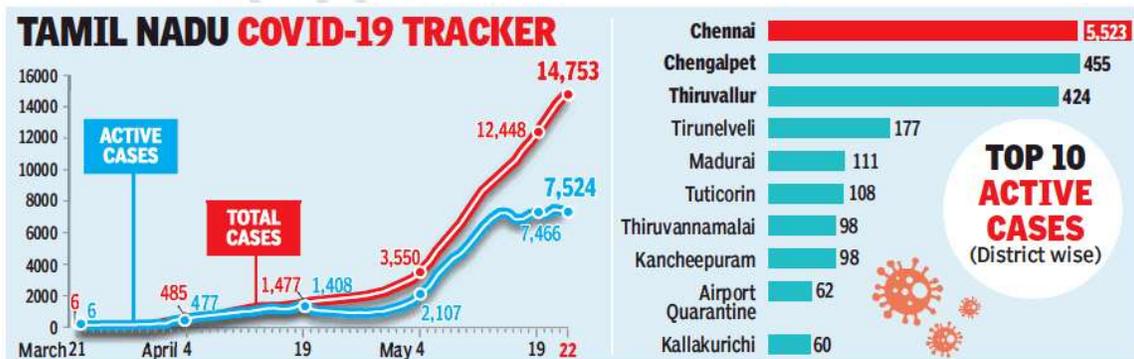


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 23, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- On May 22, Tamil Nadu - reported 786 fresh cases, taking the state's tally to 14,753 cases
- ✓ Four deaths were reported on the day, taking the toll to 98.
- ✓ Chennai's tally went up to 9,364, with 569 reporting positive for the viral infection on the day.
- ✓ On the day, the state announced 66 people from Maharashtra, 13 from Delhi, six from West Bengal, two from Andhra Pradesh and one each from Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Telangana tested positive for the infection.
- ✓ One passenger from Philippines was also tested positive during the exit test done a week after they land in India.



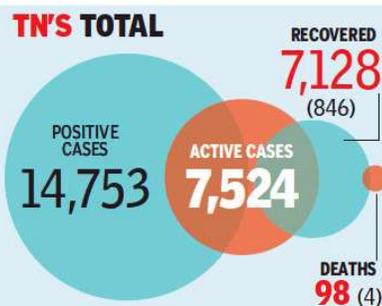
NEW CASES (Friday)

Tamil Nadu	694
Passengers from	
Maharashtra	66
Delhi	13
West Bengal	6
AP 2, Telangana 1	3
Gujarat 1, MP 1, Odisha 1	3
Philippines*	1
TOTAL	786

*Turned positive on exit test

TOP 10 DISCHARGED (District wise)

Chennai	3,773
Cuddalore	405
Ariyalur	348
Villupuram	296
Thiruvallur	243
Chengalpet	233
Kancheepuram	150
Perambalur	133
Tiruppur	114
Madurai	111



- ✓ Till date, 62 persons who returned from other countries have tested positive for COVID-19.
- ✓ With 40 new cases, Chengalpattu's tally climbed to 695, while Tiruvallur added 39 new cases, taking its total count to 675.
- ✓ Kancheepuram reported 13 new cases, while seven cases were reported in Ramanathapuram, six in Thoothukudi, four each in Theni and Tiruchi, two each in Pudukottai, Tiruvannamalai and Vellore, and one each in Erode, Kallakurichi, Krishnagiri, Madurai, Ranipet and Tirunelveli.
 - ✓ Erode district, which had not recorded cases since March 21, registered one case on the day.
 - ✓ Tiruvarur, which had no cases since May 6, also recorded three cases – one each from Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha.
- ✓ Meanwhile, three senior citizens with comorbidities aged 81, 70 and 72 succumbed to the infection on the day.
- ✓ At the end of the day, 846 patients were discharged, taking the total number of people cured to 7,128 and the recovery rate to 48%.
- ✓ There were 7,524 active patients of Covid-19 undergoing treatment at various hospitals, covid care centres or in home isolation.
- ✓ So far, a total of 3,85,185 samples have been tested in the State.
- ✓ One more private laboratory— Lifecell International Private Ltd, Chennai — was approved.
 - ✓ The State now has 41 testing facilities in the government sector and 26 in the private sector.
- ✓ Three zones of the Chennai Corporation — Royapuram, Thiru Vi Ka Nagar and Kodambakkam — have reported more than 1,000 cases of COVID-19 each in Chennai
- ✓ The Greater Chennai Corporation has removed 517 areas from the list of containment zones in the city, after no positive cases were reported in them for the past 14 days.
- ✓ Also, over 3,000 residents have returned from hospitals and Covid-19 Care centres after the successful completion of the treatment.
- ✓ The city now has 635 containment zones, where positive cases continue to be reported.
- ✓ Most of them are located in Royapuram, Kodambakkam and Thiru Vi Ka Nagar.
- ✓ On May 22, the Tamil Nadu government permitted autos and cycle rickshaws to ply in non-containment areas across the state — excluding the Greater Chennai Police limits — from May 23.
 - ✓ The vehicles are allowed to ply with only one passenger between 7am and 7pm, as per the guidelines announced by the Government
 - ✓ Drivers should keep hand sanitizers for passengers and both will have to wear masks. The vehicles will have to be disinfected thrice a day.
 - ✓ Drivers should wash hands with soap frequently and keep the vehicles clean

