

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAR 1, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- The 500mcft (million cubic feet) capacity reservoir being built in the lakes of Thervoykandigai and Kannankottai Rajaneri near Uthukottai in Tiruvallur district - is expected to be ready by April.
- ✓ This will be the fifth reservoir that will be supplying water to Chennai.

THE BACKUP RESOURCE



TWO LAKES
Thervoykandigai and Kannankottai Rajaneri in Tiruvallur district will be joined

Capacity
500mcft

SOURCE | Krishna water and another from monsoon

Total area of reservoir
1,486 acres

- Nearly 30mld of additional water can be drawn for Chennai
- This is slightly bigger than Cholavaram reservoir, which has a capacity to store 181 mcft of water

Project cost
₹380cr



- ✓ The work for the construction of the reservoir began in 2013
- ✓ Later, it was stopped within a year after problems of land acquisition emerged.
- ✓ After settling the issue, work was restarted in 2018 and is now almost complete.
- ✓ The Metrowater has proposed to divert Krishna water into this reservoir
- ✓ Excess water from Krishna river and monsoon will be the main sources for the reservoir.
- ✓ The new reservoir, being built at a cost of ₹380 crore, will be bigger than Cholavaram that can hold 181mcft of water.
- ✓ Water from this reservoir will be supplied to locals also, who can irrigate 700 acres of farmland
- ✓ The total area is 1,486 acres and the reservoir is created on 1,000 acres.

STATES

- **The new Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) - will be the only place in the country to undergo a 'delimitation exercise' based on the population figures recorded in the 2011 census.**
- ✓ The latest readjustment of boundaries of constituencies (delimitation) in the States and other Union Territories has been done on the basis of the 2001 census
- ✓ In future, it will be carried out based on the 2031 census.
- ✓ This unique provision for J&K UT was enabled through an amendment introduced in the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019
- ✓ The Act passed by Parliament on August 6 bifurcated the State of J&K into the Union Territories of J&K (with a legislature) and Ladakh (without legislature).
- ✓ The J&K state assembly was dissolved in November 2018 and the region has been under Central rule since June 2018.
- ✓ The delimitation was last done in the former state of J&K in 1995.
- ✓ Earlier, on February 17, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora nominated Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra as his nominee to the proposed Delimitation Commission for J&K.
- ✓ As per the J&K Reorganisation Act, the number of seats in the Assembly would be increased from 107 to 114.
- ✓ The delimitation will be done for 90 seats as 24 seats fall in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).
- ✓ The exercise will take at least a year to complete, which means, till then, no elections can be held
- ✓ The full Delimitation Commission is yet to be appointed.

NATIONAL

- **The Union Government - has approved 32 projects across 17 states in the food processing sector under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY).**
- ✓ The government has also set aside funds worth Rs 406 crores for the projects.
- ✓ The main focus area of the projects is to boost employment opportunities in rural areas and create direct and indirect employment for about 15000 people
- ✓ It will create more processing and preservation capacities along with the expansion and modernization of the existing food processing units
- ✓ The PMKSY scheme aims to create processing and preservation capacities and modernise existing food processing units to increase the quality of processing and the shelf-life of the agricultural produce/processed food and reduce wastage.
- ✓ The implementation period of the PMKSY scheme is 2016-20 and it has a total outlay of Rs 6,000 crore



- ✓ Overall, the scheme has 7 component schemes, which includes the creation of mega food parks, agro-processing clusters and integrated cold chain and value addition infrastructure among others.
- ✓ The processed food market is predicted to grow from \$ 322 billion in 2016 to \$ 543 billion by 2020 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 14.6%.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The United States - signed a deal with the Taliban in Doha on February 29 to end America's longest war, spanning nearly two-decades in Afghanistan**
- ✓ The US-Taliban agreement, signed after more than a year of prolonged negotiations, provides a timetable for the final withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan
- ✓ However, the agreement excludes the idea of American-backed Afghanistan government in the war-torn country
- ✓ The United States special representative for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban's top political leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar signed the peace agreement in Qatari capital, Doha
- ✓ U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was present.

