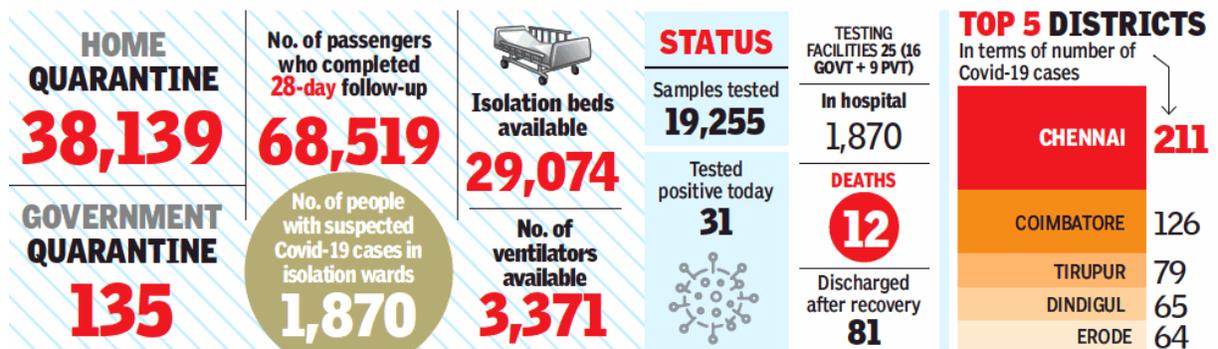


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APR 15, 2020

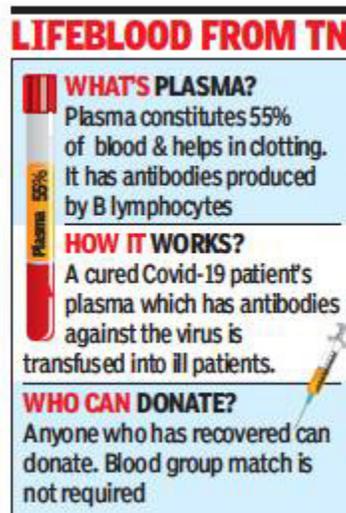
TAMIL NADU

- Tamil Nadu - recorded 31 new cases, the lowest daily rise of the infection since March 31, taking the total number of cases in the state to 1,204
- ✓ A 96-year-old Covid-19 patient died in the state on April 14, taking the death toll to 12
- ✓ Of the 31 positive cases, 21 were from the 'single source event' (Tablighi Jamaat event in Delhi)
- ✓ Among the other 10 cases, one was a health worker in Madurai, another had travel history and eight others had contact history.
- ✓ Dindigul recorded the highest number of cases with nine.
- ✓ The state has discharged 23 people on April 14, taking the total number of people sent back home to 81



- ✓ Chennai continued to remain on top with 211 cases followed by Coimbatore with 126 cases and Erode 64.
- ✓ Six districts in the states had more than 50 cases each and 17 of them were categorised as 'red' zones.
- ✓ The number of people who were on active home quarantine came down to 38,139 from 43,278.
- ✓ A total of 68,519 passengers had completed government's 28-day mandatory quarantine, as on date.

- ✓ With more than 2,300 samples tested on April 14, the total number of samples tested has gone up to 19,255
- ✓ The state is ramping up testing across all its 16 government laboratories, apart from the nine private labs available.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu has the third largest number (1,204) of cases of Covid-19, after Maharashtra (2,684) and New Delhi (1,561).
- ✓ In the treatment front, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Delhi sought the Centre's permission to conduct convalescent plasma therapy last week



