

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAR 24, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - has announced a complete lockdown of the state from 6pm on March 24 till March 31 to prevent spread of Covid-19.**
- ✓ The state would also enforce Section 144 of CrPc during this period to prevent more than four people from gathering at any place
- ✓ This was announced by the chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami around 3pm in the assembly on March 23
- ✓ The State invoked provisions of Section 2 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 to impose the restrictions.
- ✓ The Chief Minister also announced an additional ₹500 crore to fight the virus.
- ✓ Even though the Centre had recommended lockdown only in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Erode districts, the state has decided to lockdown all the districts as a proactive measure

What will work	What won't work	What it means to be under Sec 144
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  > Stores selling milk, vegetables, groceries, poultry, fish and meat  > All hospitals, private and public, labs and medical stores  > ATMs to be open. Banks to work with minimal staff  > Petrol pumps, LPG and bottling plants  > Amma canteens and hotels will be allowed to serve take-aways  > Transport arrangements made by the IT, ITES, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  industries and establishments  > Public utilities such as electricity, water supply and municipal services, ports and airports, manufacture, transport and delivery of drinking water cans  > Collectorates, revenue, police, fire and rescue services, electricity, water, prisons, health, judiciary and local body departments to function  > Tea shops can work, but without crowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  > Home-delivery of food items through Swiggy, Zomato, Uber Eats  > Shops, commercial establishments and Tasmac outlets  > Govt and private buses and interstate and inter-district vehicular transport of all nonessentials to be stopped from 6pm March 24 to March 31  > Ban on taxi, cab & auto services  > All private firm staff advised to work from home  > Except for emergency work, ban on all construction activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > People can come out of their houses only for essential services > Individuals must maintain a gap of one metre or three feet in public places > Congregation of more than four people prohibited in public places

- ✓ However, vehicles involved in essential services would be allowed to operate

- ✓ All other vehicles such as government buses, private buses, other private vehicles, autos and taxis would not be allowed to travel from one district to another.
 - ✓ Shops selling essentials such as medicine, milk, vegetables, groceries, fish, poultry and meat will be allowed to remain open.
 - ✓ All other shops and malls will remain closed till March 31
 - ✓ Similarly, essential government services and departments like police, health, district administration, fire service, prison, local bodies, electricity and judiciary will continue to function.
 - ✓ The Government is converting the Omandurar Government Multispeciality Hospital on Anna Salai into a special facility with 350 beds to treat COVID-19 patients
 - ✓ The state is also forming a task force of 10 senior doctors to study treatment protocols for Covid-19 from across the world.
 - ✓ This was announced by the state Health Minister, C. Vijayabaskar
 - ✓ The Puducherry Cabinet too recommended a lockdown from 9 p.m. on March 23 to March 31.
- **Tamil Nadu – is suspected to have recorded its first case of cluster or community transmission of Covid-19 on March 23.**
- ✓ On March 23, three more patients were tested 'positive' in the state
 - ✓ A 54-year-old Madurai resident hospitalised in Rajaji Government General Hospital in Madurai doesn't have any travel history.
 - ✓ He was tested 'positive' for the disease.
 - ✓ The other two patients, who tested positive in Chennai and Tirupur, had a travel history to London.
 - ✓ A 25-year-old who travelled from London to Chennai has been admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital.
 - ✓ Another 48-year-old businessman from Tirupur who also travelled from London flew into the Chennai International Airport on March 15, is currently in the isolation ward of ESI Hospital, Coimbatore.
 - ✓ With these cases, the state now has 12 Covid-19 positive cases.
 - ✓ On March 23, the number of people under home isolation went up 89 from 54 on March 22
 - ✓ The number of people in home quarantine – either because they travelled from Covid-19 hit countries or came in contact with positive people – went up to 12,519 from 9,424 a day before
 - ✓ Chennai alone is accounting for 3,600 persons followed by 1,044 persons in Kanyakumari being placed under 'home' quarantine.
- **The Greater Chennai Corporation – has decided to go public with the details of people who are under 'home quarantine'**

- ✓ The corporation will paste stickers outside houses where people have been home quarantined
- ✓ It includes those who may have returned from foreign countries and/or are showing symptoms of coronavirus infection such as fever, cough or cold.

