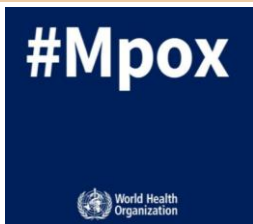


20 August 2024

Centre asks airports to be alert, marks 3 hospitals as nodal centers



Key Points:

- ❖ The Union health ministry on Monday asked all the airports and authorities at land ports on borders with Bangladesh and Pakistan to be alert about incoming passengers reporting Mpox symptoms, PTI quoted official sources.
- ❖ According to the PTI report, the health ministry identified Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital and Lady Hardinge Hospital, as the nodal centres in the national capital for the isolation, management and treatment of any Mpox patient.
- ❖ The Centre has asked all the state governments to identify such designated hospitals under their jurisdiction.
- ❖ Last week, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the recent outbreak of mpox as a global public health emergency following the emergence of a new variant.
- ❖ There have been 27,000 cases and more than 1,100 deaths, mainly among children, in Democratic

Republic of Congo since the current outbreak began in January 2023.

UPSC issues ad for lateral entry into bureaucracy



सत्यमेव जयते

UPSC

Key Points:

- ❖ The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Saturday (August 17) issued an advertisement seeking applications for "talented and motivated Indian nationals for Lateral Recruitment" to the posts of Joint Secretary, Director, and Deputy Secretary in 24 ministries of the Union government.
- ❖ A total of 45 posts have been advertised with individuals having appropriate qualifications and experience from State/UT governments, PSUs, statutory organisations, research institutes and universities, and even the private sector eligible to apply.
- ❖ The advertisement mentions that all posts are "suitable for candidates belonging to the category of Persons with Benchmark Disability (PwBD)."

- ❖ However, opposition party leaders, including Congress party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, and Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav, have criticised the policy for not having reservations for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) candidates. Rahul Gandhi slams lateral entry push, says privatisation of IAS is 'Modi's guarantee' for ending reservation.
- ❖ Chirag Paswan opposes lateral entry, Manjhi says will raise it in Cabinet
Chirag Paswan said that as a member of the government, he "has the platform to raise the issue and he would", declaring that his party was incontrovertibly opposed to lateral entry

What is 'lateral entry' into the bureaucracy?



UPSC

Key Points:

- ❖ In 2017, NITI Aayog, in its three-year Action Agenda, and the Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGoS) on

Governance in its report submitted in February, recommended the induction of personnel at middle and senior management levels in the central government.

- ❖ These 'lateral entrants' would be part of the central secretariat which, till then, had only career bureaucrats from the All India Services/ Central Civil Services. They would be given contracts of three years, extendable to a total term of five years.

What are the positions open for lateral entry?

- ❖ Based on the above recommendation, the first vacancies for lateral entrants were advertised in 2018, but only for Joint Secretary level positions.
- ❖ Posts of the rank of Director and Deputy Secretary were opened later. A Joint Secretary, appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), has the third-highest rank (after Secretary and Additional Secretary) in a Department, and functions as the administrative head of a wing in the Department.
- ❖ Directors are one rank below Joint Secretaries, and Deputy Secretaries are one rank below Directors, although in most ministries, they perform the same job. While Director/Deputy Secretaries are considered middle-level

officials in a department, the Joint Secretary-level is where the decision-making starts.

What was the Union government's logic behind introducing lateral entries?

- ❖ In 2019, Minister of State for the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) Jitendra Singh told the Rajya Sabha that “lateral recruitment is aimed at achieving the twin objectives of bringing in fresh talent as well as augment the availability of manpower”.
- ❖ On August 8, 2024, while responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Singh said, “Keeping in view their specialized knowledge and expertise in the domain area, lateral recruitment at the level of Joint Secretary, Director and Deputy Secretary in Government of India, has been undertaken to appoint persons for specific assignments
- ❖ Basically, the idea behind lateral recruitment is for the government to tap into individuals' domain expertise and specialised know-how, regardless of whether they are career bureaucrats or not.
- ❖ In line with this idea, officials of various Central Civil Services have been given opportunities to serve in the Central Secretariat in the last

decade, though it was always considered IAS-dominated.

How many people have been appointed via lateral recruitment so far?

