

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 21, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **On May 20, Tamil Nadu - saw another sharp rise in the number of COVID-19 cases with the reporting of 743 persons infected with the deadly virus**
- ✓ This takes the state's total count past 13,000, standing at 13,191
- ✓ The total count includes 83 persons, who returned from Maharashtra to various districts in the states.
- ✓ On the day, 987 persons were discharged from hospitals across the State, taking the count of total recovered persons to 5,882.
- ✓ The surge in COVID-19 cases continued in Chennai, with its total tally reaching 8,228.
- ✓ The city recorded 557 new cases, while its neighbouring districts Chengalpattu and Tiruvallur reported 58 and 23 cases, respectively.
 - ✓ Of the total cases, there were 14 in Kancheepuram and one each in Pudukottai, Tenkasi, Thanjavur, Theni, Thoothukudi, Villupuram and Virudhunagar.



- ✓ There are 7,219 active cases, as on date.
- ✓ Three more persons died on the day, taking the toll to 87.
 - ✓ It included a 44-year-old woman from Tiruvallur and a 52-year-old man from Chennai, who were admitted to Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital (RGGGH) and a 70-year-old woman from Chennai, admitted to the Government Stanley Medical College Hospital

CHENNAI RECORDS 557 CASES IN A DAY



743 test +ve in TN on Wednesday; 83 of them Maharashtra returnees

13,191 cases so far in TN

987 patients discharged today; 5,882 discharged so far

7,219 active cases now

3 deaths push toll to 87

803 children aged 0-12 among infected

- ✓ The number of samples tested stood at 11,894, while the number of persons tested was 11,441.
- ✓ With this, a total of 3,60,068 samples have been tested in the State.
- ✓ A total of 1,308 samples of persons are under process
- ✓ **Meanwhile, the State Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami launched the mobile X-Ray units on May 20**
- ✓ These will assist the government in intensifying containment strategies in neighbourhoods at which residents have tested positive for the coronavirus.
- ✓ **Health Minister C. Vijayabaskar inaugurated the “Namma Chennai COVID-19 Containment Programme” on the day**, which will focus on containment initiatives in areas where cases have been reported repeatedly.
- ✓ According to data released by the Corporation, 50% of the total case load was reported in 34 wards in the city.
- ✓ According to civic officials, five of the 14 mobile units would be utilized in medical college hospitals in Chennai.
- ✓ Each mobile unit is capable of screening 50 persons per day.
- ✓ Over 85% of the cases in the Royapuram zone have come in eight wards, with four nodes contributing 400 cases.
 - ✓ As per the Corporation data, Koyambedu, with 427 patients, has registered the largest number of COVID-19 positive cases.
 - ✓ Under Greater Chennai Corporation, Pulianthope has accounted for 265 cases, Nerkundram 224, Periamet 186, George Town 155, Krishnampet 155, Royapuram 135 and Old Washermenpet 133 cases.
- **The Indian Railways - has announced the resumption of Rajdhani superfast special trains between New Delhi and Chennai from May 21.**
- ✓ The special passenger trains were stopped based on a request from Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami last week, after two services were operated.
- ✓ According to Southern Railway, the trains would be operated on Mondays and Thursdays from New Delhi.

- ✓ In the return direction, these trains would proceed from Dr. MGR Chennai Central station on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

STATES

- **The Government of Chhattisgarh – has announced the launch of ‘Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyaya Yojana’ on May 21, the 19th death anniversary of the former Prime Minister**
- ✓ As per the scheme, farmers in the state would get up to ₹13,000 an acre a year under the new income support programme.
- ✓ The money would be distributed in four instalments.
- ✓ In the first instalment, ₹1,500 crore would be distributed among 18 lakh farmers, mostly small and marginal.
- ✓ The annual cost of the scheme would be ₹5,700 crore.
- ✓ The scheme would cover rice, maize and sugarcane farmers initially, and would be expanded to other crops later.
- ✓ Rice and maize farmers would get ₹10,000 an acre, while sugarcane farmers would get ₹13,000.
- ✓ The additional income to farmers is expected to increase rural demand and also act as a stimulus for the State’s economy
- ✓ Earlier, Chhattisgarh had paid farmers above the Central Minimum Support Price (MSP) last year but the Central government didn’t approve this.
- ✓ The State’s move was aimed at meeting the standards set by the Swaminathan Commission that farmers must get 150% of their cost of production as MSP.
- ✓ The new scheme now announced is expected to compensate the farmers through a different mode.

