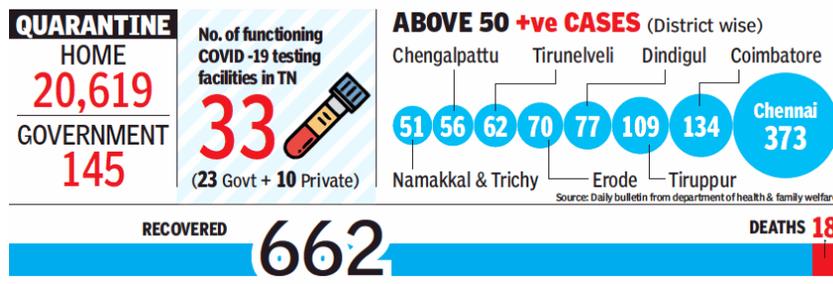
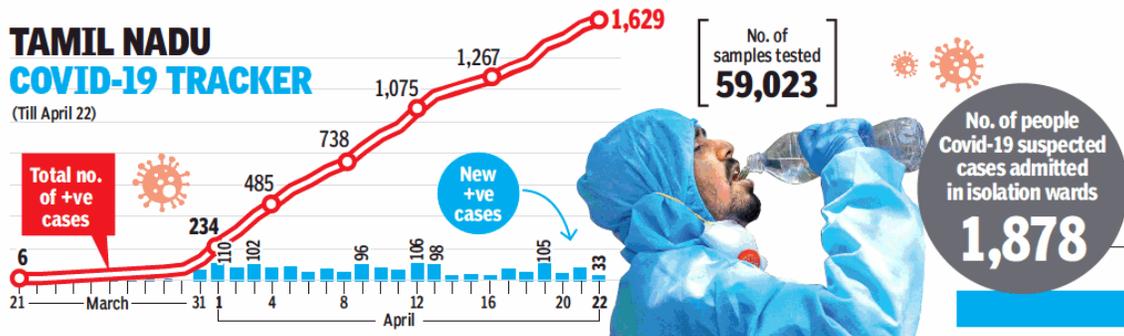


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APR 23, 2020

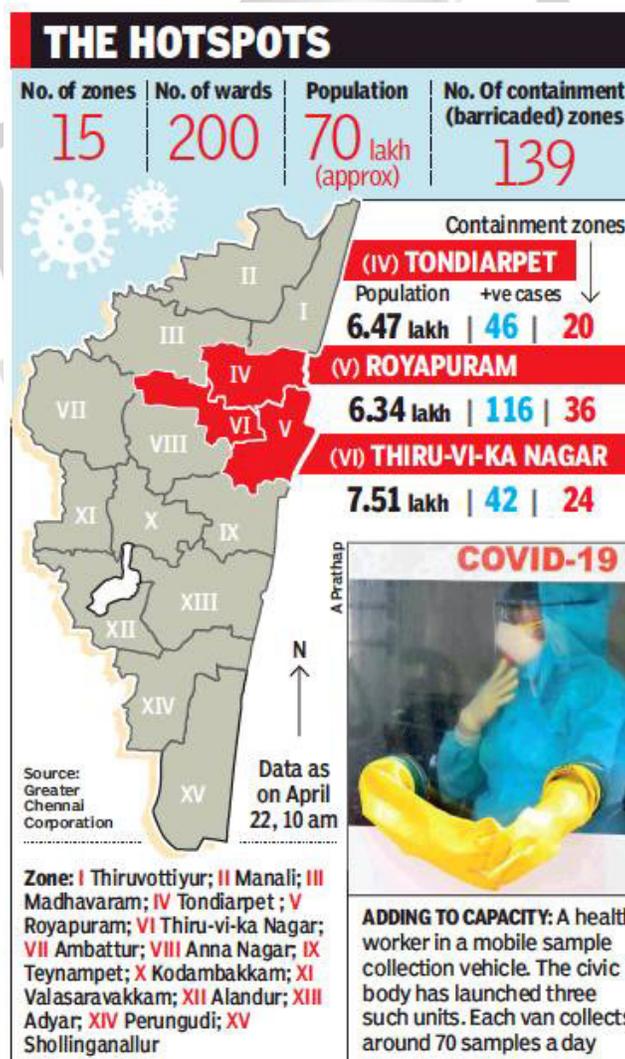
TAMIL NADU

- Tamil Nadu - reported 33 more Covid-19 positive cases on April 22, taking the total number of positive infections in the state to 1,629
- ✓ Only three patients — one woman in Dindigul and two men in Madurai — were primary cases, while the majority were contacts of already 'positive' patients



- ✓ The 33 people who tested positive on the day included four media professionals, two staff nurses from government hospitals, a front office staff of a private hospital, and a health worker.
- ✓ Chennai continued to report the maximum number of cases in the state.
- ✓ Of the 33 cases reported in the state, 15 were from the state capital.
- ✓ Also, on April 22, Dharmapuri recorded its first case of infection.
- ✓ Eight other districts recorded a single digit increase.