- ❖ The first round began in 2018 and attracted a total of 6,077 applications for Joint Secretary-level posts. After a selection process by the UPSC, nine individuals were recommended for appointment to nine different Ministries/Departments in 2019.
- ❖ Another round of lateral recruitment was advertised in 2021, with two more rounds in May 2023. In total, as MoS Jitendra Singh told the Upper House on August 9 this year, “63 appointments have been made through lateral entry...
- ❖ In the last five years. Presently, 57 officers [lateral entrants] occupy positions in Ministries/Departments.”
- ❖ **What is the criticism of lateral entry recruitment?**
- ❖ Lateral entries have been criticised on the grounds that there are no quotas for SC, ST and OBC candidates in such recruitment.
- ❖ Reacting to the latest advertisement, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge posted on X that the lateral entries were a “part of a well-planned conspiracy”

and that “the BJP is deliberately making such recruitments in jobs so that SC, ST, OBC categories can be kept away from reservation”.

- ❖ Rashtriya Janata Dal leader and Bihar Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav condemned the move as a “dirty joke”, saying that had the 45 advertised appointments been made through the civil services examination, “nearly half of the openings would be reserved for SC, ST, and OBC candidates”.
- ❖ Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati said the policy deprives directly recruited employees working at lower-level posts, as they will not benefit from promotions. She also termed the lack of quotas a “direct violation of the Constitution”
- ❖ **Why are there no quotas in lateral recruitment?**
- ❖ Reservation in public jobs and universities is implemented via what is known as the “13-point roster”.
- ❖ According to this policy, a candidate’s position on a roster of openings is determined by dividing the quota percentage of their group (SC, ST, OBC, and now EWS) by a hundred. For example, the OBC quota is 27%.
- ❖ Therefore, OBC candidates are recruited to every 4th post for which a vacancy arises in a

department/cadre ($100/27=3.7$). Likewise, SC candidates, with 15% reservation, are supposed to fill every 7th vacancy ($100/15=6.66$), ST candidates, with 7.5% reservation, are supposed to fill every 14th vacancy ($100/7.5=13.33$), and EWS candidates, with 10% reservation, are supposed to fill every 10th vacancy ($100/10=10$).

- ❖ How have lateral entries been kept out of the ambit of reservation? According to this formula, however, there is no reservation for up to three vacancies.
- ❖ Files obtained from the DoPT by The Indian Express under the RTI Act state that “In a single post cadre, reservation does not apply. Since each post to be filled under this scheme [lateral entry] is a Single Post, reservation is not applicable”.

Election for Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir Assembly announced by ECI



Key Points:

- ❖ The Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar, announced the schedule for the election to constitute a new

legislative assembly in Haryana and in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in New Delhi on 16 August 2024.

- ❖ While the election in Jammu and Kashmir will be held in three phases due to the security situation, the election in Haryana will take place in a single phase on 1 October. According to the Election Commission, the counting of votes of both the assemblies will take place on 4 October 2024. Both Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana have a 90-member Legislative Assembly.
- ❖ For the first time, seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir, as per the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019.
- ❖ Seven seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes and nine for Scheduled Tribes. In Haryana, 17 seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes and there is no reservation for the Scheduled Tribes. With the announcement of the election schedule, the model code of conduct has come into force in Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir. It will remain in force until the election results are announced
- ❖ **Assembly Election in Jammu and Kashmir after 10 Years**

- ❖ The legislative assembly election in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir will take place after 10 years.
- ❖ The last assembly election was held in 2014 when it had the status of a state. On 31 October 2019, under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019, the status of Jammu and Kashmir was changed from a state to that of a Union Territory.
- ❖ It was bifurcated into two—the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh. Article 370 of the constitution, which gave the state of Jammu and Kashmir a special status, was also abrogated under the 2019 act.
- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir have been under the president's rule since the fall of the PDP-BJP coalition government in 2018. Supreme Court in December last year had directed the Election Commission to conclude the election process in the region by 30th September 2024.
- ❖ Due to the security situation, the election will be held in three phases in Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ First Phase-18th September in Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian, Kulgam, Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda region.

- ❖ Second Phase- 25 September in Srinagar, Ganderbal, Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi region.
- ❖ Third Phase - 1 October in North Kashmir, Udhampur, Jammu and Kathua region.
- ❖ According to the Election Commission of India, there are 87.09 lakh voters in Jammu and Kashmir, of which 44.46 lakh are males and 42.62 lakh are females. The first-time voters are 3.71 lakh.