FULL PULLOUT ONLY IF TALIBAN HONOUR DEAL

➤ A full withdrawal of US forces will occur within 14 months of deal. But pullout will depend on Taliban meeting commitments: prevent terror & not showing 'bad faith' to talks

➤ US is committed to reducing the number of troops to 8,600



We are working to finally end America's longest war and bring our troops back home —US President Donald Trump

from 13,000 – within 135 days of signing the deal

➤ 'If talks fail, there's nothing that obliges the US to withdraw troops,' says an official

➤ Nato vows to adjust coalition troop levels in the first phase, bringing down to 12k from 16k



- ✓ The war cost \$2 trillion and took the lives of more than 3,500 US and coalition troops and tens of thousands of Afghans

BBC, NYT & Agencies

THE 18-YEAR-OLD WAR ENDS

US-TALIBAN CONFLICT IN SHORT | President Bush ordered the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in response to the Sept 11, 2001 attacks. It only took a few months to topple Taliban and send Osama bin Laden scrambling across the border into Pakistan, but war dragged on as US tried establish a stable state. Taliban regrouped, and currently hold sway over half the country

The Taliban control or contest much of the country

Taliban presence by district, Dec 28/19
Control
Contested
100 MILES
Source: NYT

WHAT HAS THE WAR COST?

\$2 TRILLION | Amount US spent since its invasion in 2001, according to an NYT report

➤ Between 2010 and 2012, when US for a time had more than 1,00,000 soldiers in Afghanistan, cost grew to almost \$100bn a year, according to US official figures

3,500 | Americans and coalition troops died

38,000 | Afghan civilians died

US troops levels in Afghanistan 2002-2018

Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction; BBC

HOW DID THE AGREEMENT COME ABOUT?

Momentum towards the deal came after Trump appointed Afghan-origin Zalmay Khalilzad as his special envoy to Afghanistan. Khalilzad held talks with the Taliban in Doha. Progress stalled several times, most notably in Sept when Trump tweeted that he had cancelled talks. Talks began again in late 2019, culminating in a 7-day 'reduction in violence' agreement that ended today

WHAT'S NEXT |

The next milestone is supposed to be talks in Oslo, perhaps as early as March 10, where the Taliban and Afghan negotiators are to sit down across the table from each other

- ✓ As per the deal to end America's longest war, the Taliban must provide a commitment not to extend support to jihadist groups such as al-Qaida and hold negotiations with the Kabul government.
- ✓ The US is committed to withdraw from Afghanistan all its military forces, troops of its allies and coalition partners within 14 months of the agreement.
- ✓ In the first 135 days, the US will reduce the number of US forces in Afghanistan to 8,600 from the current 13,000 and later, will also bring down the number of its allies and coalition forces proportionately.
- ✓ India supported the US-Taliban agreement, as announced by Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, who met Afghan leaders, including President Ashraf Ghani, in Kabul at the same time of the signing of agreement in Doha

- ✓ He reiterated India's commitment to an enhanced political, economic and development partnership with Afghanistan
- ✓ It was Shringla's first foreign trip after taking charge in late January.
- ✓ The Afghanistan War began on October 7, 2001 when the US and NATO forces initiated aerial bombings in the nation, to target the Taliban and Al-Qaeda camps.
- ✓ The war commenced in response to the 9/11 attacks, which were plotted by al-Qaeda leaders under the protection of the Taliban.
- ✓ Al-Qaeda leader, Osama Bin Laden later claimed the responsibility of the attacks in 2004, which targeted and fell down the twin towers of the World Trade Centre
- ✓ The US-led coalition forces invaded Afghanistan, launched "War on Terror" and eventually toppled the Taliban regime on December 7, 2001
- ✓ Osama Bin Laden, who had evaded capture for almost a decade, was located finally and killed by US navy's SEAL team in May 2011 under Barack Obama's Presidency.