- **The syndicate of University of Madras - constituted a four-member convener committee to run the varsity after vice-chancellor P Duraisamy completes his tenure on May 26.**
 - ✓ The syndicate met for the first time after the lockdown began on May 22
 - ✓ Higher education secretary Apoorva will be the Chairman of the committee
 - ✓ Commissioner of Technical Education K Vivekanandan, MOP Vaishnav College for Women principal Lalitha Balakrishnan and University of Madras Head of Indian History Department S.S. Sundaram have been appointed as members of the committee.
 - ✓ The committee will run the affairs of the university until the new vice-chancellor takes charge.
 - ✓ It will entrusted with taking crucial decisions such as conducting exams and reopening of colleges post the Covid-19 crisis
 - ✓ The constitution of the committee is against the standard practice, as normally the committee comprises of odd-number composition — three or five members — to avoid a tie between members in decision making process.
 - ✓ The vice-chancellor search panel, headed by Jawaharlal Nehru University VC M Jagadesh Kumar, has already called for applications for the vice-chancellor post from eminent academicians
- **On May 22, the Tamil Nadu government - promulgated an ordinance to 'temporarily' take possession of Veda Nilayam, the residence of former chief minister, J Jayalalithaa at Poes Garden in Chennai.**



- ✓ The government has also announced its decision to establish a foundation to turn the residence into a memorial.
- ✓ The acquisition process for the 10-ground property worth ₹67 crore, which was initiated in 2017, is yet to be completed.
- ✓ Governor Banwarilal Purohit promulgated the ordinance to allow the state to temporarily take possession of the property and its movable assets

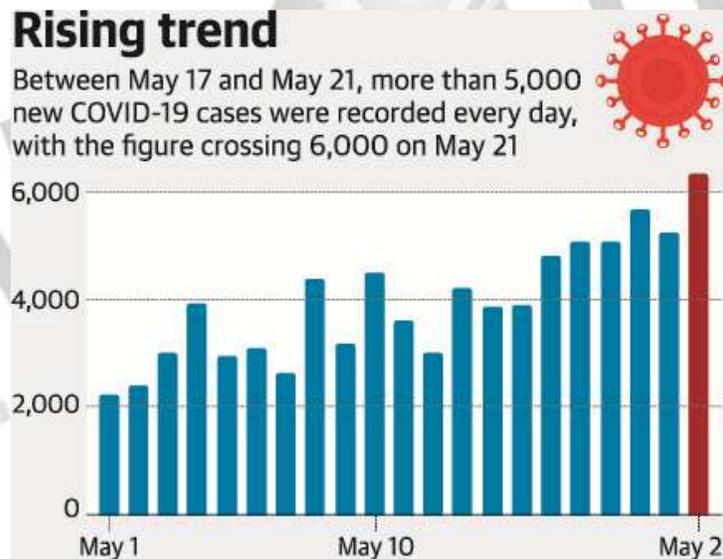
- ✓ The ordinance will establish Puratchi Thalaivi Dr J Jayalalithaa Memorial Foundation, for making long-term arrangements to convert Veda Nilayam into a memorial.
 - ✓ The state government had initiated steps to acquire the property and published a preliminary notification on June 28, 2019, and thereafter a declaration on May 6.
 - ✓ An acquisition notice pasted on the property also gave 30-day time to raise objections if any.
 - ✓ Puratchi Thalaivi Dr J Jayalalithaa Memorial Foundation will be headed by chief minister and deputy chief minister, minister for information and publicity, and several government officials will be members.
 - ✓ The Director of information and public relations will be member-secretary.
 - ✓ The foundation will be responsible for maintenance, upkeep and safety of Veda Nilayam and its movable properties.
 - ✓ One of the reasons cited in the release for the ordinance is that the building, including movable items such as furniture, books and jewellery, is in a “state of disuse for more than three years”, after the former CM passed away in December 2016
 - ✓ As there is no Assembly currently in session, the ordinance has been promulgated.
 - ✓ Besides, the government had taken prior sanction of President Ram Nath Kovind too.
 - ✓ Earlier, a bench of the Madras HC has heard objections of Jayalalithaa’s niece J Deepa and nephew Deepak against the acquisition and reserved its verdict in August 2019.
- **The Tamil Nadu government – announced that the state is on course for joining the ‘One Nation One Card’ scheme as per the plans from September 2020**
- ✓ The procurement of biometric devices and integration with point of sale devices was at advance stage of approval for the implementation of the scheme in the state.
 - ✓ The details of the developments were shared by the State Food minister C Kamaraj to Union minister for consumer affairs, food and public distribution Ram Vilas Paswan via videoconferencing.
 - ✓ Earlier, the state government issued an order in September 2019 for implementation of the scheme and accordingly signed a memorandum of understanding with Centre
 - ✓ Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami sanctioned supply of 15kg of rice, one kg of dal and one litre edible oil to 4.15 lakh migrant workers in April and 4.66 lakh guest workers in May, costing Rs 56.5 crore to the state exchequer.

