

Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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1. India Post Payments Bank's customer base crosses 5 Crore Mark (Jan. 19, 2022)

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB), a 'Digital-First Bank' announced that it has crossed the five-crore customer mark in 3 years of commencement of operations to become one of the fastest-growing digital payments bank in the country.

- IPPB opened up these five crore accounts in digital and paperless mode through its 1.36 lakh Post Offices, out of which 1.20 lakh are in rural areas, with the help of about 1.47 lakhs doorstep banking service providers. With this, IPPB has achieved the world's largest digital financial literacy programme by building a financially aware and empowered customer-base
- Out of the total account holders, around 48% were women account holders indicating the Bank's focus on bringing women customers under the banking network. Out of those about 98% of accounts of women were opened at the doorsteps and over 68% of women were availing DBT benefits.
- In yet another milestone, IPPB revealed that it attracted youths to avail of digital banking services. Over 41% of account holders were in the age group of 18 to 35 years.

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by the Government of India.

- IPPB was launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on September 1, 2018.
- IPPB delivers simple and affordable banking solutions through intuitive interfaces available in 13 languages.

2. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) launched its first bi-monthly E-Newsletter (Jan. 19, 2022)

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) (DEPwD) launched its first bi-monthly E-Newsletter on 18th January 2022.

- It was launched virtually by Dr. Virendra Kumar, Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India
- The E-Newsletter will be helpful in the continuity of the flow of information and to bridge the gap with Divyangjan's target audience. It would be a gateway to know about the department's activities. It will also keep track of the performance of various departmental schemes.

3. Rising sea levels prompt Indonesia to relocate the capital (Jan. 19, 2022)

On 18th January 2022 Indonesia's parliament passed a law approving the relocation of its capital from slowly sinking Jakarta to a site 2,000 kilometers away on the jungle-clad Borneo island.

- The new capital will be named "Nusantara"

- The new capital will cover about 56,180 hectares in East Kalimantan province on the Indonesian part of Borneo.
- This was first proposed by President Joko Widodo in April 2019, citing rising sea levels due to climate change and severe congestion on densely populated Java island.

About Indonesia

Indonesia officially the Republic of Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia and Oceania between the Indian Ocean and Pacific ocean.

- It consists of over 17,000 islands, making it the world's largest island country
- Indonesia is the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world .
- Java, the world's most populous island, is home to more than half of the country's population.
- Indonesia is a presidential, constitutional republic with an elected legislature.
- The country's capital, Jakarta, is the world's second-most populous urban agglomeration after Tokyo-Yokohama, Japan.
- Delhi, India is the third-most populous urban agglomeration in the world.
- Official language - **Indonesian**
- Legislature - **People's Consultative Assembly (MPR)**
- Currency - **Indonesian Rupiah**

4. 11 cities win Centre's "Streets for People Challenge" (Jan. 19, 2022)

Eleven cities have been selected as the winners of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)'s "Streets for People Challenge" for their pilot projects to make roads more pedestrian-friendly.

- **The list of selected cities includes Aurangabad, Bengaluru, Gurugram, Kochi, Kohima, Nagpur, Pimpri Chinchwad, Pune, Udaipur, Ujjain, and Vijayawada.**
- All the selected cities would be given 50 lakh each to scale up their proposals.
- The Ministry also announced 10 winners of the pilot stage of the "Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge" which included 70 pilot projects by 25 cities.
- Among the winners were Bengaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Jabalpur, Indore, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Rourkela, Vadodara, and Warangal.

5. Explosion on Naval Ship INS Ranvir (Jan. 19, 2022)

Three Navy personnel were killed and 11 injured in an explosion on board the ageing destroyer **INS Ranvir at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai** on 18th January 2022.

- Adm R Hari Kumar, CNS and all personnel of Indian Navy extend heartfelt condolences to the families of **Krishan Kumar MCPO I, Surinder Kumar MCPO II & AK Singh MCPO II**, who **succumbed to injuries** caused by the unfortunate incident onboard INS Ranvir.
- INS Ranvir, among the oldest warships in the Navy, is a Soviet-era destroyer and was commissioned in April 1986.

- The fourth destroyer of the Rajput class, it is the first of the Ranvir class. The other Ranvir class destroyer is INS Ranvijay.

6. No Foreign Chief Guest at the Republic day 2022 (Jan. 19, 2022)

There will be no foreign chief guest on Republic Day this year due to the coronavirus crisis and the Omicron threat. Earlier, the government of India had sent invitations to the Head of the Government of the five Central Asian Republics of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan to be the Chief Guest at the Republic day parade in 2022. .

Last year's invited Chief Guest, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson had to cancel his visit due to coronavirus.

The Government of India has decided that this year on, Republic Day celebrations will begin from January 23, in order to include Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary.

The first foreign Guest at Republic Day was Indonesia President Sukarno in 1950.

There were no foreign chief guests in the years 1952, 1953, 1966, 2021, 2022.

7. Oxfam Report on Poverty in India (Jan. 18, 2022)

The non-profit group Oxfam International published its latest report titled "Inequality Kills" on January 17th, 2022 ahead of the World Economic Forum's Davos agenda.