PERSONALITIES

- **Lt Gen Madhuri Kanitkar - took over as the new deputy chief of integrated defence staff (medical) in New Delhi on February 29**



- ✓ Her husband, Lt Gen Rajeev Kanitkar, an armoured corps officer, retired as the Army's quartermaster general in 2017
- ✓ This makes the Kanitkars the country's first-ever couple to have achieved the high rank of three-star officers in the armed forces
- ✓ While Rajeev was awarded the President's gold medal for excellence while passing out of the National Defence Academy at Khadakwasla, Madhuri won the same medal for being the best MBBS student in the Armed Forces Medical College in Pune.
- ✓ A paediatric nephrologist, Kanitkar is the third woman to reach the three-star rank in the armed forces after Air Marshal Padmavathy Bandopadhyay (retd) and Surgeon Vice-Admiral Punita Arora (retd).
- ✓ Her appointment comes soon after Gen Bipin Rawat became the country's first chief of defence staff.

- ✓ Women medical officers have been getting permanent commission in the armed forces from the beginning unlike those in other wings, who will get it now after the Supreme Court's recent strong directive to end gender inequality in the military.
- ✓ Kanitkar was commissioned in the Army Medical Corps in December 1982 and later did her MD before training in paediatric nephrology at AIIMS
- ✓ Kanitkar, who has won several awards, is a member of the PM's science and technology innovation advisory committee
- ✓ Before assuming her new charge on February 29, she was heading the medical services in the Army's Northern Command in J&K and Ladakh.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Realme and Xiaomi - have announced that they are going to launch a new range of smartphones with ISRO's NavIC, which is known as India's navigational system.**



- ✓ Realme CEO Madhav Seth announced on February 27, 2020, that Realme X50 Pro 5G will be available with NavIC as India's first smartphone with ISRO's navigation technology
- ✓ The company is going to launch Realme-6 on March 5 with ISRO's latest navigation technology.
- ✓ On the other hand, Xiaomi India's Manu Kumar Jain also announced that the upcoming Redmi phones and the next Xiaomi phone will be the world's first to use ISRO's navigational system NavIC.
- ✓ NavIC will provide much better navigation system than the traditional GPS, due to lesser signal breakage and network issues because of the coverage by Indian satellites against the present foreign satellites used in GPS
- ✓ Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) or NavIC has been developed by ISRO – Indian Space Research Organisation
- ✓ It provides accurate and real-time navigational service for Indian users up to 1500 km from its boundary.
- ✓ NavIC uses dual-band frequency while traditional GPS uses single-band frequency.

- ✓ IRNSS or NavIC can be used for terrestrial navigation aid for hikers and travelers, terrestrial, aerial and marine navigation, vehicle tracking and fleet management, mapping and geodetic data capture, visual and voice navigation for drivers, disaster management and precise timing.

DEFENCE

- **Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh - inaugurated the production facility of Light Combat Helicopter at the HAL campus in Bengaluru.**



- ✓ The project is a part of the "Make in India" initiative.
- ✓ The Light Combat helicopter has been completely designed by HAL.
- ✓ It has two engines and several latest technical features.
- ✓ These helicopters will be deployed at the Siachen base, which is 4,700 meters above sea level.
- ✓ This light combat helicopter is able to carry 500 km of weight.
- ✓ The government of India targeted to reach defence exports to Rs 35,000 crore by 2024.

ECONOMY

- **India - has overtaken France and the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy, as per IMF's October World Economic Outlook, which ranked the countries based on nominal GDP.**
- ✓ On the other hand, India's real GDP is predicted to witness slow growth in the year ahead due to credit weakness.

