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Government Scholarship for Higher Studies

- Government of India has launched various scholarship schemes for Indian Students for pursuing higher studies abroad, which are as follows
- **National Overseas Scholarship for Scheduled Caste Students** - The scheme is implemented by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment under which financial assistance is provided to the meritorious Scheduled Caste students.
- **National Overseas Scholarship for Scheduled Tribe Students** - The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs where in financial assistance is provided to the meritorious Scheduled Tribe students.
- **Overseas Doctoral Fellowship Programme** - The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology launched an Overseas Doctoral Fellowship Program with specific Universities to build national capacity where the talent supply of researchers in areas of interest to the country is sub-critical.
- **Sending Students Abroad for Research Internships** - All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in collaboration with 'Mathematics of Information Technology and Computer Systems (MITACS)' provides a platform from 2018 to the students of AICTE approved institutions to undergo Internship in Canadian Universities through its scheme.
- **University Grants Commission (UGC)** - Under Education Exchange Programme between India and Hungary, the Hungarian Govt. offers 200 scholarships to Indian students for pursuing Higher education in Hungarian Higher education institutions.

SC/ST Amendment Act, 2018

- The 2018 Supreme Court verdict had made a provision for anticipatory bail to offenders under Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act.
- However, after strong protests against the dilution across the country, Union government removed this provision to bring the law back to its

original form.

- Recently SC upheld the amendments, ruling that though the provision of anticipatory bail is not available under the law, courts can quash FIRs in exceptional circumstances.
- The court also ruled that preliminary enquiry is not a must in cases of atrocities against SCs/STs, and no prior approval of an appointing authority or senior police officers is required before filing FIRs.
- However, a caveat that anticipatory bail should be granted only in extraordinary situations where a denial of bail would mean miscarriage of justice.

Anticipatory Bail

- The provision of anticipatory bail under Section 438 was introduced when CrPC was amended in 1973.
- Section 438 is a procedural provision concerned with the personal liberty of each individual, who is entitled to the benefit of the presumption of innocence.
- As opposed to ordinary bail, which is granted to a person who is under arrest, in anticipatory bail, a person is directed to be released on bail even before arrest made.
- When any person has reason to believe that he may be arrested on an accusation of having committed a non-bailable offence, he may apply to the High Court or the Court of Session for a direction under this section; and that Court may, if it thinks fit, direct that in the event of such arrest, he shall be released on bail.
- The provision empowers only the Sessions Court and High Court to grant anticipatory bail.
- The reason for enactment of Section 438 in the Code was parliamentary acceptance of the crucial underpinning of personal liberty in a free and democratic country.

Gender Gap in Science Education

- February 11 was the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, established by the United Nations to promote equal access to and participation in science for women and girls.
- According to a 2018 fact sheet prepared by UNESCO on women in science, just 28.8% of researchers are women.
- UNESCO data from 2014-16 show that only around 30% of female students select STEM (science, technology, engineering and

mathematics)-related fields in higher education.

- Female enrolment is particularly low in information technology (3%), natural science, mathematics and statistics (5%) and engineering and allied streams (8%).
- Various studies have found that girls excel at mathematics and science-oriented subjects in school, but boys often believe they can do better, which shapes their choices in higher studies.
- In 2015, an analysis of PISA scores by OECD found that the difference in maths scores between high-achieving boys and girls was the equivalent of about half a year at school.
- But when comparing boys and girls who reported similar levels of self-confidence and anxiety about mathematics, the gender gap in performance disappeared, when girls were more anxious, they tended to perform poorly.
- The NITI Aayog report said, “The problem of entry of women in science is not uniform across disciplines.

Cash Reserve Ratio

- Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) is the share of a bank’s total deposit that is mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to be maintained with the latter in the form of liquid cash.
- The Cash Reserve Ratio acts as one of the reference rates when determining the base rate.
- Base rate means the minimum lending rate below which a bank is not allowed to lend funds.
- The base rate is determined by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The rate is fixed and ensures transparency with respect to borrowing and lending in the credit market.
- The Base Rate also helps the banks to cut down on their cost of lending to be able to extend affordable loans.
- Apart from this, there are two main objectives of the Cash Reserve Ratio:
 1. Cash Reserve Ratio ensures that a part of the bank’s deposit is with the Central Bank and is hence, secure.
 2. Another objective of CRR is to keep inflation under control. During high inflation in the economy, RBI raises the CRR to lower the bank’s loanable funds.

SLR

- RBI is also responsible for regulating the flow of money and stability of

prices to run the Indian economy.

- Statutory Liquidity Ratio is one of its many monetary policies for the same. SLR (among other tools) is instrumental in ensuring the solvency of the banks and cash flow in the economy.
- Liquid Assets under SLR includes assets one can easily convert into cash – gold, treasury bills, govt-approved securities, government bonds, and cash reserves.
- It also consists of securities, eligible under Market Stabilisation Schemes and those under the Market Borrowing Programmes.
- The ratio of these liquid assets to the demand and time liabilities is called the Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR).
- The Reserve Bank of India has the authority to increase this ratio by up to 40%.
- An increase in the ratio constricts the ability of the bank to inject money into the economy.
- Banking Regulation Act 1949 mandates all scheduled commercial banks, local area banks, Primary (Urban) co-operative banks (UCBs), state co-operative banks and central co-operative banks in India to maintain the SLR.
- SLR has an upper limit of 40% and a lower limit of 23%.

| Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) | Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) |
|---|---|
| In the case of SLR, banks are asked to have reserves of liquid assets which include both cash and gold. | The CRR requires banks to have only cash reserves with the RBI |
| Banks earn returns on money parked as SLR | Banks don't earn returns on money parked as CRR |
| SLR is used to control the bank's leverage for credit expansion. | The Central Bank controls the liquidity in the Banking system with CRR. |
| In the case of SLR, the securities are kept with the banks themselves which they need to maintain in the form of liquid assets. | In CRR, the cash reserve is maintained by the banks with the Reserve Bank of India. |

Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL)

- NDTL refers to the total demand and time liabilities (deposits) of the

public that are held by the banks with other banks.

- Demand deposits consist of all liabilities, which the bank needs to pay on demand.
- They include current deposits, demand drafts, balances in overdue fixed deposits, and demand liabilities portion of savings bank deposits.
- Time deposits consist of deposits that will be repaid on maturity, where the depositor will not be able to withdraw his/her deposits immediately.
- Instead, he/she will have to wait until the lock-in tenure is over to access the funds.
- Fixed deposits, time liabilities portion of savings bank deposits, and staff security deposits are some examples.
- The liabilities of a bank include call money market borrowings, certificate of deposits, and investment deposits in other banks.
- Every bank must have a specified portion of their Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) in the form of cash, gold, or other liquid assets by the day's end.

SPICe+

- Ministry of Corporate Affairs deployed a new Web Form christened 'SPICe+', replacing the existing SPICe form.
- The initiative is a part of India's effort to improve Ease of Doing Business (EODB).
- SPICe+ would offer 10 services by 3 Central Govt Ministries & Departments. (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of Labour & Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance) and One State Govt.(Maharashtra), thereby saving as many procedures, time and cost for Starting a Business in India.
- It would be applicable for all new company incorporations.
- It features are as follows
 1. SPICe+ would be an integrated Web Form.
 2. SPICe+ would have two parts viz.: Part A-for Name reservation for new companies and Part B offering a bouquet of services.

Source: PIB, AIR, Economic Times



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