NATIONAL

- **On May 20, India – reported 5,437 new cases, taking its cumulative tally to 1,11,862, as per the data from the State Health Departments**
- ✓ Among this, the number of active cases stood at 65,067.
- ✓ The day reported another 132 deaths, taking the casualties tally to 3,436.
- ✓ Maharashtra reported yet another surge of more than 2,000 COVID-19 cases on the day.
 - ✓ The State recorded 2,250 new cases, taking the overall tally to 39,297, while 63 deaths took the state’s fatalities to 1,390.
 - ✓ This is the second-highest case surge reported after the reporting of 2,347 cases on May 17.
 - ✓ As many as 679 patients were discharged on the day, taking the total number of discharged till date to 10,318.
 - ✓ Mumbai city recorded a massive 1,372 of the new cases to breach the 24,000-case mark, while its total count stood at 24,118.

- ✓ On the day, a total of 41 fatalities were reported from Mumbai as the city's death toll rose to 841
- ✓ Gujarat reported 398 new COVID-19 cases, taking the total infections in the state to 12,539.
 - ✓ With 30 deaths, the fatality count has increased to 749.
 - ✓ For the last three weeks, the State continues to add 300 plus cases per day while the death count remains consistently above 20 per day.
 - ✓ In Ahmedabad, 271 new cases and 26 deaths were reported, bringing the total to 9,216 cases and 602 deaths.
 - ✓ Ahmedabad's mortality rate is 6.5%, which is double than the national average.
- ✓ Odisha crossed the 1,000-mark of COVID-19 cases on the day, as 74 more people tested positive, taking the total number of infections in the state to 1,052.
 - ✓ Six casualties was reported, while 36 persons were discharged on the day, taking the total recovered persons to 343 in the state
- ✓ On the day, two more people died due to the viral disease in Telangana, and one in Karnataka
- ✓ In Kerala, the COVID-19 case load spiked again, when 24 persons were tested positive on the day, all except one being imported cases of infection.
 - ✓ Kerala had reported 666 COVID-19 cases in all, of which 161 were active.
 - ✓ The total of recovered cases was 502.
- ✓ A total of 1,661 cases had been reported in Telangana State, of which 608 were active cases, while 1013 were discharged.
- ✓ Karnataka reported 67 new cases on the day, out of which 51 were having travel history, mostly Mumbai-returnees
 - ✓ This takes the total number of infections in the state to 1,462, while one more person, with travel history succumbed to the infection in a private hospital in Bengaluru, taking the death toll to 41.
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh registered 68 new COVID-19 cases on the day, taking the total tally to 2,560, which includes 153 from other States
- ✓ India's recovery rate had climbed to 40%, as on date.
- ✓ On May 4, when Lockdown 3.0 commenced, India's recovery rate was 26.59% and on April 15, when Lockdown 2.0 began, it was 11.42%.
- ✓ India is among 11 countries that has over a 1,00,000 cases, but has fewer deaths — 3,316 — and only behind Russia's 2,972.
- ✓ Out of the total hospitalized patients, only 2.94% of Indians confirmed positive are on oxygen support, 3% in Intensive Care Units and 0.45% on ventilator support
- ✓ Just four States — Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Delhi — account for 70% of India's case load and 64% of fatalities.
 - ✓ The recovery rate of Maharashtra is only 26%
 - ✓ Gujarat, with 719 deaths, has a case fatality rate (deaths per confirmed cases) of 6%, which is nearly twice that of India's overall case fatality rate of 3.1%.

