



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 19, 2020

TAMIL NADU

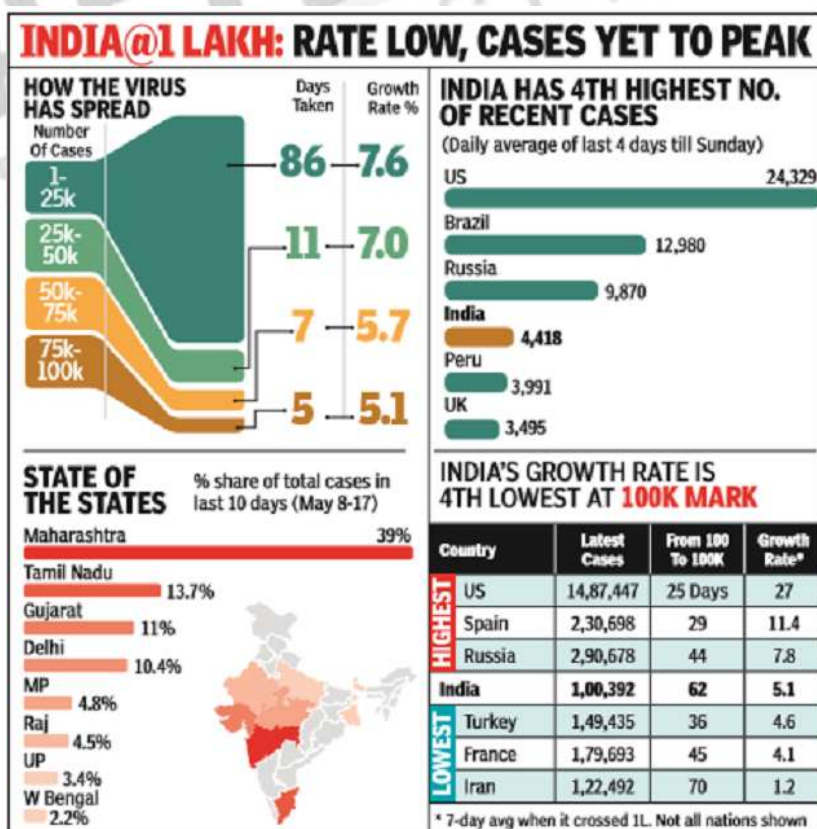
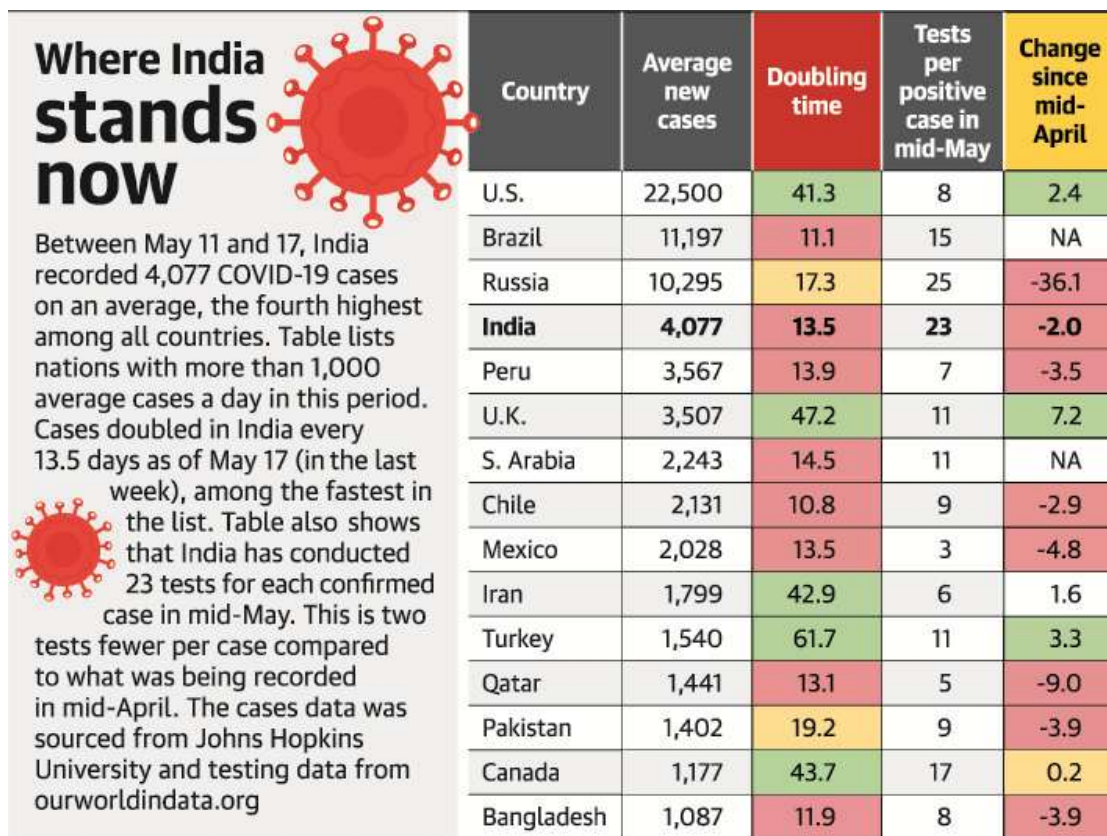
- **On May 18, Tamil Nadu – reported 536 fresh cases of COVID-19 infections - 304 male and 232 female - taking its total tally to 11,760**
- ✓ Of the new cases, 46 persons had returned from Maharashtra to the State.
- ✓ Chennai's tally of infections rose over 7000-mark after reporting 364 new cases on the day
 - ✓ Chengalpattu reported 43 more cases, taking its total to 537, while both Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram reported new cases with 19 and 17, respectively.
- ✓ Three women who tested positive for COVID-19 died in the city, which includes a 53-year-old and a 65-year-old admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital (RGGGH) and a 70-year-old resident of Chennai admitted to Government Stanley Medical College Hospital.
- ✓ The state has started testing all persons arriving by flights, trains and road.
 - ✓ The number of samples tested per day has been between 10,000 and 14,000 in the past two weeks.
 - ✓ The number of samples tested per day touched the 10,000-mark for the first time on May 2 (10,127), while the highest single-day figure was recorded on May 7 (14,195).
 - ✓ On May 18, the number of samples tested stood at 11,121.
 - ✓ So far, a total of 3,37,841 samples have been tested in the State.
- ✓ Overall, the state has a stock of 3.3 lakh RT-PCR test kits, which is enough for 20 days.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the State has formed separate committees for providing guidelines to manage the treatment of persons with co-morbidities during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - ✓ It has set up 12 committees for patients with diabetes, hypertension, obstetrics and gynaecology, cancer, paediatrics and tuberculosis.