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION
பெருநகர் சென்னை மாநகராட்சி

COVID 19 / கொரோனா தொற்று
DO NOT VISIT / உள்ளே நுழையாதே
HOME UNDER QUARANTINE
தனிமைப்படுத்தப்பட்ட வீடு

FROM _____ TO _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

NUMBER OF PERSONS _____

For more information:
Greater Chennai Corporation Control Room
Phone : 044-2530 4520

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Call or 24x7 Helpline
Phone : 044-29519880 / 044-29519860
Mobile : 94443 40406/ 87544 48477
#SaveCoronaTN #TN, Together, Against Corona

- ✓ According to the civic body, at present 3,000 people are in home quarantine across the city
 - ✓ Of these, 991 had already completed the 28-day mandatory period of quarantine
 - ✓ Teynampet zone had the maximum number of people in home quarantine with 799 cases followed by Adyar (523) and Kodambakkam (358), as per the data provided by the Corporation.
 - ✓ The civic body is expected to spend ₹150 crore for undertaking various prevention activities for COVID-19.
 - ✓ Starting March 24, Chennai Corporation will carry out disinfection of all streets in the city
 - ✓ The state health department has decided to initiate legal action against people who violate home quarantine and increase risks of community transmission
 - ✓ This was announced by the state health minister C Vijayabaskar on March 23
 - ✓ As on March 23, 12,519 including 3,600 in Chennai were on the state's list for home quarantine
 - ✓ These people were 'quarantined' either because they had travelled to a Covid-19 affected country or because they had come in contact with a person who was tested positive for the viral infection.
 - ✓ The State government had also mandated all suspected cases and foreign returnees who arrived after March 1 to remain under strict home quarantine for such period as decided by local health authorities
- **The Union health ministry - has provided its permission to two private labs in Tamil Nadu along with ten others across the country to draw samples and test for Covid-19.**

- ✓ The names of these two labs were released by the Department of health research, Indian Council of Medical Research
 - ✓ It includes the Department of clinical virology at Christian Medical College in Vellore and the Department of laboratory services in Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd, Chennai
 - ✓ These labs were asked to follow the guidelines prescribed by the ICMR for drawing, transporting samples and testing samples.
 - ✓ It is also mandated to share information with the health ministry.
 - ✓ As of now, the centre has announced that the cost of the test cannot exceed ₹4,500 – including ₹1,500 for screening.
 - ✓ In the state, the seven government labs including the King Institute for Preventive Medicine and the virology lab in Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital will continue testing free of cost for all patients.
 - ✓ Moreover, all 24 government medical college hospitals in the state are allowed to draw samples from patients suspected to have Covid-19.
 - ✓ As per the revised testing strategy released by the ICMR on March 20, people who show symptoms of the disease cough, fever and breathlessness within 14 days of international travel must be tested.
 - ✓ Besides this, healthcare workers who are showing symptoms of the disease, all patients showing severe acute respiratory illness and asymptomatic direct and high-risk contacts of confirmed case (those who live in the same household as a positive patient and healthcare worker who examined a patient without adequate precaution) should be tested between day 5 and 14.
- **The Tamil Nadu assembly - gave its nod to the government to increase its expenditure for financial year 2019-20 by ₹6,408 crore on March 23**
- ✓ Out of this amount, the maximum share of ₹5,732 crore goes to the health department
 - ✓ The government has also sanctioned ₹153 crore towards purchase of medicines for various government medical institutions.
 - ✓ It has also allotted about ₹231 crore to the school education department under Samagra Siksha Abhiyan scheme and for installing various equipment in government high and higher secondary schools.
 - ✓ The energy department gets ₹114 crore for setting up cyclone-resilient electrical network under the coastal disaster risk reduction project
- **The 15th Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly- is expected to pass demands for grants to a total of 27 government departments in a single day on March 24**
- ✓ This will create a record of sorts, surpassing the feat it had achieved in 2004, when it passed demands for grants to 24 departments in one day.
 - ✓ The Business Advisory Committee, chaired by Speaker P. Dhanapal, decided to wind up the already re-scheduled Assembly session within a day on March 24.