Rank	2010	2019
1	United States	United States
2	China	China
3	Japan	Japan
4	Germany	Germany
5	France	India

6	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
7	Brazil	France
8	Italy	Italy
9	India	Brazil
10	Russian Federation	Canada

- ✓ In 2010, India was placed 9th among the world's largest economies, behind countries including Italy and Brazil.
- ✓ The United States was ranked first then, followed by China, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Italy, India and Russia.
- ✓ In 2019, India jumped to the 5th spot, again surpassing the UK and France.
- ✓ While the UK remained at its 6th spot, France slipped to the 7th position.

SPORTS

- **Rally driver Gaurav Gill - took home a special award at the Federation of Motor Sports Club of India (FMSCI) Awards here on February 29.**



- ✓ Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju was the chief guest on the occasion and congratulated the national and international champions of Indian motorsports.
- ✓ The awards witnessed over 110 national champions receive trophies for the national championship and special awards.
- ✓ Gill created history by becoming the first motorsport driver to receive the Arjuna Award.
- ✓ Also, 17-year-old Yash Aradhya is the first-ever to win the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Shakti Puraskar.

All ABOUT Covid-19 – A REPORT

Sixty countries have so far reported confirmed cases of the new coronavirus infection, also termed Covid-19. Although the World Health Organisation (WHO) has said it is too early to label Covid-19 as a pandemic, it has advised countries to be “in a phase of preparedness”. Harvard professor Marc Lipsitch, an epidemiologist, while stating that within the year “some 40% to 70% of people around the world will be infected with the virus”, however, pointed out that many will have only a mild form of the disease, or may even be asymptomatic. In fact, experts say the disease is likely to become a fixture in our lives. But for now, efforts are under way on a war footing to limit the damage the disease can cause, including to the global economy

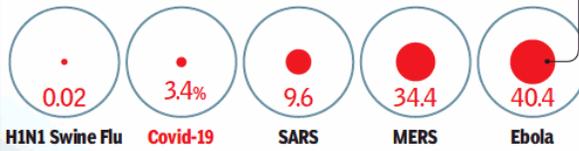
2,933
DEATHS

85,406
CASES

60
COUNTRIES
AFFECTED
(as of Feb 29, 4pm)

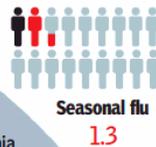
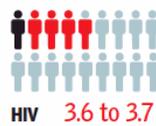
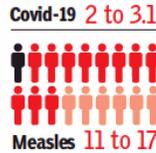
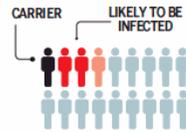
Coronavirus appears far less fatal than SARS, Ebola

FATALITY RATE



It can spread fast, but not as fast as measles

How many people a virus infects and how far it spreads depends on how quickly it jumps from one person to another. Covid-19 so far appears to spread very easily, especially within confined spaces. It is much more contagious than SARS, but not as much as measles or chickenpox, which can travel 100 feet through the air. It's believed that one Covid-19 carrier can infect 2 to 3 persons while a person with measles can pass the infection to 11-17 people



A vaccine is still in the works

There is currently no vaccine for Covid-19 and the existing pneumonia vaccine is not effective. Researchers are pushing for a vaccine at the earliest with at least one US-based biotech company sending samples for human testing that can happen "as early as April", reported the Time magazine.

However, the process of trials and development before a commercial vaccine can be released is lengthy and it is expected to be a matter of months

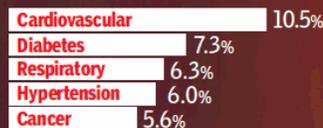
Young are safer, but can infect their parents

An analysis of around 44,000 Covid-19 cases in China suggests that the elderly and the unwell may be more at risk of death than other groups

FATALITY RATE



People with cardiovascular diseases have a higher fatality risk



2.8% Men are more likely to die than women 1.8%

SYMPTOMS



HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF



10 of the worst pandemics ever

HIV/AIDS | Peaked 2005-12

DEATH TOLL **36 million**

First identified in Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1976

FLU PANDEMIC | 1968

DEATH TOLL **1 million**

A category 2 Flu pandemic, sometimes referred to as the Hong Kong Flu, was caused by the H3N2 strain of the Influenza A virus