STATES

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy - has launched a new programme 'ReStart' to support the MSME sector in the State.**
- ✓ The programme will be providing support to 98,000 units and generate employment to more than 10 lakh people.
- ✓ The government has plans to spend ₹1,100 crore on the revival of MSME sector alone.

NATIONAL

- **On May 22, India - reported 6,339 new Covid-19 cases— the fourth peak in daily cases in four days and the first time that more than 6,000 infections were recorded within 24 hours**
- ✓ Maharashtra reported 2,940 more people tested positive for the virus, the highest single day increase in any state so far
 - ✓ This is the sixth day in a row that Maharashtra has added over 2,000 cases.



- ✓ India has recorded 1,23,081 Covid-19 infections so far, with 22,794 cases added in the last four days.
- ✓ The Covid-19 toll on the day was 140, with 63 deaths reported in Maharashtra, 29 in Gujarat and 14 reported in Delhi.
- ✓ The daily toll has remained above 130 for six consecutive days, taking the total death toll to 3,720.
- ✓ The country passed a significant positive milestone when the number of people who have recovered from the infection crossed 50,000 to reach 51,538
- ✓ The COVID-19 toll in Gujarat has gone up to 802, even as its mortality rate remains above 6%.
 - ✓ The total number of cases jumped to 13,273, with the reporting of 363 new cases.

- ✓ Ahmedabad reported 26 deaths and 275 cases on the day.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, Delhi saw its highest single-day addition to the Covid-19 count at 660.
 - ✓ Uttar Pradesh recorded 43 cases, mostly on the migrant workers returning from other places.
 - ✓ Three more patients succumbed to COVID-19 in Telangana, taking the toll in the State to 48.
 - ✓ Besides, 62 more samples tested positive for the virus, taking the total number of infections in the state to 1,761 cases.
 - ✓ Of 1,761 cases detected till date, 670 were active.
 - ✓ Andhra Pradesh reported one virus death, taking its total fatalities to 55
 - ✓ Among 8,415 samples tested in a day, 62 cases were positive, taking the total positive cases in the State to 2,514
 - ✓ In Karnataka, a total of 138 new COVID-19 cases were reported on the day, mostly due to the returnees from Maharashtra
 - ✓ Kerala reported the highest number of Covid-19 positive cases in a day — 42 — on the day, three more than the 39 reported on March 27.
 - ✓ Among the positive cases reported, 21 came from Maharashtra, one each from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, and 17 people came from abroad.
 - ✓ Kerala has so far reported 732 cases of COVID-19, of which, 216 persons were under treatment and a total of 512 persons have recovered already.
 - ✓ The recovery rate in the entire country is above 40% and doubling rate stands at 13 days.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the Centre said the lockdown has helped limit cases to a few states and cities — 80% of all cases in five states and 60% of all cases in Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Thane.
 - ✓ On May 22, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan took charge as the chairman of the World Health Organisation (WHO) executive board
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - conducted aerial surveys of the regions affected by cyclone Amphan in West Bengal and Odisha along with the respective Chief Ministers and held review meetings**