- ✓ This is being done based on the public-private partnership model, and with the collaboration of NGOs.
 - ✓ The government has involved various specialists, super-specialists and associations for the purpose.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, 234 persons were discharged across the State, taking the total of recovered persons to 4,406 persons
 - ✓ As on date, there were a total of 7,270 active cases and 4,508 individuals with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 in isolation wards.
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami – announced that the water would be released from the Mettur dam from June 12 for kuruvasi cultivation.**
- ✓ The CM had instructed officials to ensure uninterrupted 3-phase power supply for 12 hours in the Cauvery delta areas.
 - ✓ During the past year, paddy was cultivated in over 2.90 lakh acres and production was about 4.99 lakh tonnes
 - ✓ This year, the government hopes a cultivation of paddy in over 3.25 lakh acres towards an expected production of 5.60 tonnes.
 - ✓ As on date, the water level in the dam is 100 ft., against its full capacity of 120 ft.,

NATIONAL

- **India's tally of COVID-19 cases - crossed the one lakh-mark on May 18**
- ✓ The country has reported 5,079 new infections on the day, taking the total to 1,00,734, according to data from the State Health Departments.
 - ✓ Of these 58,360 are active cases, while 39,217 persons have recovered from the disease.
 - ✓ The country recorded 136 deaths on the day, taking the overall death toll to 3,157.
 - ✓ The average number of new cases reported everyday in the last week has gone up to 4,077, while the average number of fatalities per day for the period remains at 115.
 - ✓ Maharashtra topped the nationwide tally with more than 35,000 confirmed cases and 1,249 deaths
 - ✓ In Maharashtra, Mumbai reported 1,185 fresh cases and 23 more deaths, taking the total cases in the city to 21,152 and fatalities to 757.
 - ✓ It was followed by Tamil Nadu with 11,760 confirmed cases and 81 deaths.
 - ✓ Gujarat has reported 11,746 confirmed cases and a death toll of 694.
 - ✓ Maharashtra reported a consecutive surge for the second day with 2,033 new COVID-19 cases, breaching the 35,000-mark to take the cumulative tally to 35,058 cases.
 - ✓ With 51 new fatalities, the death toll increased to 1,249.
 - ✓ This is the second-highest case surge reported after the spike of 2,347 cases reported on May 17.

- ✓ Karnataka reported the highest number of new COVID-19 cases in a single day on the day at 99.