- ✓ As per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a total of 1,08,121 samples were tested on the day, taking the total number of samples tested in the entire country to 25,12,388, till now.
- **Super cyclonic storm Amphan - made landfall near Sagar Islands in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on May 20**
- ✓ According to the Regional Meteorological Centre at Alipore in Kolkata, the landfall commenced at 2.30 p.m. and went on till 7 p.m.
- ✓ The landfall was reported near Sagar Island of the Sunderbans between Digha in Purba Medinipur and Hatia in Bangladesh.
- ✓ During the landfall, wind speeds of 150-160 km per hour were recorded in the coastal areas after the cyclone.
- ✓ In Kolkata, wind speeds of 112 km per hour were recorded.



- ✓ Three persons were killed and thousands of thatched-roof houses in the coastal parts of state were damaged.
- ✓ A heavy rainfall was reported across all districts of south Bengal.
- ✓ The super cyclone was one of the severe witnessed by the State in recent years — more powerful than Bulbul (2019) and Aila (2009).
- ✓ The West Bengal government has evacuated three lakh people, two lakh from South 24 Parganas alone.
- ✓ During the landfall of the cyclone, restrictions have been imposed on the movement of people in Kolkata and adjoining areas, and ferry services have been suspended in the Hooghly.
- ✓ The Kolkata Airport has suspended the movement of cargo flights for the day.
- ✓ Meanwhile, in Odisha, two deaths were reported and power infrastructure was damaged as four coastal districts, Balasore, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Bhadrak, were severely affected.

- **The Government – has announced that domestic flights across the country will resume on May 25 after a two-month ban.**
- ✓ The government has also said that it will fix new airfares for different routes.
- ✓ The SOPs for passenger movement are also being separately issued
- ✓ After the resumption, airports will operate at one-third of their capacity, and airlines will fly only one-third of their flights
- ✓ Airlines will not be required to leave seats empty, but the passengers may be required to wear face shields and masks.
- ✓ To maintain physical distancing, floor markers in the terminal will guide passengers on where to stand.
- ✓ The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has already announced that stamping of boarding passes will be stopped.
- ✓ Self check-in kiosks will be provided to help passengers in printing boarding passes.
- ✓ The Airports Authority of India plans to install ultraviolet tunnels for disinfecting baggage at Chennai airport when flights resume.

GOVT MAY CAP AIRFARES

➤ **Aviation ministry looks at capping fares that airlines can charge for different routes**

➤ **Middle seats are unlikely to be kept vacant on flights to keep fares affordable and airlines financially viable**

➤ **Flight resumption could start with one-third of originally approved summer schedule of 24,409 weekly flights**

Standard Operating Procedures

➤ **Passengers will need to report to airports two hours before flight time to maintain social distancing at every level**

➤ **Thermal screening of flyers on departure and arrival at airports**

➤ **Registering on Aarogya Setu App, web check-in and wearing mask will be mandatory**

➤ **Flyers will be allowed to carry 350 ml sanitiser on board. Stamping of boarding card will be done away with. Flyers will need to fill a questionnaire about travel history**

➤ **Inflight service will be curtailed**

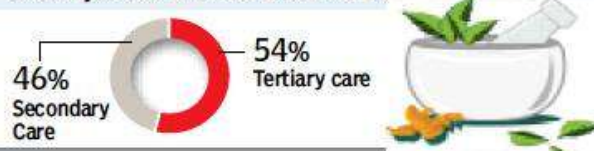
- ✓ The operation of domestic flights has been suspended since March 25 after the government banned air travel to check the spread of COVID-19.
- ✓ A decision on the resumption of international flights will be taken at a later time.
- **On May 20, 2020, the Union Cabinet - approved several initiatives under ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan’ that was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently.**
- ✓ The approved initiatives includes - the allocation of food grains, adoption of auction methodology for coal, issuance of second order to reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir, Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, scheme to formalize micro food processing enterprises and partial credit guarantee scheme