- ✓ After the aerial survey of the devastation, PM Narendra Modi announced interim rehabilitation assistance of ₹1,000 crore to West Bengal and ₹500 crore to Odisha
 - ✓ The PM also announced ex gratia of ₹2 lakh to the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured from the PM's Relief Fund.
 - ✓ The PM said a central team would visit the state soon and both the governments would "work together for the rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of the West Bengal"
 - ✓ The state has already allocated ₹1,000 crore for the relief and restoration work in areas affected by Cyclone Amphan.
 - ✓ The state government estimates the extent of damage caused by the cyclone to be around "₹1 lakh crore at least"
 - ✓ Meanwhile, West Bengal revised its death toll to 86, with 19 dead in Kolkata alone
 - ✓ Cyclone Amphan made its landfall on May 20, 2020 and its high intensity continued till May 21, 2020
 - ✓ The cyclone caused widespread damage and devastation in several parts of Bengal including capital city Kolkata and several parts of Odisha.
- **On May 22, the Centre - reiterated that domestic flights to all places would resume from May 25 as per its earlier announcement, despite resistance from Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra**
- ✓ Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the healthy elderly wouldn't be stopped from flying and the use of Aarogya Setu app was preferable, and not mandatory, for air travel.



- ✓ Airlines started opening bookings from May 21 for 8,216 weekly domestic flights
- ✓ The DGCA approved an original summer schedule of 24,643, starting from May 25
- ✓ All airlines, barring GoAir, have opened flight bookings.

- ✓ GoAir plans to open its bookings from June 1
 - ✓ As on May 22, more than 1 lakh tickets have been sold, with almost 60,000 of them by market leader IndiGo alone.
 - ✓ IndiGo, the largest airline in the country, will operate 450 flights to begin with
 - ✓ Earlier, Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami had made a request to Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to resume regular flight and train services to the state until May 31, during a recent videoconference meet.
- **Twitter - has started a new initiative #AskTheCM**
- ✓ As per the initiative, internet users can pose a question to a chief minister during a live session on the platform.
 - ✓ The initiative begins with Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, who will go online on May 23 at 12 pm.
 - ✓ Further, at least two other chief ministers, Jharkhand's Hemant Soren and Punjab's Captain Amarinder Singh have confirmed that they would hold a Twitter dialogue
 - ✓ As per Twitter, #AskTheCM series is a concerted effort to bring citizens and CMs across the states closer together and facilitate active and real-time dialogue, as it would happen at a digital public square
- **Indian Railways - has decided to reconvert around 3,200 sleeper and general coaches for use in Shramik Special trains.**
- ✓ These coaches were earlier converted as isolation coaches for Covid patients, after removing the middle berth in case of sleeper coaches.
 - ✓ The move is necessitated as Railways resume more trains with both AC and non-AC coaches and there is virtually no takers for these coaches for Covid patients
 - ✓ The national transporter has also announced to run more Shramik Special trains.
 - ✓ It has spent around ₹2 lakh to remodel each coach for Covid care purposes.
 - ✓ The railways had already converted 5,321 coaches, though the plan was to have 20,000 such Covid isolation coaches.
- **On May 22, the Railways - revised norms for booking of tickets in 15 pairs of special AC trains, allowing passengers to book tickets for one month in advance**
- ✓ As per the new norms, passengers with RAC tickets will be allowed to board these trains.
 - ✓ The changes will come to effect for tickets booked from May 24 and for journeys scheduled from May 31.
 - ✓ Currently, the advance reservation period for these special trains connecting Delhi with 15 big cities is only seven days.
 - ✓ It also clarified that there shall be no tatkal booking for these trains.