- ✓ Kerala has already received permission from Indian Council of Medical Research and is likely to commence trials within this month.
- ✓ Convalescent plasma therapy is a procedure in which the plasma with antibodies obtained from the blood of patients cured of the disease is transfused to Covid-19 patients who are critical.
- ✓ The antibodies in the plasma from recovered person bind to specific 'alien' antigens in the infected person and destroys it
- ✓ Earlier, convalescent plasma therapy was tried in epidemics like Ebola, SARS and MERS and has shown significant results.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the Greater Chennai Corporation has set up 35 walk-in kiosks at various parts of the city where public can give their swabs and get checked through the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests.
 - ✓ So far, such kiosks have been set up at 16 places, mainly in Royapuram, Teynampet and Anna Nagar zones which have a sizeable number of positive cases.
- ✓ The civic body has surveyed 1.42 crore households cumulatively in their door-to-door fever checking initiative, as on April 13
- ✓ In a related move, the state fisheries department announced that traditional boats and motorised boats fitted with not more than 10HP outboard motor/inboard motor will be allowed to fish daily up to 12 nautical miles.
 - ✓ Mechanised boats will not be allowed to fish and must follow the two-month fishing ban that begins on April 15.

- ✓ The move is expected to benefit 2 lakh fishermen directly and 2 lakh indirectly in 13 coastal villages.
- ✓ This is as per the earlier directions of Ministry of Home Affairs

STATES

- **On April 13, the Bihar government – banned the spitting of tobacco or pan masala in public places**
- ✓ The ban is announced by the State Government as spitting tobacco in public places poses a threat to public health by spreading COVID-19, encephalitis, tuberculosis, swine flu or other viral diseases.
- ✓ Under Section 268 and 269 of the IPC, the Government has also announced that those who violates the order will be punished with either six months in jail or a penalty of ₹200
- ✓ Earlier, the Centre had urged the State governments to ban the use of tobacco in public places to check the spread of the pandemic.

NATIONAL

- **On April 14, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - announced the extension of countrywide lockdown against the coronavirus pandemic until May 3**
- ✓ The PM said that the 'stay-at-home' rule will be enforced even more stringently at least until April 20.
- ✓ With the decision, the period of the lockdown, which began on March 25, would now be extended to 40 days.

TOUGHER ENFORCEMENT FOR FIRST WEEK		
Greater strictness in implementation of lockdown for the first week	Some curbs may be eased after April 20 in areas where disease has been controlled to help poor restart livelihoods. Curbs can be reimposed if lockdown rules are breached	Detailed guidelines to be issued by MHA on Wednesday which will set out exceptions like essential items
PRIME MINISTER'S 7-POINT APPEAL		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take care of elderly, especially those with chronic diseases 2. Adhere to 'Lakshman rekha' of lockdown and social distancing. Use homemade face-covers and masks 3. Follow Ayush ministry's instructions to enhance one's immunity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Download Arogya Setu app, inspire others to do so too 5. Take care of poor families 6. Be compassionate towards employees. Don't deprive them of livelihood 7. Pay utmost respect to Corona Warriors – doctors and nurses, sanitation workers and police 	
Why Till May 3, Not Apr 30? Because May 1 is a holiday and May 2 & 3 a weekend	VISUAL MESSAGE Modi appeared on TV with his face covered with a 'gamcha', which he removed at the start of his address. His Twitter handle also posted the photo of him wearing a face cover	

- ✓ However, the PM made it clear that the partial exemptions would be reversed "immediately" for non-compliance noticed by the authorities.
- ✓ Until April 20, the PM said that every town, every police station, every district, every state will be evaluated on how much the lockdown is being followed.

- ✓ He asked the people to be very vigilant about hotspots and stay alert about places which run the risk of becoming hotspots.
- ✓ In his address, the PM talked about partial reopening of sectors of the economy for the sake of daily-wagers and said that the government will issue guidelines shortly to address their needs.
- ✓ During the speech, Prime Minister invoked 'Saptapadi', the seven principles or seven vows, and urged people to follow them in their battle against coronavirus
- ✓ The PM also asked people to download the 'Aarogya Setu' App to assist the government in tracing contacts of those who have tested positive for coronavirus
- ✓ The Government has already announced its relief measures for the daily-wagers through the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojna, which was unveiled by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on March 26, 2020