- ✓ As per the Practice and Procedure of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly (Serial number 34 on financial business), “whenever demand is moved by the Minister, he will lay the policy notes before the Assembly”
- ✓ In one go, the demands of 24 departments were passed by the House on July 31, 2004, during the erstwhile AIADMK regime, when J Jayalalithaa was the Chief Minister and C. Ponnaiyan (currently vice-chairperson of the State Planning Commission) was the Finance Minister.
- **On March 23, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - announced allocation of ₹10 crore under the Chief Minister’s Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme for treatment of mentally-challenged, people suffering from muscular dystrophy and the hearing-impaired.**
- ✓ He also announced the creation of differently-abled women and children compensation scheme — 2020 fund for the welfare of differently-abled women and children, who are the victims of sexual assault.
- ✓ Making a suo motu statement in the Assembly, the CM announced that the government would allot 1.31 acres of land to construct a high school building for hearing-impaired students at ₹6.70 crore.

STATES

- **The complete lockdowns - were announced in 30 states/UTs and a total of 548 districts across the entire country, as part of massive effort to stop the spread of Covid-19**
- ✓ The government of Punjab and the Chandigarh administration have imposed curfew.
- ✓ The state government in India’s second worst hit state Kerala has decided to follow other states by ordering complete shutdown of the state till March 31.
- ✓ Other states where total lockdown was announced on March 23 were Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Assam and Manipur.
- ✓ On March 22, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram had ordered total lockdown.
- ✓ The Odisha government on March 23 decided to paste stickers outside the houses of people mandated to be in home quarantine to ensure that they do not step out.
- ✓ At present, around 3,600 people who arrived in Odisha from abroad, on or after March 4, are under home quarantine
- ✓ Meanwhile, the centre has decided to stop flying all domestic commercial flights till March 31
- ✓ A total of 650 aircraft operated by various Indian airlines will now be grounded across airports.

- ✓ Non-schedule charter flights and private aircraft were also not allowed to fly till the month-end.
- ✓ Only all-cargo, medical evacuation and special DGCA-approved flights, apart from offshore helicopter operations, will be allowed in the civilian airspace.
- ✓ However, this restriction will also not apply to aircraft and helicopters belonging to or being operated on behalf of state/UT governments

NATIONAL

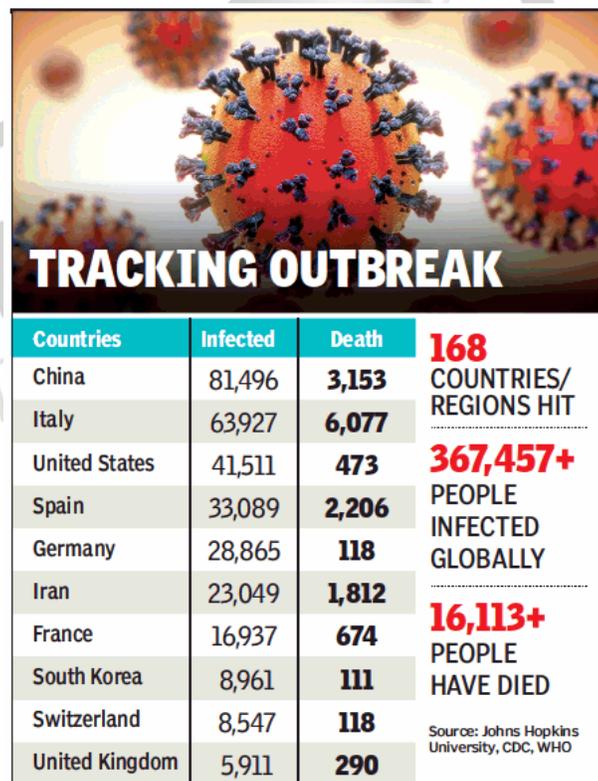
- **Covid-19 infections - continued to increase rapidly across the country, with 99 fresh cases reported from states on March 23 — by far the highest for a single day**
 - ✓ The count of coronavirus cases in the country stood close to 500, with 498 cases reported so far by the states.
 - ✓ As many as 246 cases have been reported in the past three days, accounting for nearly half of all cases reported since January 30
 - ✓ The health ministry has confirmed 478 Covid-19 cases, of which 40 are foreigners.
 - ✓ On the brighter side, 35 patients have so far recovered and have been discharged
 - ✓ Two more Covid-19 patients succumbed to the disease, taking the coronavirus death toll to 9 so far.
 - ✓ The two Covid-19 deaths were reported from West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh, even as Kerala (28) and Maharashtra (23) have registered the highest number of fresh cases
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the Indian Council of Medical Research, which has been conducting mathematical modelling of Covid-19 cases in the country, announced that strictly-implemented social-distancing measures will reduce the overall expected number of novel coronavirus cases by 62% and the peak number of cases by 89%.
 - ✓ The Government was also expanding the network of laboratories to test suspected Covid-19 cases
 - ✓ The government's research wing, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has so far approved 16 private diagnostic lab chains with more than 15,000 collection centres spread across the country
 - ✓ Besides, two companies have also secured approval from the ICMR for locally manufactured testing kits.
 - ✓ These kits can be used in designated public and private labs for testing Covid-19.
 - ✓ Following the increase in number of cases, the government provided detailed guidelines last week allowing private diagnostic labs to start testing of suspected Covid-19 cases.
 - ✓ As per the norms, any NABL-accredited lab meeting the criteria and having US-FDA or EU-approved kits can conduct commercial tests.
 - ✓ The price for testing was capped at ₹4,500 even as the government requested the private sector to do tests for free or at subsidised price.