- ✓ As per the ministry, the first chart will be prepared at least four hours before scheduled departure and second chart will be prepared at least two hours before the scheduled departure.
 - ✓ Currently, second chart is prepared just 30 minutes before departure.
 - ✓ Like other special trains, booking of tickets can be done from computerised PRS counters including post offices, Yatri Ticket Suvidha Kendra licencees and through on-line booking including authorised agents of IRCTC.
 - ✓ Tickets can also be booked at common service centres.
- **Uttar Pradesh – has produced a record 123 lakh tonnes of sugar in this crushing season**
- ✓ It is the country's highest ever output, which is also a record production by any state in a season.
 - ✓ In UP, the sugarcane crushing season is usually from October to May.
 - ✓ As on May 21, the total production of sugar has already crossed the 117 lakh tonnes produced in the corresponding period of the last season.
 - ✓ The state's previous record was reported in the 2017-18 season with an output of 120.45 lakh tonnes of sugar.
 - ✓ The output is all set to increase further as 39 of the total 119 sugar mills are still running as nearly 10 more days are left in this crushing season.
 - ✓ In contrast, only 16 mills were operating after the third week of May last year.
 - ✓ However, the national production of sugar in this season fell by nearly 62 lakh tonnes — from 326 lakh tonnes in the previous season to 264 lakh tonnes.
 - ✓ UP accounts for 47% of the total national output, as on date.
 - ✓ Already, UP mills crushed 10,918 lakh quintals of cane as compared to 10,213 lakh quintals in the last season
 - ✓ In the current crushing season, the state government paid farmers nearly ₹19,000 crore, which is 56% of the total dues.
- **The United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth - has listed Manipur's 'khudol' (gift) initiative among the top 10 global initiatives for an inclusive fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- ✓ Khudol is a crowdfunded initiative of Ya_All, an Imphal-based NGO.
 - ✓ The initiative ensures providing food supplies and health services for the LGBTQI+ community, people living with HIV, daily-wage earners, children and adolescents.
 - ✓ The organization has mobilized a network of 100 volunteers.
 - ✓ It has distributed 1000 health kits, 1500 condoms and 6500 sanitary pads through the volunteers.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On May 22, a Pakistan International Airlines aircraft with 99 people on board, including crew - crashed into a crowded residential area near the airport in the port city of Karachi, after what appeared to be engine failure during landing.**



- ✓ At least 60 people were killed and, miraculously, two passengers survived, which included the CEO of Pakistan's Bank of Punjab
 - ✓ Flight PK-8303, an Airbus A320 flying from Lahore to Karachi, crashed in the city's Model Colony in Malir area, when it was about to land at Jinnah International Airport.
 - ✓ The Airbus A320 has 180 seats but due to the Covid-19 pandemic flights are operating with reduced capacity.
 - ✓ Pakistan has a troubled aviation safety record.
 - ✓ A number of crashes have occurred in the past decade and the incident is the second plane crash for the PIA in less than four years.
 - ✓ In 2016, a PIA plane burst into flames while flying from Chitral hill station to Islamabad, killing 47 on board.
- **The clinical trials to test Oxford University's new vaccine for Covid-19 - have moved to the second phase of the study in which 10,260 people in the UK, including elderly and children, will be assessed.**
 - ✓ The Phase I trials were conducted just over 1,000 adults aged 18–55, following promising results on six monkeys.
 - ✓ However, the Phase II involves expanding the age range of volunteers by testing the vaccine on people aged 56 and older as well as children from age 5 to 12 years.
 - ✓ In a related development, the scientists at China's CanSino Biologic who are developing a similar vaccine reported promising results from their first-stage testing with no serious side effects in 108 people.
 - ✓ The CanSino and Oxford vaccines are developed in the same method
 - ✓ Both the vaccines use a harmless virus to carry genes for the "spike" protein that coats the virus into the body, preparing the immune system to react if the real Covid-19 infection enters.

