

# UPSC 2017: Comprehensive News Analysis – Sept 22

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### A. [GS1 Related](#)

### B. [GS2 Related](#)

#### Polity

1. [Pass Women's Reservation Bill in LS: Sonia](#)
2. [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana flounders: 30 lakh trained in skills, less than 3 lakh get job offers](#)

#### International Affairs/Bilateral Relations

1. [50 nations ink UN nuclear ban treaty opposed by big powers](#)
2. [Sushma slams Pakistan over terror funding](#)
3. [US Senate passes \\$700 billion defence spending bill](#)
4. [Solving the Afghanistan riddle](#)

### C. [GS3 Related](#)

#### Economy

1. [Cabinet to soon take up \\$5 bn convention centre project](#)
2. [A big broom-On crackdown on shell companies](#)

### D. [GS4 Related](#)

### E. [Prelims Fact](#)

### F. [UPSC Prelims Practice Questions](#)

### G. [UPSC Mains Practice Questions](#)

**Nothing here for Today!!!**

## B. GS2 Related

### Category: POLITY

#### 1. [Pass Women's Reservation Bill in LS: Sonia](#)

##### In news:

- Congress President Sonia Gandhi has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to get the long-pending Women's Reservation Bill passed in the Lok Sabha.

Basic Information:

#### Women's Reservation Bill [The Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, 2008]

- Commonly known as the Women's Reservation Bill, it seeks to reserve one-third of all seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies. Introduced by the UPA-I government in May 2008, it also provides that one third of the total number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be reserved for women of those groups. Similar Bills have been introduced thrice before in the late 90's but lapsed with the dissolution of their respective Lok Sabhas.

#### Highlights of the Bill

- The Constitution (One Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 seeks to reserve one-third of all seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies. The allocation of reserved seats shall be determined by such authority as prescribed by Parliament.
- One third of the total number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be reserved for women of those groups in the Lok Sabha and the legislative assemblies.
- Reserved seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in the state or union territory.
- Reservation of seats for women shall cease to exist 15 years after the commencement of this Amendment Act.

#### Key Issues and Analysis

- There are divergent views on the reservation policy. Proponents stress the necessity of affirmative action to improve the condition of women. Some recent studies on panchayats have shown the positive effect of reservation on empowerment of women and on allocation of resources.
- Opponents argue that it would perpetuate the unequal status of women since they would not be perceived to be competing on merit. They also contend that this policy diverts attention from the larger issues of electoral reform such as criminalisation of politics and inner party democracy.
- Reservation of seats in Parliament restricts choice of voters to women candidates. Therefore, some experts have

- suggested alternate methods such as reservation in political parties and dual member constituencies.
- Rotation of reserved constituencies in every election may reduce the incentive for an MP to work for his constituency as he may be ineligible to seek re-election from that constituency.
- The report examining the 1996 women's reservation Bill recommended that reservation be provided for women of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) once the Constitution was amended to allow for reservation for OBCs. It also recommended that reservation be extended to the Rajya Sabha and the Legislative Councils. Neither of these recommendations has been incorporated in the Bill.

## 2. [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana flounders: 30 lakh trained in skills, less than 3 lakh get job offers](#)

### Context:

- The government's flagship skilling scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), is struggling to achieve end-results
- Data reveals that out of a total 30.67 lakh candidates who had been trained, less than a tenth – 2.9 lakh candidates – had received placement offers.

### Reasons:

**Lack of quality training:** Information asymmetry regarding the demand-supply dynamics of skilled candidates

### Plans ahead:

- Centre is now planning to shift focus to district-level schemes to yield better results in the short-term for its skilling initiative.
- Under the relaunched PMKVY, which started October 2, 2016 placement tracking has been made mandatory
- Now, the focus is going to be on greater participation of states
- And bringing district collectors into the picture to ensure delivery at the district level and monitoring of skilling schemes at the ministry level.

Basic Information:

### Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana:

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The objective of this Skill Certification Scheme is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood. Individuals with prior learning experience or skills will also be assessed and certified under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

## Category: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/BILATERAL RELATIONS

### 1. [50 nations ink UN nuclear ban treaty opposed by big powers](#)

#### In news:

- Fifty countries signed a **treaty to ban nuclear weapons**, a pact that the world's nuclear powers spurned but supporters hailed as a historic agreement nonetheless.
- **Brazil** was the first country to sign onto the ban, followed by nations from Algeria to Venezuela.
- It needs 50 ratifications to take effect among the nations that back it.
- This treaty is an important step towards the universally held goal of a world free of nuclear weapons
- The U.S., Britain and France said the prohibition wouldn't work and would end up disarming their nations while emboldening "bad actors"
- Supporters of the pact say it's time to push harder toward eliminating atomic weapons than nations have done through the nearly 50-year-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

#### Modus operandi:

- The members would be barred from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, otherwise acquiring, possessing or stockpiling nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

Basic Information:

### Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

#### The objectives of the NPT are as follows:

- Prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology.
- Promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- Nuclear disarmament.
- The three objectives viz. non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to peacefully use nuclear technology, are sometimes called three pillars of NPT.