- ✓ As of now, Krishnagiri is the only district in the state that has not reported any case
- ✓ A Chennai-based government doctor and 76 others were discharged from hospitals, taking the total number of patients to 662, amounting to about 40% of those who tested positive for the viral infection so far
- ✓ The state still has 946 Covid-19 positive patients in various hospitals.
- ✓ On April 22, 5,978 samples were tested, taking the total count of tested samples to 59,023 samples in the entire state.
- ✓ A total of 1,878 persons were admitted to isolation facilities, while 23,760 persons were under home quarantine.
- ✓ A total of 155 persons were also kept in government quarantine facilities.
- ✓ The 3 neighbouring areas of Chennai, Royapuram, Thiru Vi Ka Nagar, Tondiarpet zones have accounted for 57% of the total Covid-19 positive cases in Chennai so far, contributing to 204 of the 358 cases.
- ✓ On April 21 alone, the three zones accounted for 36 of the 55 positive cases in the city, with Royapuram, a Covid-19 hotspot, reporting 24 new cases and taking its total to 116.



- ✓ Apart from these three in North Chennai, Anna Nagar, Teynampet and Kodambakkam account for 104 cases and the six zones together share 85 % of the positive cases in Chennai.
- ✓ As on date, the Greater Chennai Corporation has set up 118 containment zones in Chennai.
- ✓ Apart from these, there is another 300 containment zones set up in urban local bodies (ULBs), which houses 39.5 lakh people.
- ✓ Among the Municipal Corporations, Tiruppur accounts for the maximum number of people covered under containment zones with around 4.17 lakh people, followed by Coimbatore with 3.68 lakh people and Vellore with 2.78 lakh.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the government announced that there is a steady decline in the percentage of those testing positive.
 - ✓ There is a 10 percentage point decline from April 7
 - ✓ On April 7, when the state recorded 621 cases, it was announced that nearly 13% of the 5,015 samples tested were positive.
 - ✓ By April 22, 53,072 people had been tested and 3% were found to be infected
- **On April 22, Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced a solatium of ₹50 lakh to doctors and health workers engaged in Covid-19 treatment and prevention work, up from the earlier announced ₹10 lakh.**
- ✓ The CM also said that a family member will be provided with a government job based on their qualification.
- ✓ The state government will confer the highest award and certification to honour the service of private and public staff, including doctors, nurses and health workers, who lose their lives while engaged in coronavirus preventive work in government hospitals and healthcare centres
- ✓ In an official statement, the chief minister recalled the medical insurance cover of ₹50 lakh announced already by the Union government for health workers fighting Covid-19 pandemic
- **The Union territory of Puducherry - has the country's second highest testing rate as per the criteria prescribed by the Union Health Ministry and ICMR.**
- ✓ Puducherry has managed to maintain its tally of active COVID-19 cases to three till now, ever since the first case was reported in Mahe over three weeks ago
- ✓ The UT conducts 102 RT-PCR tests per lakh of population and is ranked second only to Delhi, which conducts 120 tests per lakh of population
- ✓ Jipmer, which has been designated as a COVID-19 hospital by the Union Health Ministry, has conducted 1,528 RT-PCR tests since January 27, which includes 1,319 tests from Puducherry and the rest from Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Puducherry has deferred deployment of rapid testing on the advice of the Government of India following widespread reports about false values.

- ✓ The Centre has provided 3,800 rapid test kits for Puducherry.