- ✓ According to ICMR's latest update on March 23, 18,383 samples were tested for Covid-19.
- ✓ The health ministry reported 433 confirmed cases by March 23.
- **The Finance Bill, 2020 - was passed by Lok Sabha in a record 29 minutes on March 23, without any discussion or debate.**
- ✓ The decision to pass the legislation was taken at an all-party meeting convened by Speaker Om Birla with the participation of floor leaders
- ✓ The exceptional step was taken following the countrywide lockdown and the need to adjourn Parliament early
- ✓ Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved an amendment to the Finance Bill to increase the limit up to which the government can raise special excise duty on petrol and diesel to ₹18 per litre and ₹12 per litre, respectively
- ✓ The government had on March 14 raised excise duty on petrol and diesel by ₹3 per litre each to raise an additional ₹39,000 crore in revenue annually.
- ✓ This hike took the special additional excise duty to maximum permissible in law — ₹10 in case of petrol and ₹4 in case of diesel.
- ✓ The bill provided a major relief for Indians whose children study abroad
- ✓ Henceforth, the overseas remittance out of specified domestic loans will attract 0.5% TCS (tax collected at source), for which credit is available while calculating the annual liability, against the 5% proposed in the Finance Bill on overseas remittances of more than ₹7 lakh.
- ✓ The government relaxed the proposed rules for taxing non-resident Indians to ensure that the middle-class and normal workers are not burdened
- ✓ It includes NRIs with income more than 15 lakhs from business owned by them in India will fall under tax net.
- ✓ The government also decided to abolish the dividend distribution tax on companies that earned dividend from their overseas arms.
- ✓ Later in the day, Rajya Sabha too approved the general budget, including the Finance Bill, and returned it to the lower House.
- ✓ The bill provides the financial proposals of the fiscal year 2020-21
- ✓ With the bill now being passed, the proposals made under the Union Budget 2020-21 has come into effect.
- ✓ The Government proposed to spend Rs 30,42,230 crores of rupees in the financial year 2020-21, which is 12.7% more than the revised estimate of 2019-20.
- **The Parliament - was adjourned sine die on March 23 in view of the drastic nationwide measures to encourage social distancing to combat the coronavirus.**
- ✓ The House was scheduled to adjourn on April 3.

- ✓ On the last day, the Lok Sabha passed the Finance Bill, a crucial budget legislation, without a discussion after the leaders of all political parties agreed to forgo a debate due to an “extraordinary situation”
- ✓ After the passage of the Bill, two more Bills for a National Security University was introduced by Minister of State for Home G. Kishen Reddy.
- ✓ The Budget session, the first part of which began on January 31, saw 109 hours and 23 minutes of work done in 23 sittings
- ✓ The Rajya Sabha passed 12 Bills, 6 of which were passed on March 23, the last day of the curtailed session.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Globally, more than 1.5 billion people — around 20% of the world’s population — were asked or ordered to stay home on March 23 to combat the spread of the coronavirus.**
- ✓ Worldwide, over 3,67,000 people have been infected and more than 16,000 have died from the virus



- ✓ Even though the cases in China have started to reduce except the reporting of imported cases, the dangers to Europe and US have started to grow ‘exponentially’
- ✓ As per WHO, it took 67 days to reach 100,000 cases worldwide but within just four days it has gone from 2,00,000 to 3,00,000 cases