ASIAN FLU | 1956-58

DEATH TOLL **2 million**

An outbreak of Influenza A of the H2N2 subtype. It spread from the Chinese province of Guizhou to Singapore, Hong Kong, and the US

SPANISH FLU | 1918

DEATH TOLL **50 million**

A deadly outbreak of influenza that infected some 500 million people across the world. Around 25 million died in the first three months of the outbreak

SIXTH CHOLERA | 1910-11

DEATH TOLL **0.8 million**

Originated in India where it killed over 800,000, and spread to the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe and Russia

FLU PANDEMIC | 1889-90

DEATH TOLL **1 million**

This was an outbreak of Influenza A virus subtype H3N8. The first cases were observed in 1889 in Asia, Canada, and Europe

THIRD CHOLERA | 1852

DEATH TOLL **1 million**

Again, originated in India

THE BLACK DEATH | 1346-53

DEATH TOLL **75 - 200 million**

Thought to have originated in Asia, it most likely jumped continents via the fleas living on the rats that so frequently lived aboard merchant ships

PLAGUE OF JUSTINIAN | 541-542

DEATH TOLL **25 million**

Thought to have killed perhaps half the population of Europe, it was an outbreak of the bubonic plague that afflicted the Byzantine Empire and Mediterranean port cities

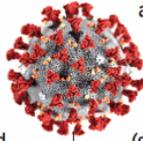
ANTONINE PLAGUE | 165

DEATH TOLL **5 million**

Also known as the Plague of Galen, it hit Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy and is thought to have been either smallpox or measles

Coronavirus comes from 'crown', causes respiratory trouble

The coronavirus belongs to a family of viruses that attack the respiratory system. Corona in Latin means crown; and ancient Greek korone means garland. The name refers to the pointy fringe circling these viruses. The official designation Covid-19, stands for coronavirus disease and '19' denotes the year it was identified. Most coronaviruses infect only animals but seven, including SARS and MERS, are known to infect humans



What are the chances of getting the virus on a plane or a train?

WHO says there is very little evidence that a communicable disease can be transmitted on board an aircraft but notes conditions in which one may catch an infection in a plane, train or bus. Coronavirus may jump between passengers who are seated in the same area of a plane or train, usually as a result of the infected individual coughing or sneezing or by touch (directly touching handles or seat covers touched by an infected person, too, is a risk factor). But especially where planes are concerned, they are relatively safe as the air on an aircraft is constantly replaced

What is the test to confirm coronavirus? How long does it take for the result to come?

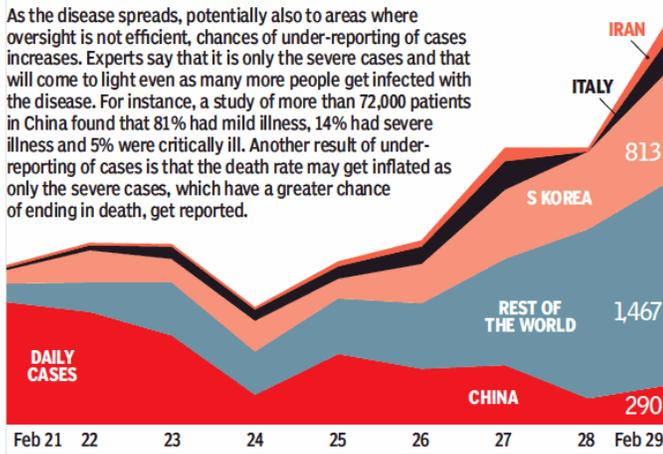
Bronchial washes/ lung washing samples are taken to test for coronavirus and it takes 6-8 hours for the results to come. The treatment is mostly symptomatic, that is, if someone has fever, medicine is given for that