STATES

- **On April 22, Telangana - became the fifth state in the country to extend the home quarantine period from the existing 14 days to 28 days, to further check the rapid surge of coronavirus cases in the state.**
 - ✓ Odisha, Kerala, Assam and Jharkhand have already made 28-day home quarantine mandatory
 - ✓ Till now, the state was following a two-week home quarantine period, as the incubation period for suspected coronavirus cases is perceived to be 14 days.
 - ✓ However, in some cases, patients remained asymptomatic beyond the 14-day quarantine and tested positive thereafter.
 - ✓ Also, the government has instructed the authorities to conduct Covid-19 tests only on suspected cases of primary contacts, who get infected straight from a coronavirus positive patient.
 - ✓ These secondary contacts should be identified, stamped and placed in strict home quarantine for 28 days and monitored daily, as per the government order.
- **The Karnataka government - said it would ease lockdown 2.0 from April 23, allowing a host of services, ranging from private clinics and veterinary centres to home repairs involving carpenters, plumbers, electricians and mechanics.**
 - ✓ However, as per the government order issued on April 22, the relaxations will not be applicable to Covid-19 hotspots and containment zones across the state.
 - ✓ The educational institutions and transport services remain suspended with non-essential travel and congregations also remain barred everywhere.
 - ✓ The funerals will be allowed with a limit of 20 people attending
 - ✓ The IT & ITES firms will be allowed to function with minimum essential staff
 - ✓ The order also specifies that companies should encourage employees with children up to five years old and elderly (65 years and above) at home to work from their residence
- **In a first, Varanasi region – has sent a consignment of four tonnes of green vegetables, including green chilli, cucumber and gourd, for Delhi to be exported to the UK**
 - ✓ Earlier, vegetable consignments were sent only to the Gulf countries from Varanasi region.
 - ✓ The vegetables grown by a progressive farmer, Anil Kumar Rai, in his fields in Ghazipur district, will reach London by air cargo on April 23 from the Delhi airport.
 - ✓ The last dispatch from the region was made by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) on December 20, 2019 to Dubai

- ✓ It was the first trial shipment of vegetables through sea route to Dubai.
- ✓ APEDA strives to promote exports from various rich agricultural regions of India
- **The Bengal health department - has banned use of cell phones inside hospitals treating suspected and positive Covid-19 cases across West Bengal.**
- ✓ This applies to all persons inside the hospital, whether patient or staff on duty
- ✓ The Government has announced that no one will be allowed to carry, possess or use mobile phones inside Covid hospitals in the state, since mobile phones can be a potential source of spreading Covid-19 infection
- ✓ The order, passed on April 21, was addressed to district magistrates, chief medical officers of health (CMOHs) and superintendents of Covid-dedicated hospitals

NATIONAL

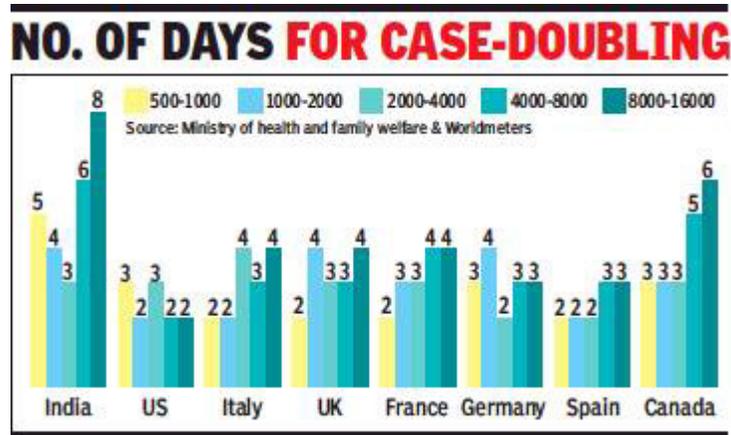
- **The surge of the Covid-19 outbreak - continues to be severe in Maharashtra and Gujarat, with the two western states accounting for more than 52% of the total 1,273 fresh cases recorded across the country on April 22.**
- ✓ Of the 39 new deaths reported on the day, 79% came from the two western states — 18 from Maharashtra and 13 from Gujarat.
- ✓ India's death toll as on date stands at 683.