- ✓ The Cabinet has also approved additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME)
 - ✓ This funding was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last week, as part of the ₹20 lakh crore economic package.
 - ✓ Under the scheme, 100% guarantee coverage will be provided by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to eligible MSMEs and interested borrowers of the MUDRA scheme
 - ✓ The guarantee coverage will be in the form of a Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL) facility, without charging any guarantee fee.
 - ✓ The tenure of loan under this scheme will be four years with a moratorium period of one year on the principal amount.
 - ✓ The interest rates on loans provided by banks and financial institutions will be fixed at 9.25%, and 14% for those extended by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).
 - ✓ The scheme would be applicable to all loans sanctioned under GECL till October 31, or till an amount of ₹3 lakh crore is sanctioned, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ The Cabinet also approved a new centrally-sponsored scheme to support micro food processing units at an outlay of ₹10,000 crore, with the expenditure being shared on a 60:40 basis by the Centre and States.
 - ✓ The scheme will be implemented over a five-year period
 - ✓ It is expected to benefit about two lakh self-help groups, farmer producer organisations and other small units through a credit-linked subsidy
- ✓ Among other proposals approved by the Cabinet was the grant of subsidy of almost ₹3,110 crore for distribution of extra foodgrains to about eight crore migrant workers and their families.
- ✓ It also approved the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, a scheme announced in the 2020 Budget, to develop the fisheries sector over a five-year period.
- ✓ This scheme has an total outlay of ₹20,050 crore
 - ✓ Out of this budget, the Centre will spend ₹9,407 crore, the States ₹4,880 crore while beneficiaries themselves will invest about ₹5,763 crore.
- ✓ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs also approved the adoption of a new methodology for the auction of coal and lignite blocks on a revenue-sharing basis.
 - ✓ As per the new norms, the tenure of coking coal linkage was increased to 30 years.
 - ✓ It will also permit commercial exploitation of coal-bed methane in the mining lease area.
 - ✓ The government will also provide rebates in revenue share payments in case of early production of coal from the mine.

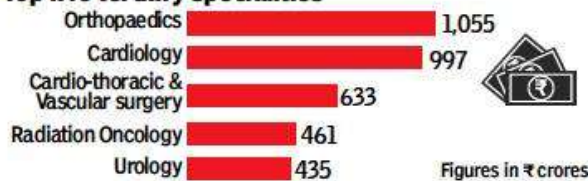
- **On May 20, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - announced that the number of people who have benefited from Ayushman Bharat Scheme has crossed 1 crore mark**
- ✓ On the occasion, the Prime Minister had a telephonic conversation with Pooja Thapa from Meghalaya, the 1 crore beneficiary of the scheme, who shared her success story
- ✓ During the talk, the PM congratulated all the beneficiaries of the scheme and their families.
- ✓ He also appreciated healthcare workers, doctors, nurses, and all those who have been associated with the success of the scheme.

1 CRORE TREATMENTS IN LAST 20 MTHS

Total 1 crore treatments worth over ₹ 13,412 crore provided under Ayushman Bharat in last 20 months



Top five tertiary specialities



Over 1 lakh people have availed portability scheme to avail treatment worth ₹ 248 crore

Patient state	Treatment state	Number of Treatments
Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat	16,141
Uttar Pradesh	Uttarakhand	6,481
Madhya Pradesh	Maharashtra	5,498
Bihar	Uttar Pradesh	4,664
Jharkhand	Bihar	4,105