#### Parties

- The treaty entered into force in 1970 and in 1995 it was extended indefinitely. It has 190 parties.
- All the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are among its members.
- India, Pakistan & Israel have not signed the treaty.
- North Korea acceded to the NPT in 1985, then withdrew in 2003

### 2. [Sushma slams Pakistan over terror funding](#)

## In news:

### BRICS Ministerial Meeting

- Held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said militants continue to find shelter in countries using terrorism as an “instrument of state policy”. Terror groups draw sustenance from support systems in South Asia
- The Minister called on her counterparts from BRICS to condemn efforts to sponsor the menace.
- Swaraj also called for terrorists’ funding, their weapons supply, training and political support to be systematically cut off.
- Swaraj also called for early conclusion of the CCIT while urging all the BRICS countries “Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa” to condemn efforts, including by states, to use religion to justify, sustain and sponsor terrorism against other countries.

### Projects in Afghanistan

- India has announced to take up 116 “high impact community developmental projects” in 31 provinces of Afghanistan
- The decision was taken during a meeting between Ms. Swaraj and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani
- Over and above these high impact projects, India has also offered assistance for six new projects under granting aid assistance from India. One of them is low-cost housing for returning Afghan refugees, road connectivity, national Park and economic development

Basic Information:

### Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

The CCIT provides a legal framework which makes it binding on all signatories to deny funds and safe havens to terrorist groups. The original draft that was tabled in 1996 and discussed until April 2013, as, included following major objectives:

- To have a universal definition of terrorism that all 193-members of the UNGA will adopt into their own criminal law
- To ban all terror groups and shut down terror camps
- To prosecute all terrorists under special laws
- To make cross-border terrorism an extraditable offence worldwide.

### 3. [US Senate passes \\$700 billion defence spending bill](#)

#### Context:

- The US Senate has overwhelmingly approved the nearly **\$700 billion defence** spending bill for 2018.
- Bill seeks to develop a strategy for **Indo-US defence cooperation** and adopts a tough approach on Pakistan’s action against terror outfits like the Haqqani network and the LeT.
- As part of the **National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 2018**, the legislation also approved several India-centric amendments aimed at increasing the defence relationship between the two countries and thus enhancing the strategic partnership between the two countries.

#### Provisions relating to India:

- An amendment that calls on the Department of Defense to reassess its approach to partnering with India and to appoint an individual to oversee this process.
- Another amendment which asks the Pentagon to develop a strategy of defence cooperation between the US and India.

#### Provisions relating to Pakistan

- The bill approves \$700 million in coalition support fund to Pakistan as a reimbursement to the services rendered by Islamabad towards America’s fight against terrorism.
- However, \$350 million of this amount cannot be released unless the Defense Secretary certifies to the Congress that Pakistan has taken satisfactory steps against terrorist organizations like the Haqqani network and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)
- Pakistan is required not provide military, financial or logistical support to specially designated global terrorists operating in Afghanistan or Pakistan.
- Along with this Pakistan must show that is not using its military or any funds or equipment provided by the US to persecute minority groups seeking political or religious freedom, including the Balochi, Sindhi and Hazara ethnic groups and minority religious groups, including Christian, Hindu and Ahmadiyya Muslims, it said.

### 4. [Solving the Afghanistan riddle](#)

#### Context:

- Recent announcement of US Afghan Policy. The policy envisages more pressure on Pakistan, no early U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, robust military action on counterterrorism and a greater role for India.
- The US has never been so critical of Pakistan publically.
- The issue today is how the U.S. strategy differs from the past in terms of addressing concerns regarding Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan, particularly in view of a shift in Pakistan’s strategic priority towards China.
- Present Situation in Afghanistan continues to be fragile, though Taliban has made some gains but at the same it is not a cohesive movement and has several divisions in it.
- Also, since 1747, Afghanistan’s territorial borders have remain unchanged unlike those of Pakistan and Central Asian Republics.