PM Modi Inaugurates 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August 24



Key Points:

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August 2024.
- ❖ The Summit is being held in a virtual format, and many leaders of the Global South are participating in the meeting.
- ❖ The Voice of Global South is an Indian concept rooted in the ancient Indian philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

- ❖ It provides a platform for the countries of the Global South to raise issues that are vital to them.
- ❖ **What is Global South?**
- ❖ Global South is a loose term that refers to poor and developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania.
- ❖ It is contrasted with the Global North, which includes rich and developed countries in Europe, North America, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.
- ❖ The Global North dominates the Global South through political and economic exploitation. American political activist Carl Oglesby is given credit for coining the term 'Global South' in 1969.
- ❖ **Voice of Global South Summit**
- ❖ India hosted the first Voice of Global South Summit in a virtual format from 2 to 13 January 2023.
- ❖ Following the summit's success, India organised the second Voice of Global South Summit on 17 November 2023.
- ❖ Over 100 countries of the Global South participated in the 2nd Voice of Global South Summit. The 3rd Voice of Global South Summit will

include a Leader's session and 10 Ministerial sessions on various themes.

- ❖ The Leader's session was hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ❖ 3rd Voice of Global South Summit Theme
- ❖ "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future" is the theme of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit.
- ❖ The theme reflects the agenda of the summit, which will discuss issues like conflicts, food and energy security crises, and climate change, which is a major challenge for the Global South.

Dr. Virendra Kumar inaugurates the 17th Divya Kala Mela in Raipur



Key Points:

- ❖ Dr Virendra Kumar, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, inaugurated the 17th Divya Kala Mela in Raipur, the

capital of Chhattisgarh, on 17 August 2024. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai was also present on the occasion.

- ❖ The Divya Kala Mela was started by the government of India in 2022 to economically empower disabled (Divyang) artists by providing market access to their products.
- ❖ It also aims to develop their skills. Since 2022, a series of Divya Kala Melas has been organised in various cities across the country, and the Raipur Mela is the 17th in the series. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Virendra Kumar said that his ministry will set up a Divyangjan park in Raipur if the state government provides land for the purpose.

- ❖ The Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai agreed to the proposal and announced that the state government would allot 5 acres of land for the purpose in Raipur.

Who organised the 17th Divya Kala Mela?

- ❖ The 17th Divya Kala Mela has been organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India. The week-long Mela will be held from 16 August to 23 August 2024.

Feature of the 17th Divya Kala Mela

- ❖ The 17th Divya Kala Mela will provide a platform for over 100 Divyang artisans, artists, and entrepreneurs from around 20 States/Union Territories to display their products, including home decor, lifestyle products, clothing, eco-friendly items, packaged foods, etc., to the public.
- ❖ To promote the economic empowerment of the Divyangjan, Divya Kala Shakti' Job Fairs and Loan Mela are also being organised.
- ❖ This will help the Divyangjan access cheaper loans to expand their businesses.

Former Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik seeks Centre's intervention for continuation of UNESCO Kalinga Prize



Key Points:

- ❖ Former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik on Monday (August 12, 2024) urged the Centre not to discontinue UNESCO Kalinga Prize, a prestigious international award in the field of science, which was instituted by his

father legendary Biju Patnaik in 1952.

- ❖ "The UNESCO Kalinga Prize was made possible with generous grant of 1,000 pounds to UNESCO, Paris from Kalinga Foundation Trust in the year 1951 of which Biju Babu was the Founder President Trust.
- ❖ The prize is the only international award from India in the field of popularisation of science," said Mr. Patnaik in a letter addressed to Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of Science and Technology.
- ❖ The Science and Technology Ministry has withdrawn its contribution to the prestigious UNESCO Kalinga Prize for Popularisation of Science, UNESCO's oldest award, instituted through a donation by Odisha's former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik way back in 1951.
- ❖ Official sources said the decision to withdraw the Department of Science and Technology's annual contribution to the award was part of the recent decision to 'rationalise' all science awards.
- ❖ The government has, last year, instituted a new set of science awards, called Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar, to replace all the earlier awards, including the coveted Shanti

Swarup Bhatnagar Awards. The inaugural set of Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskars were announced last week.

- ❖ The Science Ministry has been supporting this award since 2001. The award carries a cash prize of US\$ 40,000.
- ❖ The winner also receives a Kalinga Chair established by the DST which also carries a cash component of US\$ 5,000. Besides, the winner is invited to travel to India for two to four weeks and interact with scientists and science communicators.
- ❖ The expenses of this are also borne out by the DST. Besides DST, the Kalinga Foundation and the state government of Odisha also contribute to the main award money.
- ❖ The winner of this award is selected by the Director-General of UNESCO

upon the recommendation of a jury of five members.

- ❖ It is the Science Analysis and Policies Division of the UNESCO which administers this award. The award ceremony is scheduled during the celebration of the World Science Day in Budapest as the guest of UNESCO and India in the alternate years.

2017	Erik jacqemyn	Belgium
2019	Karl Kruszelinicki	Australia
2021	Jean-Pierre Luminet	France
2023	Ana Maria Cetto	Mexico

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