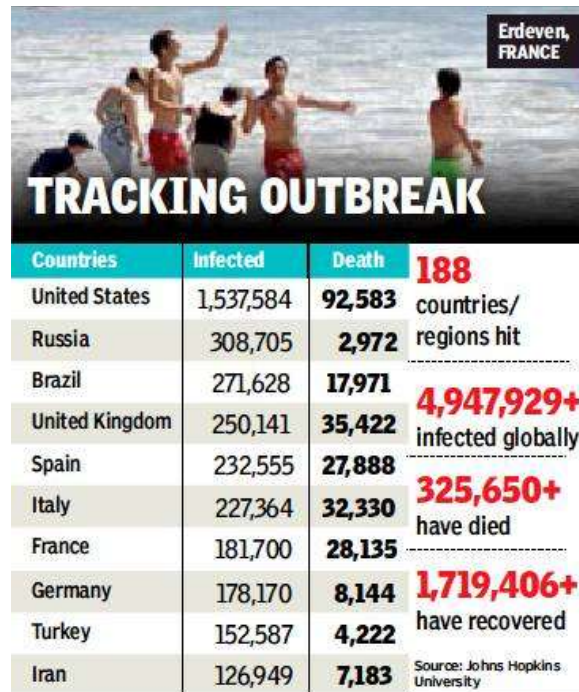
- ✓ PM Modi also pointed out that one of the major benefits of the programme is its portability.
- ✓ He highlighted that the scheme has won the trust of crores of people, especially the poor and downtrodden.
- ✓ PM Modi also shared the audio clip of the conversation in which Pooja Thapa, a soldier's wife, explains that she underwent surgery in Shillong using Ayushman Bharat Yojana.
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana- Ayushman Bharat was launched by PM Modi in September 2018
 - ✓ It was termed as the biggest government-sponsored healthcare scheme in the world.
 - ✓ It is a part of the Indian government's National Health Policy, 2017 and launched under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 - ✓ The scheme provides an insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per annum per family.

- ✓ The main aim of the scheme is to provide free health coverage at the secondary and tertiary levels to support the country's 40% poor and vulnerable section.
- ✓ Post COVID-19, the Government made the testing and treatment of the disease 'free' under Ayushman Bharat since April 2020, as per the protocol set by ICMR
- **The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) - has given the security clearance to the Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG for the construction of the Noida International Airport at Jewar in Uttar Pradesh.**
- ✓ The ambitious greenfield project on the outskirts of Delhi will be developed as an alternative to New Delhi's IGI airport.
- ✓ The firm had outbided competitors like DIAL, Adani Enterprises, and Anchorage Infrastructure Investments Holding and emerged as the highest bidder to develop an airport in Jewar
- ✓ The Environment Ministry had already given its approval for the project, after reviewing the response of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), the agency which was piloting the project three months ago.
- ✓ The biggest airport in the country, spread over 5000 hectares, will be developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 29,560 crore.
- ✓ Once fully operational, the Jewar Airport in Noida is expected to handle over 160 million passengers per year.
- ✓ The airport will have six to eight runways, highest in India, once fully developed.
- ✓ The airport will be the third in the national capital region (NCR) after Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi, and Hindon Airport in Ghaziabad.
- ✓ The UP government has put the deadline for the completion and operationalisation of the first phase of Jewar International Airport by 2023.
- ✓ The first phase, spread over 1,334 hectares, will be constructed at a budget of Rs. 4,588 crore.
- ✓ The implementation of the project will take place in four phases, and the last phase is scheduled to be completed by 2040.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Brazil – has reported a record number of coronavirus deaths as the pandemic begins to hit Latin America with its full force.**
- ✓ It has reported 1,179 deaths on the day, the first time the daily toll exceeded 1,000
 - ✓ After Asia, Europe and North America, Latin America has seen coronavirus infections surge in recent days
 - ✓ It now accounts for about 5,80,000 of the world's nearly five million confirmed cases.
 - ✓ Brazil has been hardest-hit in the region, rising to the third-highest number of cases in the world

- ✓ Apart from Brazil, other Latin American countries, Peru, Mexico and Chile also see steady increases in infections.