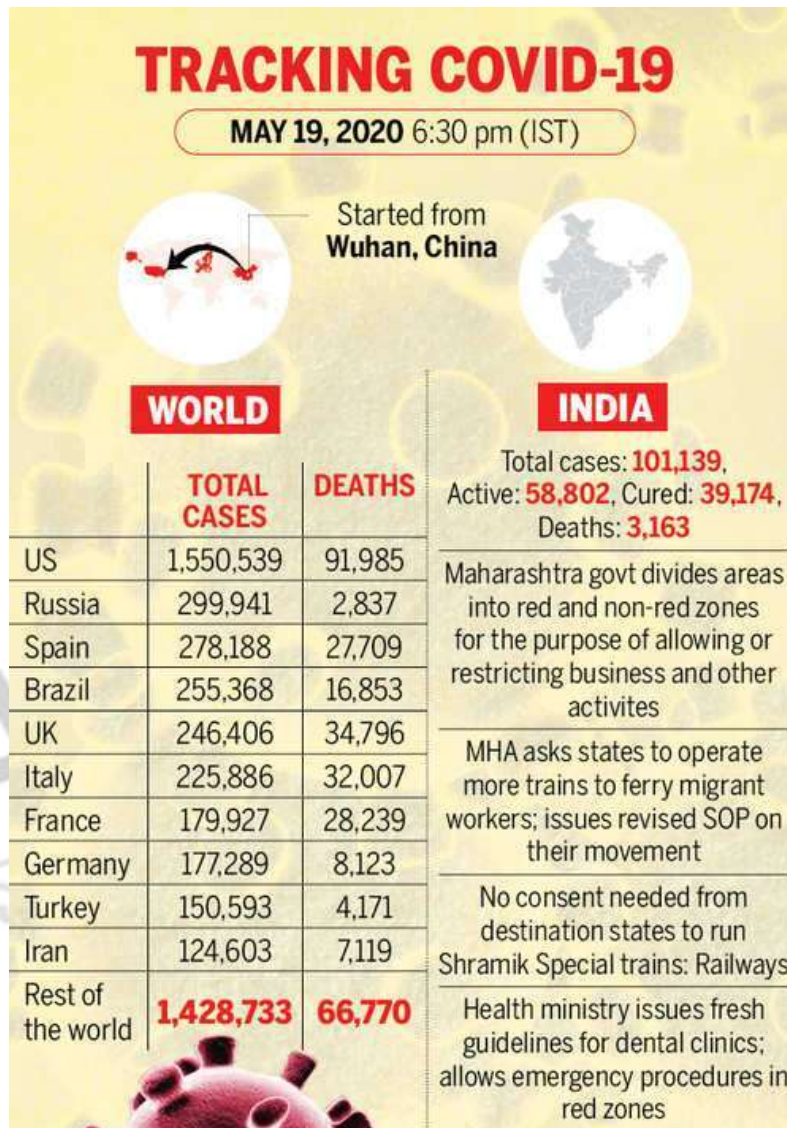
- ✓ In an effort to control the spread of COVID-19 from States that have had high incidence of infection, the Karnataka government said it has restricted the entry of people from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu into the State till May 31.
 - ✓ Andhra Pradesh registered 52 new cases
 - ✓ Kerala recorded 29 cases, mostly from expatriates and non-resident Keralites.
 - ✓ In Telangana, the total number of cases touched 1,592 as 41 more tested positive.
 - ✓ Jammu and Kashmir reported 106 fresh cases of the COVID-19 infection and two more deaths, pushing the total number of positive cases to 1,289 and the toll to 15.
 - ✓ In Gujarat, 366 new cases and 35 deaths were reported, taking the case tally to 11,746 and 694 deaths
 - ✓ According to the Union Health Ministry, the country has now registered a jump of over 10,000 cases in the past two days — the highest so far in 48 hours.
 - ✓ India currently has a recovery rate of 38.29%
 - ✓ The Ministry has issued new guidelines to the States for categorisation of red/orange/green zones as part of its lockdown easing measures.
- **On May 18, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - released a revised COVID-19 testing strategy**
- ✓ As per the new guidelines, testing of all symptomatic influenza like illness (ILI) individuals with history of international travel in the past 14 days to be performed by the states.
 - ✓ Apart from this, the frontline workers involved in containment and mitigation of the pandemic, all hospitalised patients who develop ILI symptoms and all returnee and migrants with such symptoms within seven days of illness should be given 'high priority' for testing.
 - ✓ Also, all asymptomatic direct and high-risk contacts of a confirmed case to be tested once between day 5 and day 10 of coming into contact
 - ✓ Generally, an ILI case is one with acute respiratory infection with 38 degree Celsius fever or more than that and cough, while SARI patient develops acute respiratory infection with 38 degree Celsius fever or more than that, requiring hospitalisation.
 - ✓ As per ICMR, all testing in the categories mentioned in the guidelines refers to real-time RT-PCR test only.
 - ✓ In the previous set of guidelines issued on April 9, the ICMR cleared testing only for symptomatic health care workers.
 - ✓ The changed strategy allows testing also for migrant labourers and those landed into India from abroad.
 - ✓ According to ICMR, it had so far tested 23,02,792 samples in the country.