55% OF DEATHS FROM MAHA, GUJ

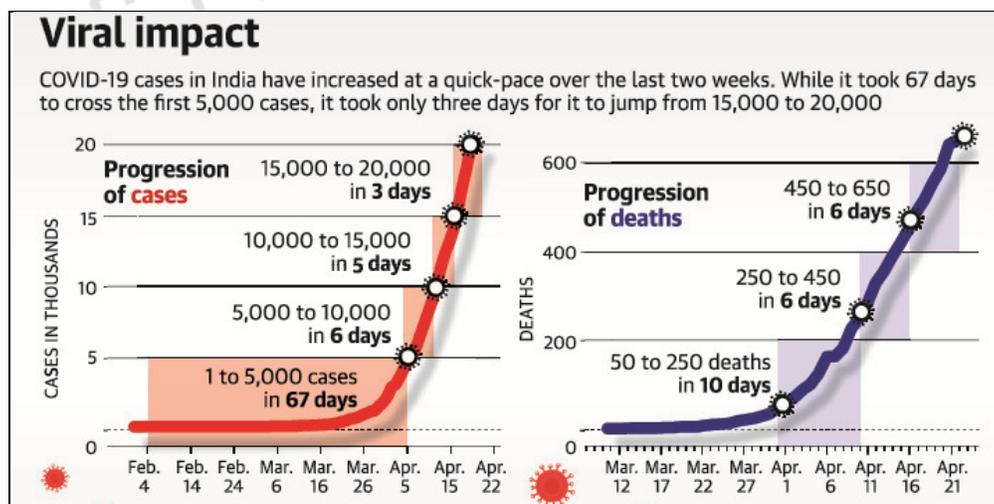
Name of State/UT	Cases on April 22	Total Cases	Recovered	Deaths
Maharashtra	431	5,649	164	269
Gujarat	229	2,407	179	103
Delhi	92	2,248	724	48
Rajasthan	153	1,888	344	27
Tamil Nadu	33	1,629	662	18
Madhya Pradesh	34	1,587	196	80
Uttar Pradesh	101	1,465	173	22
Telangana	15	943	194	23
Rest of India	185	3,539	866	93
Total	1,273	21,355	3,502	683

- ✓ With 229 fresh cases recorded in the last 24 hours, Gujarat emerged as the second worst affected state after Maharashtra, which reported 431 new cases on the day.
- ✓ Just five days ago, Gujarat was at number six, with Delhi, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh — apart from Maharashtra — reporting more confirmed cases.

- ✓ With 92 fresh cases (against 75 on previous day) and 2,248 in all, Delhi is now the third worst affected state in the country.
- ✓ With one more death, Delhi's toll now stands at 48
- ✓ Maharashtra, Gujarat and Delhi alone account for over 48% of the total 21,355 cases so far.
- ✓ However, on the positive side, 16% of Covid-19 patients have recovered from the disease across states.
- ✓ Delhi has recorded maximum of 724 recoveries, followed by Tamil Nadu (662), Rajasthan (344) and Kerala (308).



- ✓ With 431 new cases, Maharashtra's figure now stands at 5,649.
 - ✓ The total toll in the state now is 269
- ✓ With 13 deaths on the day, Gujarat's toll rose to 103, becoming the second state after Maharashtra to cross the 100-mark
- ✓ Uttar Pradesh recorded 101 new Covid-19 cases and no fresh deaths.
 - ✓ The state's tally stands at 1,465 as on date



- ✓ As per the Union Health Ministry, 20,971 individuals have been confirmed positive as of now, while the death toll stood at 652
- ✓ On the day, the country has reported 50 new COVID-19 deaths and the recovery of 3,959 patients

➤ **On April 22, the Union Cabinet - approved the promulgation of an ordinance to amend the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897**

- ✓ The ordinance seeks to make acts of violence against doctors and frontline health personnel a 'cognisable and non-bailable offence'
- ✓ It also proposes to provide compensation for injury to healthcare personnel or for damage or loss to property.
- ✓ In cases of attacks on healthcare workers, the ordinance directs to complete the investigation within 30 days and the final decision arrived at within one year.
- ✓ The ordinance proposes a punishment of prison term from three months to five years along with a fine ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹2 lakh for such attacks.
- ✓ In severe cases, where there are grievous injuries, the punishment will be six months to seven years and the fine from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh.
- ✓ In case of damage of property or assets, violators would also have to pay as compensation double the market price.

IMA CALLS OFF STIR

- Ordinance makes acts of violence against doctors and frontline personnel **cognisable and non-bailable offence**
- Attacks on health workers to attract jail term of up to **7 yrs and fine of up to ₹5 lakh**
- In case of **damage to property**, violators will have to **pay double the market price**
- IMA calls off stir after talks with Amit Shah & Harsh Vardhan

- ✓ The promulgation of ordinance is necessitated following the reports of attacks on healthcare personnel engaged in treating coronavirus cases across the country
 - ✓ The details of the ordinance were announced by I&B minister Prakash Javadekar after the meeting.
 - ✓ The Ordinance is expected to be implemented after the President's approval, due on April 23.
- **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – has allowed the states to continue using the antibody diagnostic kits for surveillance and monitoring purposes alone, as per protocol prescribed by it.**
- ✓ On April 21, the ICMR has asked the states to stop using rapid testing kits for Covid-19 for two days, so that it can check complaints of 'accuracy errors' in the kits and perform field validation and investigation by its teams
 - ✓ The agency has reiterated that to contain coronavirus infection, RT-PCR tests must be continued vigorously as the principal diagnostic test or the 'gold standard' for detecting the infection.
 - ✓ The states should follow the protocol that rapid tests are not meant for diagnostic purposes.