## India-Afghanistan ties

- On January 4, 1950, India signed a Treaty of Friendship with Afghanistan which also permitted opening of consulates in each other's country.
  - Afghanistan signed its first strategic partnership agreement with India in 2011.
  - India's assistance to Afghanistan amounts to \$2 billion and it covers broad spectrum of areas like political, security, trade and economic cooperation and capacity development.
  - India has always wanted a democratic, stable and strong Afghanistan able to decide its own future and it supports its quest for reconciliation.
  - Various surveys show that the Afghan people ranked Indian assistance as the most suitable because of the positive role India played in the development programme of Afghanistan and they appreciate that India has never interfered in their internal affairs.
  - India can assist Afghanistan in training and supplying them much-needed spare parts.
  - Asia is a region of energy and it needs to be exploited for the benefit of Afghanistan and surrounding areas, TAPI (Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan India) pipeline is an example.
  - SAARC and SCO should encourage regional economic cooperation and completion of Chabahar will help Afghanistan in trade with other countries.
  - It is essential to take action against terrorism and insurgency and treating Taliban's Quetta Shura and the Haqqani network as one.
1. Efforts relating to counter narcotics needs to be redoubled because Afghanistan remains the world's largest producer of opium accounting for 90% of the world's supply.
  2. Regional powers must work closely without interfering internally for a stable Afghanistan. India needs to coordinate with Russia and Iran.

## India-Pakistan relations and its impact on Afghanistan

- Unfair attempts have been made to link the Afghan issue with India-Pakistan relations. There is no connection.
- Pakistan-Afghanistan relations since 1947 have always been thorny and replete with problems except during the brief Taliban era.
- India and Afghanistan have never exploited their friendly bilateral relations to harm Pakistan. This is clear from-
- In both the 1965 and 1971 wars, Afghanistan was non-committal and did not support India.
- On the Kashmir issue, Afghanistan has not publicly supported India.
- India has not entered the debate on the Durand Line.
- Neither India nor India-Pakistan relations were responsible for the situation which prevailed in Afghanistan following the departure of the Soviet troops.
- The U.S. operation to kill Osama bin Laden and the recourse to drone attacks in Afghanistan were due to the situation prevailing there, which had nothing to do with India or India-Pakistan relations.
- When in 2010 Pakistan shifted over 100,000 of its security forces from its eastern border to its western border with Afghanistan, India did not exploit the situation.

## Category: ECONOMY

### 1. [Cabinet to soon take up \\$5 bn convention centre project](#)

#### In news:

#### Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (ECC):

- The Union Cabinet will soon take up the proposal for a \$5 billion-worth world-class and state-of-the-art ECC in the national capital.
- It will be the largest such facility in Asia when completed by 2021.
- According to the officials, the Cabinet will consider for discussion a note on approval of the project and formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to implement the same.
- The SPV will be a 100% subsidiary of Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) Development Corporation.

### 2. [A big broom-On crackdown on shell companies](#)

#### Context:

- The decision by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs to crack down on so-called shell companies, disqualify select directors in these entities and debar them from taking board positions for a specified period.
- According to the ministry, this would help in clean up of many firms set up in many cases with less than bona fide intent and having virtually no business operations.

#### Key Points:

- Naming and Shaming decision of the Union government has a real danger of tainting genuine firms and individuals.
- For example, SEBI also implemented similar decision and in a way it hastily imposed trading curbs on some entities which were given relief by Securities Appellate Tribunal recently.
- The sheer scale of the task at hand, with the ministry identifying more than 1.06 lakh directors for disqualification, it is imperative that there be great care and diligence to ensure that the authorities do not penalise anyone who for non-mala fide reasons failed to comply with the relevant provisions of the Companies Act.
- Many entrepreneurs find it easier to register a firm than it is to dissolve or wind it up.
- In public limited companies, a major portion of the extralegal activities including price rigging of shares, insider trading and other questionable practices have been found to occur in the large mass of smaller companies.
- Various problems like illiquidity, weak governance and regulatory oversight have combined with the difficulty in delisting to make these firms prime targets for money launderers.

- The Centre and the regulatory arms need to address the underlying systemic shortcomings that have allowed so many companies, to become vehicles of malfeasance.
- Making the process to dissolve or delist online will improve governance and ensure that all stakeholders have an enabling atmosphere to operate freely.
- The government’s move to address banking sector stress by adopting the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code is a step in the right direction.

***Nothing here for Today!!!***

***Nothing here for Today!!!***

**F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam**

**G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions**

**GS Paper I**

- - - - 1. Explain how the Uprising of 1857 constitutes an important watershed in the evolution of British policies towards colonial India.
        2. The effective management of land and water resources will drastically reduce the human miseries. Explain

**GS Paper II**

- - - - 1. Exercise of CAG’s powers in relation to the accounts of the Union and the States is derived from Article 149 of the Indian Constitution. Discuss whether audit of the Government’s policy implementation could amount to overstepping its own (CAG) jurisdiction.