- **The United States - has announced its decision to exit the Open Skies Treaty (OST) with Russia**
- ✓ The OST is an agreement that allows countries to monitor signatories' arms development by conducting surveillance flights over each other's territories.
- ✓ U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the withdrawal, saying Russia had "continuously" violated the treaty.
- ✓ The US withdrawal will be effective after six months from the date of the formal notification
- ✓ The OST contributes to security and peace in almost the entire northern hemisphere.
- ✓ However, U.S. President Donald Trump said the deal could be amended or a new one could be made.
- ✓ The idea of OST was first proposed in the early years of the Cold War by former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower
 - ✓ Later, it was signed in 1992, during the George H.W. Bush presidency and after the Soviet Union had collapsed.
 - ✓ The OST came into effect in 2002 under the George W. Bush administration
 - ✓ The treaty has 35 signatories including Russia, the US, the UK, Germany, France, Canada, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece.
 - ✓ The treaty allows unarmed aerial surveillance flights over the entire territory of the participating countries
- ✓ The U.S. has used the treaty more intensively than Russia.
 - ✓ Between 2002 and 2016, the U.S. flew 196 flights over Russia compared to the 71 flights flown by Russia
- ✓ This is the third international arms pact the US has pulled out from since Donald Trump became the president.
 - ✓ Previously, the US withdrew itself from the 2015 nuclear agreement to prevent Iran from conducting its nuclear activities and the 1988 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia.
- ✓ India has similar treaty with Japan.
 - ✓ India and Japan signed open sky agreement in 2017, in accordance with National Civil Aviation Policy, 2016.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The rare Asiatic wild dog or dhole - has been sighted in the wild in Gujarat, after five decades.**
- ✓ The forest authorities have captured two dholes in the camera traps set up in Vansda National Park, which is spread on 24sq km hilly terrain of Sahyadri ranges.
- ✓ The dholes are also known as the whistling dog due to its peculiar contact call

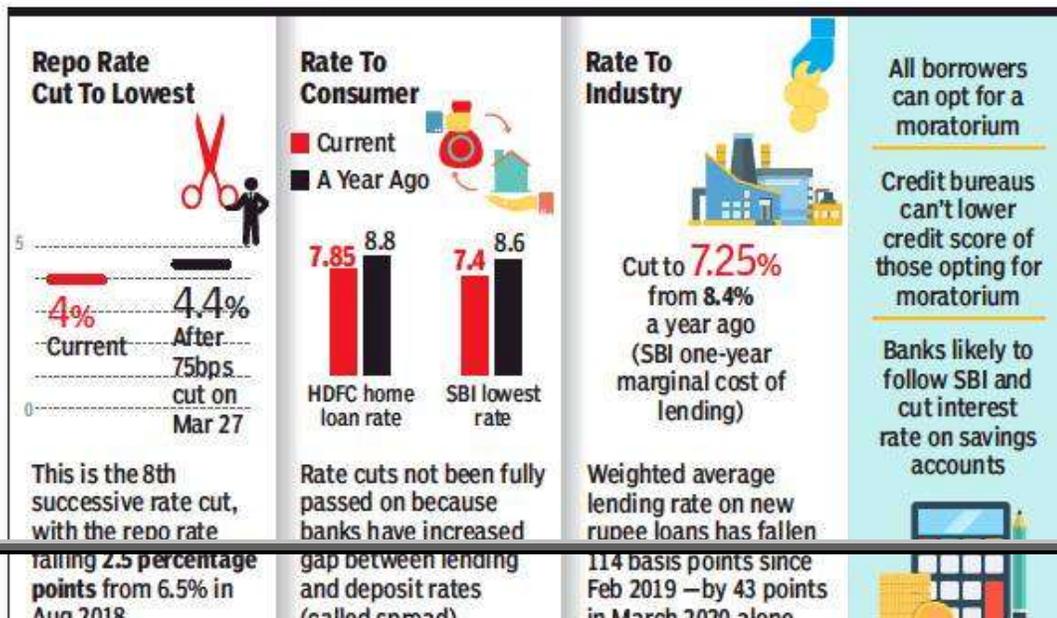
- ✓ The last reliable sighting of dhole was reported around 1970 by Late Maharaja Digveerandrasinhji of Dang.
- ✓ The presence of dhole is an indicator of good quality forest, prey abundance and less human disturbance.



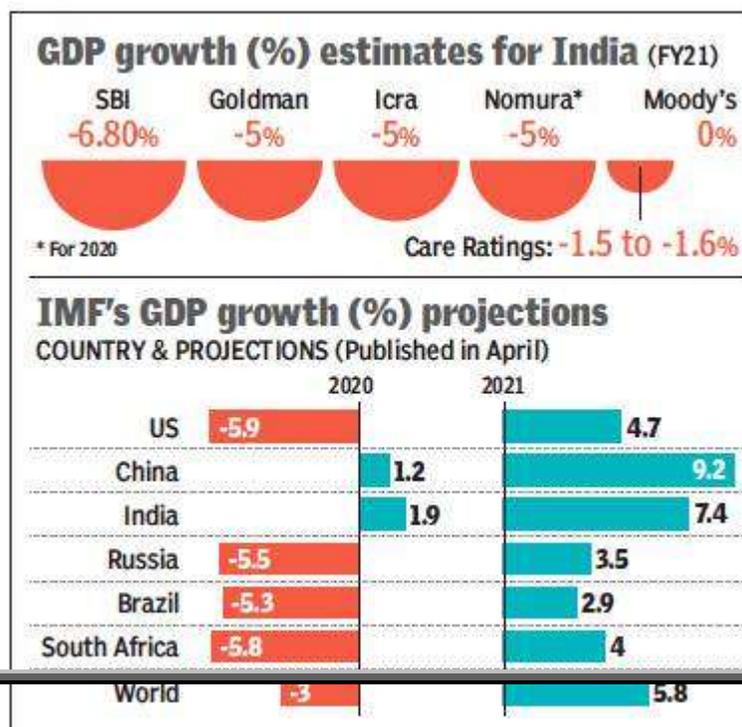
- ✓ The first sighting of the whistling dog was observed on February 20 by a local birder Mohammed Jat, who reported this to the forest department