- ✓ India had taken delivery of 500,000 rapid antibody test kits from China last week and distributed it to several states, which have started using it.
 - ✓ As on April 22, the health ministry reported a total of 19,984 confirmed cases of coronavirus infection along with 640 deaths, which included 50 new deaths in the last 24 hours.
 - ✓ Till now, 3,870 people have been cured with a recovery rate of 19.36%, which has increased from the earlier rate of 17%.
- **On April 22, the Union Cabinet - approved a ₹15,000-crore investment package for the Covid-19 emergency response and health system preparedness**
- ✓ The funds will be used in three phases
 - ✓ For the first phase, ₹7,774 crore has been allotted for immediate use and the rest for medium-term support ranging between one to four years
 - ✓ The funds will be used for various healthcare plans, which include developing diagnostics and COVID-19-dedicated treatment facilities, centralising the procurement of essential medical equipment and drugs, strengthening the healthcare systems nationally and for preparedness and pandemic research in States.
 - ✓ The first phase of the plan has already been rolled out by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
 - ✓ As part of the first phase, ₹3,000 crore was already released to the States and the UTs for strengthening facilities as additional funds
 - ✓ Using the funds, the network of diagnostic laboratories had been expanded and orders for 13 lakh diagnostic kits had been placed.
 - ✓ The health workers, including ASHA workers, have been given insurance cover under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Britain – will be commencing the human trials of the new Covid-19 vaccine, being developed by the University of Oxford, from April 23**
- ✓ A total of 510 healthy volunteers, aged 18 to 55, will take part in the trial.
 - ✓ The vaccine is called ChAdOx1 nCoV-19
 - ✓ Some volunteers will be administered the vaccine, while others will take a control injection for comparison.
 - ✓ The trial will continue over a couple of weeks.
 - ✓ The UK government has also set aside £ 20 million for the Oxford team to fund their clinical trials.
 - ✓ The trial will provide valuable information on the safety aspects of the vaccine.
 - ✓ Globally, it will be the fourth Covid-19 vaccine to proceed successfully to human trials

- ✓ For developing the vaccine, a chimpanzee adenovirus vaccine vector (ChAdOx1) was chosen as the most suitable vaccine technology
 - ✓ The 'ChAdOx1' was chosen specifically, as it can generate a strong immune response from one dose
 - ✓ Moreover, it is not a replicating virus which cannot cause an ongoing infection in the vaccinated individual.
- ✓ The production of the vaccine is already being scaled up for larger trials, and potentially, future deployment.
- ✓ The second phase of the clinical trials involves increasing the maximum age of those who receive the vaccine to above 70.
- ✓ The third phase is to vaccinate 5000 volunteers aged over 18 years, giving half of them the Covid-19 vaccine
- ✓ The UK Health Department had confirmed 129,044 confirmed COVID-19 cases as of April 21, 2020, which includes a total of 17,337 deaths.
- ✓ The two UK universities - Oxford and Imperial College have been making rapid progress in developing the vaccine for novel coronavirus
- ✓ Meanwhile, a German biotechnology company, BioNTech, said that a vaccine it had developed with the US pharmaceutical company Pfizer had been approved for clinical testing in Germany.
- ✓ In the United States, a US government expert panel has formally recommended 'against' using a drug combination promoted by President Trump to fight the coronavirus, because of its potential harmful impact on the heart.
 - ✓ The National Institutes of Health's Covid-19 Treatment Guidelines warned doctors not to use the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine in combination with the antibiotic azithromycin outside of clinical trials.
 - ✓ In general, hydroxychloroquine and a related compound chloroquine have been used to treat malarial

TRACKING OUTBREAK			
Countries	Infected	Death	
United States	835,316	45,950	185 countries/ regions hit
Spain	2,08,389	21,717	
Italy	187,327	25,085	2,614,040+ infected globally
France	1,59,300	21,373	
Germany	149,401	5,185	182,004+ have died
United Kingdom	134,637	18,151	
Turkey	98,674	2,376	706,636+ have recovered
Iran	85,996	5,391	
China	83,868	4,636	
Russia	57,999	513	Source: Johns Hopkins University