- ✓ On the day, Russia reported its highest ever COVID-19 death toll of 135, bringing the country's total fatalities to nearly 3,000.
- ✓ Overall infections in the country crossed 3,00,000, but the number of active cases dropped for the first time.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus pandemic, has announced the ban on consumption of all wild animals.
- **Cambridge University – has announced that it will have no face-to-face lectures until summer 2021, following the ‘social distancing’ measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic**
- ✓ It is the first U.K. University to announce its plans for the academic year starting in September.
- ✓ As per the new announcement, lectures would continue to be available online.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **The Ministry of External Affairs – has announced that Nepal's new official map is “artificial” and unacceptable to India**
- ✓ Nepal has unveiled a new political map that claimed Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh of Uttarakhand as part of its sovereign territory
- ✓ The new map was launched at a press conference in Kathmandu by Minister of Land Management Padma Kumari Aryal, as per the instructions of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli

- ✓ Nepal had protested, after India had recently inaugurated a 22 km long Darchula-Lipulekh link road in Uttarakhand, which could cut travel time for the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage.



- ✓ According to the Indian Government, the road going through the Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district lies completely within the Indian Territory.
- ✓ Nepal claimed the area and Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli announced his government was willing to give a road towards Tibet on lease to India without surrendering the region.
- ✓ The new map approved by Nepal includes a 335 km land area that includes Limpiyadhura in the Nepalese territory.
 - ✓ It has been drawn on the basis of the Sagauli treaty of 1816, which was signed between Nepal and the then British India government
 - ✓ Limpiyadhura, from where the Kali river originated, is on Nepal's border with India.
- ✓ India and Nepal have been at a dispute after India issued a new political map that incorporated Kalapani and Lipulekh on its side of the border in October 2019.
 - ✓ Kalapani is the first big reason behind Indo-Nepal border controversy, followed by Lipulekh.
 - ✓ Both India and Nepal claim Kalapani as an essential part of their territory.
 - ✓ India claims it as part of Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh District and Nepal claims it as part of Dharchula District.
 - ✓ India's Indo-Tibetan Border Police has been controlling the Kalapani and nearby areas since the Indo-China war of 1962.
 - ✓ Nepal has also claimed the highly strategic areas of Kalapani and Limpiyadhura, even though Indian troops have been deployed there ever since India fought a war with China in 1962.

ECONOMY

- **On May 18, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) - had announced that it has released Rs. 20,500 crore to regional rural banks and co-operative banks for on-lending to the farmers.**

- ✓ The released amount is part of the Rs. 25,000 crore which was a refinance facility provided by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to NABARD.
- ✓ The funding will be used for refinancing regional rural banks, microfinance institutions (MFIs) and co-operative banks.
- ✓ In the first quarter of the last fiscal year, NABARD had lent Rs. 5000 crore to RRB's and co-operative banks
- ✓ The funding by NABARD will ensure adequate liquidity with the banks and institutions, so as to provide loans to the farmers during the Kharif and pre-monsoon 2020 operations.
- ✓ The RBI had also announced to provide the special grant worth Rs. 10,000 crore to National Housing Banks (NHB) and Rs. 15,000 crore to the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- ✓ NABARD had also informed that the banks have started the programme of completion of the issuing of Kisan Credit Cards
 - ✓ Under the programme, about 12 lakh new Kisan credit cards have also been issued by the RRBs and Co-operative banks in the last two months.
 - ✓ As of March 31, 2020, a total of 4.2 crore KCCs have been issued by RRBs and cooperative banks.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ International Tea Day – May 21



- ✓ The International Tea Day is being celebrated since 2005 in major tea producing countries of the world namely Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Nepal, Kenya, Malaysia, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania
- ✓ It was observed every year by the United Nations.
- ✓ The celebration of the day aims to draw the attention of general public and governments about the impact of global tea trade.
- ✓ The main objective of the day is to promote sustainable production of tea and create awareness in fighting poverty and hunger of tea estate workers.

- ✓ The Intergovernmental Group of Tea (IGT) operating under Food and Agriculture Organization proposed the concept of International Tea Day in the year 2015.
- ✓ The resolution to celebrate the day was first adopted in 2019 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. (FAO)
- ✓ India is the second largest tea producing country after China.
- ✓ It is the largest consumer of tea in the world India, as the country consumes around 30% of global tea output
- ✓ The International Tea Day is celebrated every year on the motto, “Harnessing Benefits for all From Field to Cup”

CONTINENT-WISE COVID-19 LIST – A REPORT