- **India – has announced that it will take delivery of 200 ventilators donated by the U.S. within the next month**
 - ✓ The ventilators will be paid for by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
 - ✓ They are expected to arrive in May and June and the final delivery schedule will be notified next week
 - ✓ The ventilators are likely to be funded by an additional grant of \$3 million that the USAID made last month.
 - ✓ The ventilators, which were built for use in the U.S., are being “repurposed” for donations to several countries, including India.
 - ✓ According to the Health Ministry, India has 18,855 ventilators for COVID-19 patients at present, while about 60,000 more had been ordered.
 - ✓ The announcement is seen as a reciprocal gesture following the country’s lift on the export ban of the anti-malarial drug Hydroxychloroquine.
 - ✓ With the lift of the ban, around 50 million HCQ tablets were exported to the US.
 - ✓ Both US and China had recommended the use of the drug under their national guidelines.
 - ✓ However, the drug is failing its efficacy in seriously ill patients, as per the latest studies.
 - ✓ ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) had recommended the drug in “Prophylactic treatment”, which indicates it is only a preventive treatment.
 - ✓ HCQ has been included in one of the four mega trials that are being conducted by WHO (World Health Organization).
 - ✓ This includes HCQ, Lopinavir and Ritonavir, Lopinavir and Ritonavir along with Interferon, Remdesivir.
- **The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) – has announced that the Class 12 examinations postponed nationwide because of COVID-19 and Class 10 exams in northeast Delhi affected by riots will be held from July 1 to 15.**
 - ✓ It had issued safety instructions for the candidates
 - ✓ According to the instructions, the students should carry hand sanitiser in a transparent bottle, cover the mouth and nose with a mask or cloth and follow physical distancing norms.
 - ✓ Parents should guide their children about the precautions to be taken and also ensure they are not sick.
 - ✓ The Class 10 exams in northeast Delhi and the Class 12 exams will start on July 1

INTERNATIONAL

- **On May 18, Russia - reported under 9,000 infections for the first time since the beginning of May**

- ✓ The country was reporting a daily rise of around 10,000 cases for more than two weeks.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Europe reopened more widely on May 18, allowing more people into the shops, markets, museums, golf courses, gardens among other places.
- ✓ Greece had thrown open the Acropolis in Athens and other ancient sites, along with high schools, shopping malls and mainland travel.



- ✓ In Belgium, more students returned to school, hairdressers were allowed and museums and zoos opened their doors, all with strict reservation systems to avoid overcrowding.
- ✓ Churches in Italy and at the Vatican resumed public Masses.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- The new vaccine tested by researchers on monkeys at Oxford University - failed to protect them from being infected by the virus.

- ✓ A high-profile potential vaccine candidate for COVID-19, ChAdOx1 nCoV-19, being tested is a weakened form of a common cold virus (adenovirus) that affects chimpanzees

The trial in progress

The phase-1 trial of the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 - against SARS-CoV-2 is expected to be completed by the end of May and phase-2 by September, 2020

- The potential vaccine is being administered to **1,112 healthy volunteers** to study the safety, ability to produce immune response and efficacy of the vaccine



- It uses the common cold virus (adenovirus) that causes infections in chimpanzees and carries the genetic material of the novel coronavirus that makes the spike protein

- The spike protein binds to human receptors on cell surfaces and infiltrates the lung cells

- Serum Institute has committed **₹400 crore** and expects to produce **10 million doses** of the vaccine

- ✓ Considering it as a potential vaccine for Covid-19, Indian vaccine manufacturer, the Pune-based Serum Institute announced plans to manufacture a four to five million doses by May-end.
 - ✓ It is one of seven global institutions that will manufacture the vaccine developed by the Oxford Vaccine Group.
- ✓ However, detailed results of the trials in monkeys available suggest that the vaccine may not be the cure to protecting people from being infected and passing on the infection to others
- ✓ The researchers were led by Sarah Gilbert of The Jenner Institute, University of Oxford and Vincent Munster of the National Institutes of Health, United States
- ✓ This vaccine is among the eight other vaccines that are being tested in humans for efficacy.