- ✓ Globally, the total number of infections has surged over 2.6 million and a toll of over 1.8 lakh people was reported

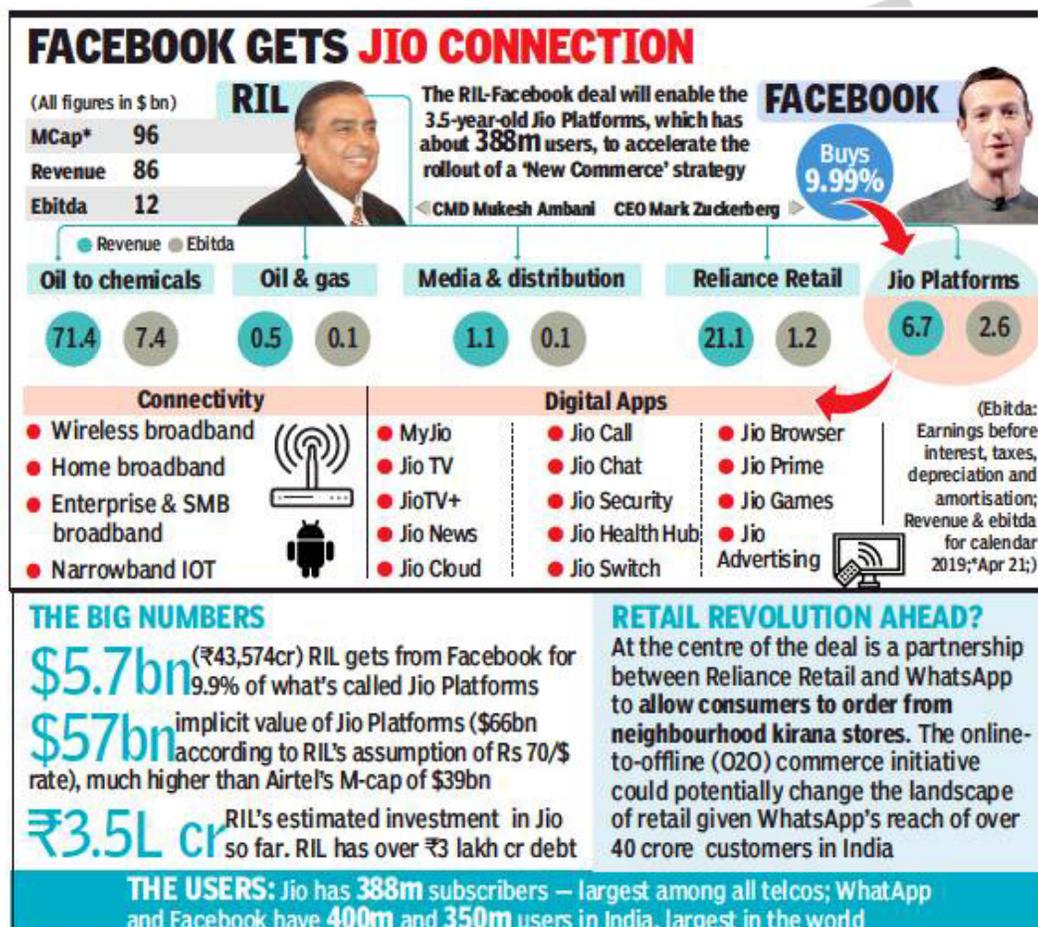
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi and Bhopal – have decided to test the ‘Sepsivac’ drug on 50 COVID-19 patients**
 - ✓ The drug was jointly developed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Ahmedabad based Cadilla Pharmaceuticals.
 - ✓ The drug ‘Sepsivac’ was developed to treat sepsis.
 - ✓ The result of the drug for the treatment of COVID-19 can be expected in the next two months.
 - ✓ The drug was originally developed to treat sepsis caused by a class of pathogens called ‘gram-negative bacteria’ which cause life-threatening infections.
 - ✓ The drug therapy is expected to stimulate a response in COVID-19 patients, as the similarities are found in the immune system for both cases
 - ✓ Sepsivac reduces the time period spent in ICU, ventilator, and incidence of secondary infection.
- **Mumbai-based Glenmark - may become the first company in India to offer an anti-retroviral, a class of drugs which has shown promise, and is being used as a potential treatment for the virus.**
 - ✓ Glenmark has developed antiretroviral (ARV) drug, Favipiravir, which has shown positive results globally
 - ✓ The company has applied for regulatory approval for trials in India
 - ✓ Favipiravir has demonstrated good results against influenza viruses and has been approved in Japan and China.
 - ✓ Japanese company Fujifilm sells the drug Favipiravir since 2014 to treat influenza, and other viral strains that don’t respond to other therapies.
 - ✓ The drug which was earlier used to treat Ebola, became off-patent last year, which implies generic versions can possibly be launched anywhere in the world.
 - ✓ Glenmark has also submitted its application to Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for marketing approval of Favipiravir.
 - ✓ Globally, it is either anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine, or anti-retrovirals/anti-virals like Favipiravir, Remdesivir and Lopinavir, that are increasingly being used for Covid treatment.
- **A South Korean company, SD Biosensor - has set up an Indian subsidiary, thereby becoming the first foreign company to produce rapid antibody test kits in India.**
 - ✓ The subsidiary will produce the rapid test kits from a plant in Haryana