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **Nepal and Bhutan - have both all but shut their borders with India**
- ✓ Both these countries have imposed restrictions on the movement of people across the border because of the novel coronavirus threat.
- ✓ However, the movement of goods is expected to continue across the border.
- ✓ Both countries have responded positively to India's proposal for a joint strategy to check the spread of the coronavirus outbreak.
- ✓ Nepal and Bhutan are at the centre of India's 'Neighborhood First' policy
- ✓ India and Nepal have for long had free movement of people across their borders and Indian companies remain the biggest investors in the country

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The health ministry - allowed use of anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine for prevention of Covid-19 disease in the country.**
- ✓ However, it has been permitted to be used only in two cases –
 - ✓ High-risk cases involving healthcare workers engaged in care of suspected or confirmed patients and for
 - ✓ Asymptomatic household contacts taking care of positive cases.
- ✓ The advisory is based on recommendations of national task force for Covid-19, constituted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
- ✓ It emphasised that the anti-malarial drug had been allowed for two categories only for prophylactic or prevention purpose.
- ✓ The health ministry reported 433 confirmed cases of Covid-19 till March 23.
- ✓ Of this, 402 were active cases, 23 were cured and one was a migrated case.
- ✓ Besides, there were seven deaths reported
- ✓ The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has also approved the protocol recommended by the ICMR's national task force for restricted use in emergency situation.
- ✓ The drug should only be given under prescription from a registered practitioner
- ✓ However, the health workers were advised to follow all prescribed public health measures, including frequent washing of hands, respiratory etiquette, keeping safe distance of minimum one metre and use of personal protective equipment.
- ✓ The Hydroxychloroquine drug has been found to be effective against SARS-CoV-2 infection during the laboratory studies
- ✓ The drug is usually prescribed to malaria patients.
- ✓ Both South Korea and Italy have been using the drug to contain the spread of COVID-19

ECONOMY

- **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) - has announced several measures to fight the COVID-19 outbreak, which includes setting up India's first dedicated COVID-19 hospital in Mumbai**
- ✓ Within two weeks, Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation Hospital has set up a 100-bedded centre at the Seven Hills Hospital, Mumbai, to treat Covid-19 patients.
- ✓ The RIL conglomerate has also set up special quarantine facilities, imported additional test kits and enhanced its production capacities to produce 1,00,000 face-masks per day, as part of its various measures to fight the spread of disease.

APPOINTMENTS

- **BJP national vice-president Shivraj Singh Chouhan - was sworn in for a fourth term as chief minister of Madhya Pradesh on March 23**



- ✓ Governor Lalji Tandon administered the oath in the presence of select BJP leaders, MLAs and top bureaucrats.
- ✓ Acting chief minister Kamal Nath and former chief minister Uma Bharti were also present.
- ✓ The swearing-in comes after the Kamal Nath-led Congress government lost its majority in the state.
- ✓ Kamal Nath had resigned from the post of CM on March 19
- ✓ Shivraj Singh Chouhan is a five-time member of the Parliament, representing Vidisha constituency in the Lok Sabha between 1991 and 2006
- ✓ He had previously served as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh for three consecutive terms from 2005-2008, 2008-2013 and finally from 2013-2018.
- ✓ Chouhan previously served as the general secretary and president of BJP's Madhya Pradesh state unit.
- ✓ The Kamal Nath-led Congress government lost its majority in Madhya Pradesh after its senior leader Jyotiraditya Scindia defected from the party and 22 MLAs allegedly loyal to him also sent in their resignations.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ World Tuberculosis Day – March 24



- ✓ The Day is being observed to raise public awareness about the devastating social and economic impacts caused by the disease
- ✓ Theme 2020 – It's Time
- ✓ The idea was proposed by International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD).
- ✓ Dr Robert Koch announced the discovery of the bacterium causing Tuberculosis on the very same day in 1882, when the disease was deadly and was killing one out of seven people in Europe and America
- ✓ After its discovery, it was called Koch's bacillus and today it is called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- ✓ In 1905, Koch was given the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for his investigations and discoveries in relation to tuberculosis".
- ✓ According to the United Nations, currently around 4,000 people lose their lives due to Tuberculosis every day.