- Oxfam is a British-founded confederation of 21 independent charitable organizations focusing on the alleviation of global poverty, founded in 1942 and led by Oxfam International.
- It is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.
- Gabriela Butcher is the present director of Oxfam.
- Oxfam describes itself as a global movement of people who are fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice.

Highlights from the latest report-

- The income of 84 percent of households in the country declined in 2021, but at the same time, the number of Indian billionaires grew from 102 to 142.
- Oxfam's analysis during the coronavirus pandemic (March 2020 to November 2021) showed that the wealth of Indian billionaires rose from Rs 23.14 lakh crore to Rs 53.16 lakh crore. In contrast, more than 4.6 crore Indians were estimated to have fallen into extreme poverty in 2020 alone, which was nearly half of the global new poor according to the United Nations
- Oxfam says that a 1% Wealth Tax on India's Super Rich families could fund its entire vaccination program cost of Rs 50,000 crore, and a 4% wealth tax on just the 98 richest families of India could account for the Union health ministry's budget for two years and the mid-day meal program for 17 years.
- The budgetary allocation for social security schemes declined from 1.5% of the total Union budget to 0.6%. There was a 6% cut in allocation for education and in the health sector, even though covid continued to ravage India, the country's healthcare budget saw a 10% decline from RE (revised estimates) of 2020-21.

- Lowering corporate taxes from 30 percent to 22 percent to attract investment last year resulted in a loss of Rs 1.5 lakh crore, which contributed to the increase in India's fiscal deficit.
- As a remedy to the growing wealth inequality in India, Oxfam suggested imposing a wealth tax on the super-rich population of India.

8. CSIR's UV-C Disinfection Technology to combat the pandemic (Jan. 18, 2022)

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh trolled out CSIR's newly developed Disinfection technology for use by the common masses.

- The UV-C technology is developed by the Ministry of Science & Technology through CSIR-CSIO (Council Of Scientific And Industrial Research - Central Scientific Instruments Organisation) and is totally effective for mitigation of airborne transmission of SARS-COV-2 and will also remain relevant in the post-COVID era.
- The technology has been successfully tried in Railways, AC Buses, and even the Parliament House
- UV-C deactivates viruses, bacteria, fungus, and other bioaerosols, etc. with appropriate dosages using 254nm UV light.
- UV-C air duct disinfection system can be used in auditoriums, large conference rooms, classrooms, malls, etc. which provides a relatively safer environment for indoor activities in the current pandemic.

9. PM address the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Davos Agenda (Jan. 18, 2022)

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered 'State of the World' special address at the World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda on 17 January 2022, via video conferencing. The WEF's annual meeting, which has been taking place in the Swiss ski resort town of Davos for 50 years now, could not take place in 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic and has been deferred till early summer this year.

Highlight of his speech

- Referring to the Mission LIFE, that he gave at the CoP26 conference held at Glasgow , the Prime Minister said that making LIFE into a mass movement can be a strong foundation for P-3 i.e 'Pro Planet People'. LIFE i.e. 'Lifestyle for Environment', is a vision of a resilient and sustainable lifestyle that will come handy in dealing with the climate crisis and other unpredictable challenges of the future.
- He said that "We contribute 5 percent of global carbon usage but our commitment to phasing out non-renewable energy is 100 percent,". India has set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2070.
- He said that India has given the entire world a "bouquet of hope". "The bouquet contains - trust towards democracy, technology to empower 21st century and talent & temperament of us Indians,".
- In the times of Covid, we saw India's vision of one Earth, One Health which helped save millions of lives by sending medicines to countries. India is today the pharmacy of the world.

The World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda Virtual Summit will host world leaders and heads of important institutions and organisations around the world who will discuss areas of concern and present their ideas on how to address them.

The three main areas of concern at the summit are Climate Action, Pandemic Recovery, and Economic and Social Resilience.

See 21 December 2021 post on WEF

10. Election Commission defers Punjab Assembly polls (Jan. 18, 2022)

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on 17 January 2022 postponed polling for the Punjab Assembly election from February 14 to 20 after the State government and political parties raised concern that many devotees would be in Varanasi to celebrate Guru Ravidas's birth anniversary on February 16 and miss out on voting.

- Punjab has a substantial population of followers of Guru Ravidas, including the Scheduled Caste community, which is around 32 per cent of the state's population.
- Counting would, however, take place on March 10, as in the schedule announced on January 8 2022.

Guru Ravidas

Ravidas is a 15th-century poet, saint and philosopher, who founded the Ravidassia religion. It has a large following among dalits in Punjab who consider Sant Ravidas as their Guru and some of his sayings has been included in the Sikh holy book "Guru Granth Sahib".

- The birthday of Ravidasji is on 16 February 2022 and lakhs of devotees are expected to visit his birthplace Varanasi . Many of them take a special train organised by the Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Jalandhar.
- The Dera Sachkhand Ballan is the Ravidassias' largest dera with around 20 lakh followers worldwide. Of these, around 15 lakh live in Punjab in the Doaba region. The region has 23 out of the total 117 Assembly seats in the state.