- ✓ It is targeting to produce up to 500,000 kits per week
- ✓ The first batch of the test kits was rolled out on April 19, 2020.
- ✓ The launch is seen as an example of India's 'Make in India For World' initiative, as the company plans to step up production to meet growing demand in India as well as other parts of the world

ECONOMY

- **Social media giant, Facebook - has agreed to invest \$5.7 billion or ₹43,574 crore for a 9.99% stake in Mumbai-based Jio Platforms, a unit of Reliance Industries (RIL).**
- ✓ It is the largest ever Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India's tech sector and also the largest ever strategic investment by a technology company for a minority stake anywhere in the world



- ✓ The transaction gives Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook CEO and the world's seventh richest man according to Forbes, an opportunity to deepen FB's presence in India, which is its largest market in terms of users
- ✓ Jio Platforms, which houses all of RIL's digital businesses, proposes to use a part of the funds invested by Facebook to reduce its \$43 billion debt.

- ✓ The transaction will enable about \$4.1 billion to be paid back by Jio Platforms to parent RIL.
- ✓ The deal will also see a tie-up between RIL's retail e-commerce unit, JioMart and Facebook's WhatsApp to use each other's platforms to allow consumers to order items from their local grocery stores.
- ✓ The Facebook - Jio deal will help grow the small businesses on WhatsApp, the subsidiary of Facebook.
- ✓ It will boost e-commerce through a digital ecosystem and would empower over 60 million micro, small and medium (MSME) businesses in India, 30 million small merchants and 120 million farmers
- ✓ The Facebook investment values Jio Platforms at \$57 billion
- ✓ The Jio Platforms runs apps like JioSaavn and JioCinema and holds investments in Reliance Jio Infocomm, operator of the world's third largest mobile services network
- ✓ Reliance Jio Infocomm, which provides connectivity to more than 388 million subscribers, will continue to be a wholly owned subsidiary of Jio Platforms.
- ✓ If Jio Platforms were to be listed today, it would be the fifth most valued company in India after RIL, TCS, Hindustan Unilever and HDFC Bank.
- ✓ It is valued higher than India's second and third largest technology companies - Infosys and Wipro - combined.
- ✓ Jio Platforms will also be 70% more valuable than its closest rival Bharti Airtel, which had a closing market capitalisation of ₹2.73 lakh crore, as on date.
- ✓ The FB has three major platforms – Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram – with around 700 million-plus Indian users
- ✓ Launched in 2016, Jio is currently valued at \$65.95 billion and makes Reliance Industries (RIL) one among the top five listed companies by market capitalisation in India

INDEX

- **India - has been ranked at 142 out of 180 countries in the Global press freedom index, released in the annual 'Reporters without borders' report on April 21.**
- ✓ According to the index, there were no murders of journalists in India in 2019 when compared to 6 murders in 2018
- ✓ Norway has been ranked first in the list for the fourth successive year
- ✓ China is ranked at 177th position, which is just three places above North Korea, which is placed at the last place, 180th
- ✓ South Asia generally performs poorly in the index.
- ✓ 'Reporters without borders' is a non-profit organization established in 1985
- ✓ The aim of the organisation is to promote independent and free journalism as well as to defend media workers.

