

Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and launched development projects in Mauritius (Jan. 21, 2022)

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Mr. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, jointly -

- Inaugurated the Social Housing Units Project in Mauritius
- Layed the foundation stone for
- Construction of a state-of-the-art Civil Service College and
- 8 MW Solar PV Farm
- The event was held via video-conference.
- All the projects are undertaken as part of India's development support
- PM Modi also offered to share learnings of Mission Karmayogi.
- The 8 MW Solar PV Farm project involves the installation of 25,000 PV cells to generate approximately 14 GWh of green energy annually, to electrify approximately 10,000 Mauritian households with an estimated avoidance of 13,000 tons of CO2 emissions every year,
- The Civil Service College project, located in Reduit, is being financed through grant support of US\$ 4.74 million, under an MoU signed in 2017 during the visit of Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth to India.
- The social housing project is developed with a grant of US\$ 353 mn, which the Government of India extended to the Government of Mauritius in May 2016 as a Special Economic Package (SEP).
- The ceremony also included the exchange of two key bilateral agreements:
- Agreement for the extension of USD 190 million Line of Credit from the Government of India for the Metro Express and other infrastructure projects and
- MoU on the Implementation of Small Development Projects.

Mauritius

Capital - Port Louis

President - Prithvirajsing Roopun

Prime Minister - Pravind Jugnauth

Legislature - National Assembly

Currency - Mauritian Rupee

Official Language - English and French

2. Spice Xchange: India's first virtual platform for spice exporters launched (Jan. 21, 2022)

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri Som Parkash launched the country's first virtual platform for spice exports Spice Xchange India at a hybrid event held in Kochi

- Launched by the Spices Board, spicexchangeindia.com is a 3D virtual platform aimed at connecting India's spice exporters with buyers from around the world.
- The portal uses artificial intelligence (AI)-based technology to connect spice buyers with exporters in India.
- The buyers and sellers can access the database to find potential customers.
- The portal works as an extended office enabling the subscribers to conduct virtual meetings.

3. Gigantic Scroll created under KALA KUMBH installed at Rajpath for Republic Day celebrations (Jan. 21, 2022)

The gigantic and spectacular 750 m long scrolls created under the unique initiative 'Kala Kumbh' have now been installed at the Rajpath for the Republic Day 2022 celebrations.

- These have been diligently researched upon and painted enthusiastically by more than five hundred artists who participated in special workshops or 'Kala Kumbh' at two locations, Odisha and Chandigarh.
- At Odisha, the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi collaborated with Kalinga Institute of Technology and Silicon Institute of Technology in Bhubaneswar from 11th – 17th December and at Chandigarh the collaboration was done with Chitkara University from 25th Dec 2021 – 2nd January 2022.
- The magnificent scrolls have been painted by local artists drawn from different regions and largely portray the tales of valour of unsung heroes of the freedom struggle.

4. Amar Jawan Jyoti merged with National War Memorial Flame (Jan. 21, 2022)

After burning for 50 years, the eternal flame of Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate lawns will be merged with the National War Memorial Flame forever. The decision was taken after it was found that the upkeep of two flames is becoming increasingly difficult.

- The torch was merged with the National War Memorial's torch at a programme on 21st January, 2022 days ahead of Republic Day.
- The ceremony was presided over by the Integrated Defence Staff chief, Air Marshal Balabhadra Radha Krishna.

National War Memorial

The National War Memorial was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February 2019.

- All military ceremonial events that took place at the India Gate were shifted there after the inauguration.
- The National War Memorial also has the names of all the Indian defence personnel who have lost their lives in different operations from the 1947-48 war with Pakistan to the clash with Chinese troops at Galwan valley.
- The eternal flame is positioned below the central 15.5 m obelisk.

- There are four concentric circles - the "Amar Chakra", "Veerta Chakra", "Tyag Chakra" and the "Rakshak Chakra", where the names of 25,942 soldiers are inscribed on granite tablets in golden letters.
- The memorial also includes six bronze murals depicting the famous battles fought by the Indian Army, Air Force and the Navy in a covered gallery in the Veerta Chakra.

India Gate

The India Gate was built by the British government in the memory of the soldiers of the British Indian Army who died in the First World War between 1914 and 1921. In 1972, the Amar Jawan Jyoti was lit in memory of the Indian soldiers who died in the 1971 war with Pakistan.

5. Supreme Court upholds validity of OBC Quota in NEET Admissions (Jan. 20, 2022)

The Supreme Court in a judgement delivered on 20 January 2022, upheld the constitutional validity of providing a 27 % quota to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the National Eligibility Cum Entrance (NEET) All India Quota (AIQ) seats for Undergraduates and Postgraduates medical courses noting that “high score are not the sole criteria for merit” .

- It upheld its January 7 order allowing reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the NEET undergraduate and postgraduate admissions for 2021-22.
- The Supreme Court gave its judgement on a petition filed by doctors in August 2021 challenging reservation for OBC and EWS by the central government in the All India Quota (AIQ) seats in state government medical institutions.

