

Current Affairs:30.07.2021

Karnataka becomes first State to provide 1% reservation for Transgender persons in Government Employment

Karnataka has become the first state in India to reserve jobs in public employment in favour of **transgender persons**. As per the information, the state government has approved 1% horizontal reservation for transgenders in government jobs. For this the government has amended the Karnataka Civil Services (General Recruitment) Rules, 1977. The amendment is made to **Rule 9** by inserting **Sub Rule (1D)** to provide for **1% of vacancies** which needs to be filled in any service or post by the state government from among the transgender candidates in each category of general, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and in each of the categories among the Other Backward Classes.

UT of Ladakh gets RBI nod to Acquire 8.23% stake in J&K Bank



On July 26, 2021, the Government of the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh has received the approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire **8.23 percent** of the paid-up equity capital of **Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd.** This means that the ownership of 8.23 percent (**4,58,29,445 Equity Shares**) shareholding of J&K Govt. in Jammu and Kashmir Bank shall now be transferred to the Government of UT of Ladakh as on the date of enforcement of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, i.e. October 31, 2019. Additionally, one post of Director on the Board of the J&K Bank has been earmarked for the UT of Ladakh.

Najib Mikati elected as new Lebanese Prime Minister



Billionaire businessman **Najib Mikati** has been voted as the new **prime minister of Lebanon** in a Parliament election on July 26, 2021. The 65-year-old received 72 votes out of a total of 118 members of parliament. If Mikati successfully forms a government, this would be his third stint as Lebanon's prime minister. Prior to this, Mikati had served as Prime Minister of Lebanon in 2005 and from 2011 to 2014.

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World Day Against Trafficking in Persons : 30 July



The **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons** is observed every year on **July 30**. The day was designated by the UN General Assembly in 2013 to raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights. The 2021 theme for World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is **“VICTIMS’ VOICES LEAD THE WAY”**

Reservation in Medical Seats

The Union Health Ministry has announced 27% reservation for the OBCs (Other Backward Classes) and 10% quota for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in the **all-India quota (AIQ)** scheme for undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental courses from 2021-22.

This decision would benefit every year nearly 1,500 OBC students at the undergraduate level (MBBS) and 2,500 such students at the postgraduate level

Background:

- The AIQ was introduced in 1986 under the directions of the Supreme Court to provide for **domicile-free merit-based opportunities** to students from any State aspiring to study in a medical college located in another State.
- AIQ comprises 15% of the UG seats and 50% of the PG seats in government medical colleges.
- Initially, there was no reservation in the AIQ.
- In 2007, the SC introduced reservation of 15% for SCs and 7.5% for STs in the scheme.
- When the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act became effective that year, providing for uniform 27% reservation to the OBCs, the same was implemented in all the Central educational institutions.

Shared values: On India and the U.S

Recent visit of U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to Delhi. The visit was meant to prepare the way for more substantive meetings in Washington later this year, including

- US -India “2+2” of Foreign and Defence Ministers
- Quad (India, US, Australia, Japan) summit of its leaders
- Bilateral meeting between PM Modi and U.S. President Joseph Biden.

Key Takeaways of the Blinken’s Visit

Most of the conversations were focused on Quad cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, Afghanistan and on the state of democracy and rights.

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- **On Quad:** US & India showed full convergence
- **On Afghanistan:** India said that there were “more convergences than divergences” on the common positions that there is no military solution to conflict, and that neither country would recognise a Taliban regime that takes Kabul by force.
- **On Democratic freedom:** Both sides maintained there were “shared values” but points of friction existed between two.

What are the divergences between India & USA on Afghanistan?

- U.S. withdrawal will mean a less secure region that also impacts India’s security interests in the region.
- **U.S. continues to engage the Taliban** in talks for a power-sharing arrangement, despite the Taliban leadership’s refusal to enforce a ceasefire, and stop attacks against civilians in areas they take over. This embolden Taliban who has close ties with Pakistan (against India’s interests)
- Taliban is also trying to squeeze trade and financial supply chains to the Afghanistan government and US is not holding Taliban accountable for its actions.
- Perhaps the greatest worry for India is the U.S.’s refusal to hold Pakistan to account for having given shelter to the Taliban, as this will only embolden Islamabad if the Taliban advance in Afghanistan.
- Another cause of worry is the recent [U.S.’s announcement of a new “Quad”](#) with Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan on connectivity.

What were the points of friction on Democratic freedoms?

- Mr. Blinken met with a “civil society roundtable” wherein internal Indian issues such as minority rights, religious freedoms and curbs on the media and dissent were discussed. This was done in the wake of international criticism against Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 & abrogation of Article 370.
- India’s Minister of External Affairs however countered the allegation of “backslide” in India’s democracy by reiterating that the same standards apply for the U.S. and India and actions by government like CAA & Article 370 was taken to “right historical wrongs”