- ✓ Under the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme, financial assistance worth about Rs 29,352 crore was transferred directly into the accounts of about 32 crore people to help survive the lockdown imposed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- ✓ Aarogya Setu, India's first comprehensive COVID-19 tracking app, was launched by the central government on April 2, 2020
 - ✓ Unlike the other two apps, MyGov app and Corona Kavach, which are also COVID-19 tracking apps, Aarogya Setu informs the user regarding the risks, best practices and relevant advisories for the containment of COVID-19.
 - ✓ Aarogya Setu app uses Bluetooth and GPS to provide information regarding the risk of COVID-19 exposure.
 - ✓ The app supports 11 languages and shows real-time tweets by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India in its social media feed.
- **India's count of new Covid-19 cases – dropped to 944 fresh infections on April 14, taking the cumulative total to 11,393 cases**
- ✓ It is still the second highest total recorded in a day, after a peak of 1,276 registered a day before

- ✓ With 34 infected patients passing away due to disease-related complications on the day, the country's death toll from the virus remained close to the 400-mark at 393

RAJ CORONA COUNT CROSSES 1K

Name of State/UT	Cases On April 14	Total Cases	Recovered	Deaths
Maharashtra	350	2,684	164	178
Delhi	51	1,561	25	30
Tamil Nadu	31	1,204	81	12
Rajasthan	108	1,005	133	11
Madhya Pradesh	127	741	38	53
Uttar Pradesh	83	672	59	10
Rest of India	194	3,526	505	99
Total	944	11,393	1,005	393

Source: State govts

- ✓ Maharashtra remained at the centre of India's virus outbreak, reporting another 350 cases and as many as 18 corona-related deaths, more than half of all fresh fatalities in the country.
 - ✓ Maharashtra remains by far the worst affected state, accounting for 24% of all cases and as much as 45% of all deaths recorded in the country
- ✓ The surge of cases reduced substantially in Delhi and Tamil Nadu on the day
- ✓ However, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan registered a surge with 127 and 108 cases, respectively.
- ✓ UP reported five more deaths, taking the state's toll to 10.
- ✓ Till date, nearly 380 out of 732 districts in the country have been affected by the outbreak
- ✓ However, 25 districts which reported Covid-19 cases earlier, had no positive case in last 14 days
- ✓ Delhi, which is the second most coronavirus-affected state, recorded 51 new cases and two Covid-19 deaths on the day, taking its Covid-19 tally to 1,561 and the death toll to 30
- ✓ Meanwhile, Meghalaya became the 32nd state/UT to record a Covid-19 case on April 13
- ✓ In the treatment side, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has ordered 33 lakh RT-PCR testing kits and 37 lakh rapid antibody diagnostic kits, which are expected any time.
 - ✓ The rapid testing kits will be used in hotspots along with RT-PCR testing (Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction)
- ✓ The ICMR has issued an advisory on feasibility of using 'pooled samples' for molecular testing for Covid-19 in areas with low prevalence (of less than 2% positivity rate) of the viral infection and for community survey.

- ✓ Pooled testing involves PCR screening of a specimen pool comprising multiple individual patient specimens, followed by individual testing (pool deconvolution) only if there is a positive result.
- ✓ Meanwhile, railways and airlines have announced the further suspension of their services for passengers till May 3, 2020.
 - ✓ The announcement came after PM Modi's live address on the lockdown extension till May 3.

INTERNATIONAL

- **In the US, fatalities from Covid-19 and related issues crossed 24,000 – highest among all countries in the world**
- ✓ The daily toll has started to stabilise after reaching a peak of more than 2,000 deaths on April 10

TRACKING OUTBREAK			
Countries	Infected	Death	
United States	5,84,073	24,485	185 countries/ regions hit
Spain	1,72,541	18,056	
Italy	1,62,488	21,067	19,49,210+ infected globally
France	1,37,887	15,729	
Germany	1,31,100	3,261	
United Kingdom	94,829	12,125	1,23,348+ have died
China	83,306	3,345	
Iran	74,877	4,683	4,67,818+ have recovered
Turkey	61,049	1,296	
Belgium	31,119	4,157	Source: Johns Hopkins University