Main points of SC Judgement

- The court also pronounced that there will be no stay on the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) criteria for admission to NEET-PG and the existing criteria (Rs 8 lakh gross annual income cut-off) will apply to the current admission year.
- The Supreme court held that providing reservations to AIQ is a policy decision that would not be subject to judicial review. There was no need for the Central government to seek prior consent of the Court before introducing the OBC quota.
- The court also held that the State government has power to provide reservation under article 15 (4) and (5) of the constitution and was not an exception to article 15(1) which provides that “ State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion ,race,caste,sex,place of birth or any of them” .
- The court held that the power of the State government to craft reservation policy for the OBC amplified the principle of “ Substantive Equality “ as manifested in article 15(1) of the constitution .

The Supreme Court decision on the issue of providing a 10% quota to the EWS category will be finally heard in the third week of March 2022.

Also see December 1 2021 and 10 January 2022 post

6. NTPC top Biomass user in India (Jan. 20, 2022)

According to the Union Power Ministry , National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has emerged as a leader in biomass users having used approx. 58,000 Metric Tonnes (MT) of biomass for the production of power in its thermal power plant.

- According to the Union Power ministry , approximately 59,000 metric tonnes (MT) of biomass has been co-fired in thermal power plants in the country.
- The Ministry of Power's policy on "Biomass Utilization for Power Generation through Co-firing in Coal based Power Plants" issued in October 2021 mandates all thermal power plants in the country to use 5 to 10% biomass along with coal for power production.

SAMARTH

Sustainable Agrarian Mission on use of Agro Residue in Thermal Power

Plants (SAMARTH) was launched by the Government of India in 2021 .

Under SAMARTH the Union Ministry of power launched the National Mission on Use of Biomass in coal based thermal Power Plants.

AIM:-

- It was launched by the Government of India to reduce stubble burning and to reduce carbon footprint of Thermal Power Plants while increasing the income of farmers.
- The farmers are encouraged to sell their crop residues, stubble to the power plants and earn extra income instead of burning in the field which increases pollution.
- Thermal power plants are encouraged to use crop residue along with coal for production of power. It will reduce the use of coal for power generation and consequently lesser amounts of carbon will be produced.

Biomass:-

Biomass is plant or animal matter which is used for production of power or heat . For example , woods, cow dung , crops residue etc.

7. HAL Signs Contract For Helicopter Export to Mauritius (Jan. 20, 2022)

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has signed a contract with the Mauritius government, to export one advanced light helicopter (ALH Mk-III) for the country's police force.

- The contract was signed by B.K. Tripathy, General Manager, Helicopter Division-HAL and O.K. Dabidin, Secretary of Home Affairs, Prime Minister's Office, Government of Mauritius, recently at HAL's Transport Aircraft Division, Kanpur.
- ALH Mk-III is a multi-role, multi-mission versatile helicopter in the 5.5-tonne category.
- The Mauritius government already operates HAL-built ALH and Do-228 aircraft.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company, headquartered in Bengaluru, India.

- Chairman and Managing Director: **R Madhavan**

8. The launch ceremony of 'Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ke Ore' (Jan. 20, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 20th January launched “Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ke Ore”.

- The program unveiled yearlong initiatives dedicated to Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav by Brahma Kumaris, which includes more than 30 campaigns and over 15,000 events and programs.
- The event is being held on the occasion of the 53rd Ascension Anniversary of Pitashree Prajapita Brahma, the founding father of Brahma Kumaris.

Brahma Kumaris is a worldwide spiritual movement dedicated to personal transformation and world renewal.

- Founded in India in 1937.

9. Cabinet approves infusion of Rs.1,500 crore in IREDA (Jan. 20, 2022)

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, approved the equity infusion of Rs.1500 crore in the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA).

- This equity infusion will help in employment generation of approximately 10200 jobs-year and CO2 equivalent emission reduction of approximately 7.49 Million Tonnes CO2/year.

The additional equity infusion of 1500 Crore will enable IREDA

- To provide additional Renewable Energy (RE) financing, thus contributing better to the Government of India targets for RE.
- To facilitate the debt requirement of RE of additional capacity of approximately 3500-4000 MW

IREDA,

It is a Mini Ratna (Category-1) company under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy(MNRE) was set up in 1987 to work as a specialized non-banking finance agency for the Renewable Energy (RE) sector.

IREDA with more than 34 years of techno-commercial expertise, plays a catalytic role in the RE project financing which gives confidence to the FIs/banks to lend in the sector.

For more details on Mini Ratna see the post on 15th January 2022.

10. National Commission for Safai Karamcharis gets 3 years extension (Jan. 20, 2022)

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the extension of the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) for three years beyond 31.3.2022.

- The total cost of the extension for three years would be approximately Rs.43.68 crore
- The NCSK was first established in the year 1993 as per the provisions of the NCSK Act 1993
- The NCSK Act ceased to have effect from 29.2.2004. After that, the tenure of the NCSK has been extended as a non-statutory body from time to time through resolutions
- The NCSK has been giving its recommendations to the Government regarding specific programmes for the welfare of Safai Karamcharis, study and evaluate the existing welfare programmes for Safai Karamcharis, investigate cases of specific grievances, etc.
- Also as per the provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, the NCSK has been assigned the work to monitor the implementation of the Act, tender advice for its effective implementation to the Centre and State Governments and enquire into complaints regarding contravention/non-implementation of the provisions of the Act.
- Current Chairperson of NCSK: MR. M. Venkatesh.