#RSFIndex | RSF unveils its 2020 World Press Freedom Index:

- 1: Norway 🇳🇴
- 2: Finland 🇫🇮
- 3: Denmark 🇩🇰
- 11: Germany 🇩🇪
- 34: France 🇫🇷
- 35: United Kingdom 🇬🇧
- 45: United States 🇺🇸
- 66: Japan 🇯🇵
- 107: Brazil 🇧🇷
- 142: India 🇮🇳
- 166: Egypt 🇪🇬
- 178: Eritrea 🇪🇷
- 180: North Korea 🇰🇵

142

in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index

RANKING

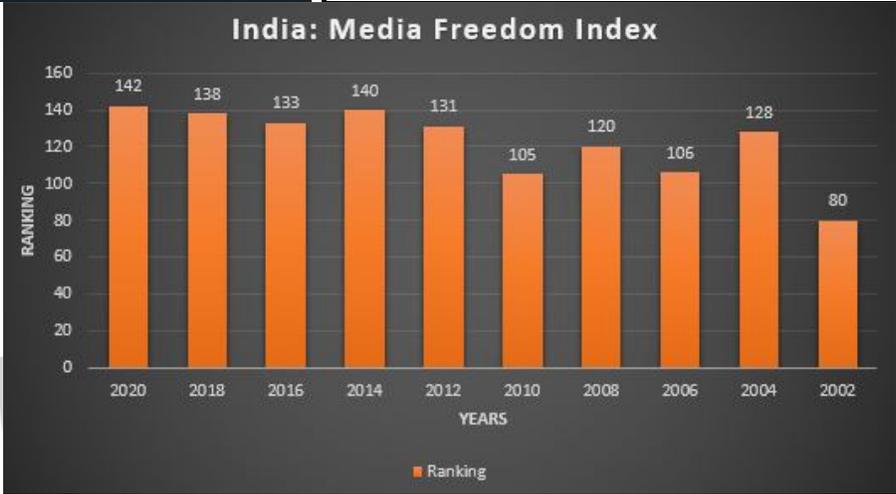
↓ -2

140 in 2019

GLOBAL SCORE

↑ -0.34

45.67 in 2019



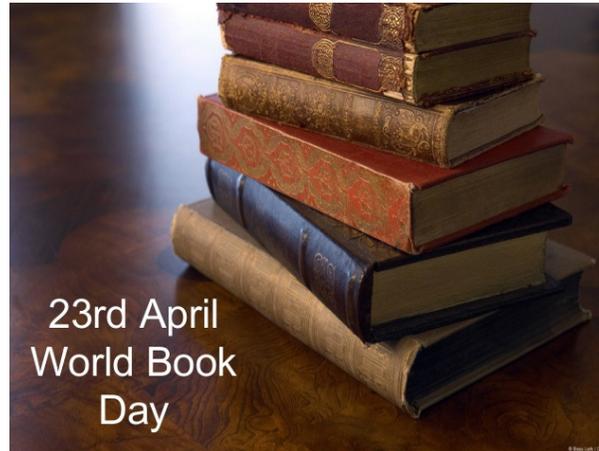
Ranking of Top 10 countries in World Press Freedom Index 2020:

S.No	Countries	Underlying Situation Score	Global Score	Diff. Position 2019
1.	Norway	7.84	7.84	0
2.	Finland	7.93	7.93	0
3.	Denmark	8.13	8.13	2
4.	Sweden	9.25	9.25	-1
5.	Netherlands	9.96	9.96	-1
6.	Jamaica	10.51	10.51	2
7.	Costa Rica	10.53	10.53	3
8.	Switzerland	10.62	10.62	-2
9.	New Zealand	10.69	10.69	-2
10.	Portugal	11.83	11-83	2

- ✓ It documents attacks on journalists around the world and works on safeguarding the right to freedom of information.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ World Book Day – April 23



- ✓ The day is also observed as 'International Day of Book or World Book and Copyrights Day'
- ✓ It is organised by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) every year.
- ✓ The World Book Day is being celebrated since 1995.
- ✓ The idea of 'World Book Day' was given by a writer 'Vicente Clavel Andres' to coincide the death anniversary of author Miguel de Cervantes
- ✓ Initially the day was proposed to be observed on his birthdate, October 7
- ✓ But as the death anniversaries of William Shakespeare and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega also falls on April 23, the later was selected.
- ✓ Miguel de Cervantes was 17th Century Spanish writer, who was well known for the classic western literature "Don Quixote".
- ✓ He was a soldier, poet, novelist, tax collector and a playwright