- ✓ With cases of the coronavirus nearing the 2-million mark, and over 1,20,000 dead, the pandemic still remains a potent threat around the world
- ✓ Spain allowed some construction work to resume and a few factories to reopen on April 13.
- ✓ Austria and Italy followed with a gradual easing of restrictions and allowed some small shops to reopen.
- ✓ Denmark will allow children under 11 to return to schools and nurseries later this week, after a month of closures.
- ✓ Poland also plans to slowly start unfreezing the economy
- ✓ The IMF issued a stark warning on April 14 that the global economy this year faces the worst downturn since the Great Depression, projecting that the global economy will contract by 3% in 2020.

- ✓ In Spain, the overnight death toll from the coronavirus rose to 567 on April 14 from 517 a day earlier, but the country reported its lowest increase in new cases since March 18.
 - ✓ The total deaths climbed to 18,056 in the country.
- ✓ In Italy, which has the world's second highest death toll of 21,067, shops and supplies were allowed to open nationwide on April 14, provided they could maintain the social-distancing
- ✓ The Czech government has also decided to gradually reopen stores and restaurants from April 20.
- ✓ Britain has the fifth-highest death toll globally.
 - ✓ The death toll in British hospitals rose to 12,125 on April 13
- ✓ French President Macron extended a virtual lockdown to May 11, after the toll in the country rose to 15,729 on April 14
 - ✓ France registered 762 deaths over the past 24 hours in hospitals and nursing homes.
- ✓ Mainland China reported 89 new cases on the day, but no deaths.
 - ✓ China's border province of Heilongjiang saw 79 new cases on April 13, all Chinese citizens travelling home from Russia
 - ✓ As per China, Russia has become its largest source of imported cases, with a total of 409 infections originating in its neighbour.
- ✓ Meanwhile, China has approved early-stage human tests of two experimental vaccines to combat the new coronavirus

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Indian Scientists - have found that two bat species — Pteropus (Indian flying fox) and Rousettus (old world fruit bats) — found in four states of the country were carrying coronavirus**



- ✓ This was the first Indian study to examine bat samples for coronavirus
- ✓ One of the species, Pteropus, has earlier been linked to the nipah virus in India.
- ✓ Bat samples that tested positive for coronavirus were found in Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The research was conducted by scientists from the National Institute of Virology, Pune, and the National Institute of Virology in Kerala

- ✓ For the study, researchers collected 586 swab samples from the two species of bats in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Odisha, Telangana, Chandigarh and Puducherry during 2018 and 2019
- ✓ After that, they have conducted reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests to screen them for coronavirus.
- ✓ At least 25 samples from four states tested positive for presence of coronavirus.

DEFENCE

- **The US - has approved the sale of next lot of Harpoon Block-II missiles and MK-54 lightweight torpedoes worth \$155 million to India**
- ✓ These weapons will be fitted in about a dozen Poseidon-8I long-range maritime patrol aircrafts' acquired by India



- ✓ The Harpoon is an anti-ship missile used to attack an enemy boat or ship.
- ✓ The torpedoes is an underwater missile that can be launched below or above the water
- ✓ The lightweight Torpedoes will be used in anti-submarine warfare missions.
- ✓ The US has approved to sell 10 AGM-84L Harpoon air-launched missiles worth \$92 million and 19 MK-54 lightweight torpedoes worth \$63 million, along with associated equipment, to India.
- ✓ Boeing is the contractor for the first deal of Harpoon missiles, while Raytheon Integrated Defense System supplies the second deal of lightweight torpedoes.
- ✓ The missiles and torpedoes will be integrated into the P-8I aircraft by India to conduct critical 'sea' missions along with the US and other allied forces
- ✓ The US has already bagged lucrative Indian defence deals worth over \$21 billion just since 2007
- ✓ The latest deals include the supply of 24 MH-60 'Romeo' multi-role naval helicopters and six more Apache attack choppers for \$3 billion, which were signed during President Donald Trump's visit here in February.
- ✓ The Indian Navy operates eight P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft procured under a \$2.2 billion deal in 2009.