It is now spreading faster across the world than inside China

On February 20, the WHO situation report on Covid-19 had identified 26 countries that had reported cases of coronavirus. The update for February 29 showed it had more than doubled to 60 countries in a little over a week

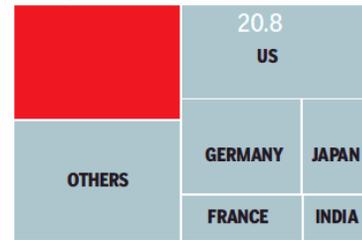
As the disease spreads, potentially also to areas where oversight is not efficient, chances of under-reporting of cases increases. Experts say that it is only the severe cases and that will come to light even as many more people get infected with the disease. For instance, a study of more than 72,000 patients in China found that 81% had mild illness, 14% had severe illness and 5% were critically ill. Another result of under-reporting of cases is that the death rate may get inflated as only the severe cases, which have a greater chance of ending in death, get reported.

Experts suggest some people may transmit the virus very early in their illness or even before they are showing symptoms



Why a China in Covid-19 grip is bad news for biz

23.6% China accounts for the largest share of global trade

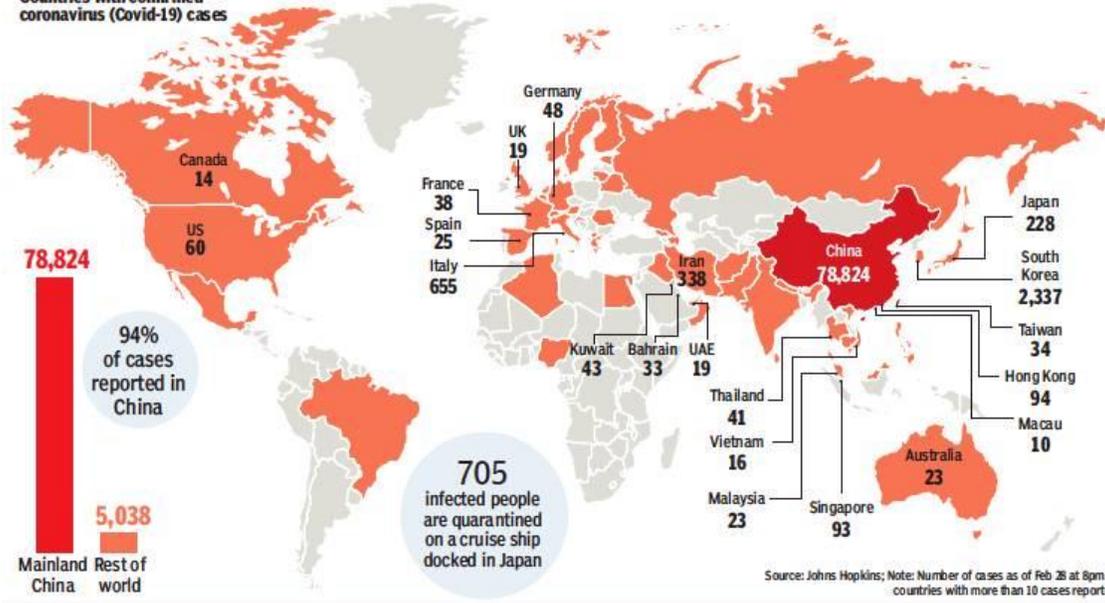


20.6% Electrical machinery accounts for largest share of India's imports from China. It is followed by reactors/boilers, organic chemicals, plastics, and fertilizers

Source: WHO, CDC, NYT, BBC, Media reports
Compiled by Kenneth Mohanty
Graphic: Sajeew Kumarapuram

WUHAN VIRUS SPREADS TO 53 COUNTRIES

Countries with confirmed coronavirus (Covid-19) cases



Source: Johns Hopkins; Note: Number of cases as of Feb 28 at 8pm in countries with more than 10 cases reported