about the latest situation in Ukraine.

Because I know everyone is deeply concerned about events, the barbarism we have seen, that barbarism by Vladimir Putin in the Donbas region,

and in particular his brutal offensive against Mariupol,

which is why yesterday I announced we would be sending more artillery and doing everything possible to help the people of Ukraine defend themselves those areas.

And at the same time, the extraordinary fortitude and success of President Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian people in resisting Russian forces in Kyiv,

means that I can today announce shortly, next week, we will re-open our embassy in Ukraine's capital city.

I want to pay tribute to those British diplomats who remained elsewhere in the region throughout this period.

The United Kingdom and our allies will not watch passively as Putin carries on this onslaught.

And what I think we've seen here in New Delhi

is one of the world's oldest democracies, and the largest democracy, sticking together,

And confronting our shared anxieties about autocracies and autocratic coercion around the world

and acting together to make our countries safer and more prosperous.

Our new and expanded Defence and Security Partnership

will enable India to strengthen its own domestic defence industry

as well as protecting vital shared interests in the Indo-Pacific.

Our collaboration on energy security

– including our new offer on offshore wind, the new UK-India Hydrogen Science and Innovation Hub and our joint work on solar power –

will help to reduce our collective dependence on imported hydrocarbons in

favour of cheaper, more sustainable home-grown renewables.

And our Global Innovation Partnership will help transfer climate and energy-smart innovations to developing countries across the wider Indo-Pacific.

As we deepen the partnership between our countries, we won't just make our people safer, we'll make them more prosperous too, creating new jobs, driving up wages, and driving down prices for consumers, all of which will help with the cost of living.

And our partnership with India is particularly powerful in achieving these things

because India is an incredible rising power in Asia, with one of the fastest growing economies in the world – already worth £2.25 trillion –

and set to be the world's third largest economy by 2050.

India is also our biggest partner in the Indo-Pacific,

which is increasingly the geopolitical centre of the world,

with two-thirds of humanity, and a third of the global economy – and that share is rising every year.

Indian investment already supports almost half a million British jobs,

and with a population bigger than the US and the EU combined,

there is so much potential for us to take our trade and investment to a whole new level.

On this visit alone we've secured new deals worth £1 billion, creating more than 11,000 jobs.

And perhaps most significantly of all, we're using our Brexit freedoms to reach a bi-lateral Free Trade Agreement,

and today Prime Minister Modi and I told our negotiators

to get it done by Diwali in October.

This could double our trade and investment by the end of the decade, driving down prices for consumers,

and increasing wages across the UK by as much as £3 billion.

So what we have been getting on with here

is getting on with the job of delivering on the priorities of the British people,

deepening a friendship with a nation with whom we have profound ties of culture, language and kinship,

while making both our countries safer and our economies stronger.

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## Rural Payments Agency update – April 2022

Welcome to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) April 2022 update. RPA recognises that this is a really challenging time for many rural businesses and we would like to share some updates with you and reflect on what has been achieved. Our updates include:

- the Sustainable Farming Incentive in 2022
- Landscape Recovery and Local Nature Recovery
- the Lump Sum Exit scheme

We have published our 5 Year Strategy which sets out our main objectives in delivering agricultural transition, meeting both customer expectations and policy needs, delivering environmental outcomes through a quality service and being an exemplar of the Civil Service's Operational Delivery Profession working in practice.

We continued to deliver a range of services to rural businesses and developed and implemented new schemes and services. We launched the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) pilot with over 2,500 expressions of interest and more than 900 applicants.

RPA has continued to issue payments to farming and rural businesses through schemes such as the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Environmental Stewardship (ES). Over 100,000 eligible 2021 claims worth £1.8bn were paid – 92% by the end of December (2020: 89.5%). This represented 98.3% of BPS, 62.2% of CS revenue claims, and 64.6% of ES eligible claims.

We also received over 5,600 CS Capital grant claims worth £66.75m, which had helped to establish and maintain woodland and hedges, as well as much more.

We introduced a new approach for rural business that were due more than one 2021 scheme payment (combinations of BPS, CS, and ES). We wanted rural businesses to receive at least one payment in December, and over 98% did.

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## [Inflation, it's personal](#)

News story

In our latest blog we look at the reasons behind the cost of living increases.



In '[Inflation, it's personal](#)' GAD actuary Christophor Ward examines the background to our current period of high inflation of prices for goods and services.

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## [New ACCIA application portal open for registration](#)

News story

You can now register for an account on the new ACCIA application portal to apply for an award in the 2022 round.



If you plan to apply for an award in the 2022 ACCIA round you will need to [register on the new ACCIA application portal](#), even if you have previously applied for an award.

At this stage, the portal is only accepting applications for new awards and will not show records of previous awards, as these data will be migrated to the portal later.

During the registration process you will be sent an email. If you do not receive this email, please check your junk folder. You may need to ensure that your email service trusts future messages from the address, so that you don't miss any important updates.

There is a different process if you are registering as an employer or nominating organisation. We will be emailing separately with details of how to do this. Please do not use the link above as this will only allow you to access the applicant portal.

Any queries about the application portal or the awards in general should be sent to [accia@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:accia@dhsc.gov.uk).

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## [National Highways awards major A417 contract to Kier](#)

The contract award follows a competitive procurement process through National Highways' Regional Delivery Partnership framework.

Kier and National Highways completed a budget setting process in the early part of this year (2022). Kier's team will include Volker, Arup, Tony Gee and RPS to prepare for and construct the 3.4-mile route.

The Planning Inspectorate is examining our Development Consent Order (DCO)

application, which is needed for all Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects prior to construction starting.

Following the examination's conclusion in May, the Planning Inspectorate will send its recommendation of a decision to the Secretary of State for Transport in the summer, with a decision on the route expected by the Secretary of State in the autumn.

Michael Goddard, Project Director for the A417, said:

We are delighted to be working with Kier to move forward this vital scheme.

Kier has an extensive track record working with National Highways and delivering large scale infrastructure projects, so we are confident they will deliver a scheme that meets our landscape-led vision. We will work together to deliver a project that is sympathetic with the special character of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and will support economic growth, improve traffic flows at peak times and make the road safer.

Paul Baker, Kier Highways project director, said:

Delivering highways infrastructure which is vital to the UK is Kier Highways' purpose and we are proud to be doing this through the delivery of the A417 contract. We look forward to working with National Highways and our supply chain partners to deliver this vitally important infrastructure project to improve the connectivity of the strategic road network.

We are a national business with a local focus and throughout the duration of the project, we will support the local community through employment opportunities and social value initiatives that leave a positive legacy.

Councillor Mark Hawthorne, Leader of Gloucestershire County Council, added:

I'm really pleased we've reached this key stage of this vital project. After such a long wait, it really feels like the solution for the 'Missing Link' is much closer to becoming a reality.

Completion will bring improved safety and air quality along with more reliable journey times leading to huge benefits for our county's economy as well as creating new habitats and habitat connections for native wildlife.

The A417/A419 provides an important route between Gloucester and Swindon that helps connect the Midlands/North to the South of England. It's an alternative

to the M5/M4 route via Bristol.

The Missing Link itself is a three-mile stretch of single-lane carriageway on the A417 between the Brockworth bypass and Cowley roundabout in Gloucestershire.

The Missing Link causes many problems for road users and those who live or work in the area. Congestion can be frequent and unpredictable, so some motorists divert onto local roads to avoid tailbacks.

This causes difficulties for neighbouring communities and local roads were not built to accommodate so much traffic. Poor visibility and other factors also mean that accidents, many of which are serious, occur frequently along this section of road.

Our aim is to improve this section of the A417 with a scheme that includes:

- 4 miles of new dual carriageway connecting the existing A417 Brockworth bypass with the existing A417 dual carriageway south of Cowley
- the section to the west of the existing Air Balloon roundabout would follow the existing A417 corridor. However, the section to the south and east of the Air Balloon roundabout would be offline, away from the existing road corridor
- a new junction at Shab Hill, providing a link from the A417 to the A436 towards Oxford and into Birdlip
- a new junction would be included near Cowley, replacing the existing Cowley roundabout
- the existing A417 between the Air Balloon roundabout and the Cowley roundabout would be repurposed. We would convert some lengths of this existing road into a route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, while retaining other sections to maintain local access for residents.

Similarly, supporting the landscape vision of the scheme, we continue to work with our stakeholders to maximise the benefits. We will be creating new habitats and habitat connections for native wildlife including bats, bees, badgers and more to flourish.

To ensure this, we will deliver:

- 2 miles of dry-stone walls
- 8 miles of hedgerow
- 7ha of native woodland
- 5ha of scrub
- 15ha of native grassland
- 72ha of calcareous grassland
- helping us be at one with nature

Further information on upgrading the A417 can be found at on the [A417 web page](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.