ECONOMY

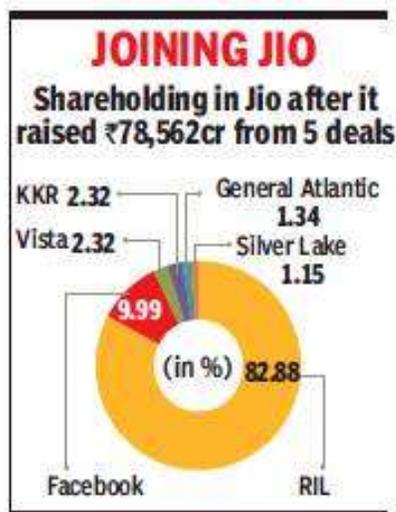
- **On May 22, the Reserve Bank of India - unexpectedly cut key interest rates by 40 basis points, citing negative GDP growth in the current fiscal, loss of production and demand**
- ✓ The RBI also allowed lenders to extend an ongoing moratorium on loan repayment, which was due to end on May 31, by another three months to August 31.
- ✓ In end March, the regulator announced the moratorium for a three-month period — March 1 to May 25.
- ✓ The banking regulator has also extended the interest payment deferment for working capital loans by another six months.



- ✓ This is the second 'off-cycle' rate cut by RBI, which advanced its June monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting to May 20-22.
- ✓ The six-member MPC voted by a 5-1 majority to reduce the Repo rate by 40 basis points from 4.4% to an all-time low of 4.0%.
 - ✓ Consequently, the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate stand reduced to 4.25% from 4.65%.
 - ✓ The reverse repo rate stands reduced to 3.35% from 3.75%.
- ✓ The RBI has cut the repo rate by a total of 115 bps since the lockdown began in late March.
- ✓ It also marks the eighth straight rate cut by the central bank.
- ✓ The rate cut will immediately result in home loans becoming cheaper for borrowers whose EMIs are linked to the repo rate
- ✓ Interest rates on deposits are set to drop further given the surge in banks deposits and the fall in credit demand.
- ✓ Among the positive news highlighted by the governor was the improvement in forex reserves by \$1.73 billion to \$ 487.04 billion in the week to May 15, which is equivalent to 12 months of imports.
- ✓ The increase since April 1 is \$9.2 billion
- ✓ According to RBI Governor, the GDP growth is likely to remain negative in 2020-21.
 - ✓ This means, the economy is expected to contract for the first time in nearly 41 years, while the outlook for inflation remains uncertain
 - ✓ If it happens, it will be the first contraction for Asia's third largest economy since 1979-80, when GDP growth shrank 5.2%.



- ✓ IMF's April estimate, however, showed that India and China will be the only countries to display growth, while the rest will contract.
- **On May 22, Reliance Industries (RIL) - agreed to sell 2.32% stake in the Jio Platforms Ltd to US private equity fund KKR for Rs 11,367 crore (\$1.5 billion).**
- ✓ Jio Platforms Ltd, a telecom-cum-digital services company, is a wholly owned digital subsidiary of Reliance Industries
- ✓ Other Jio Platforms includes Jio Saavn, Jio Cinema, and Haaptik.
- ✓ With this deal, KKR becomes the fifth American investor in Jio Platforms, which so far has raised Rs 78,562 crore (\$10.3 billion) from external parties.



- ✓ Jio is KKR's largest investment in Asia to date
- ✓ Three weeks before, the KKR group had announced plans to purchase Shapoorji Pallonji's five solar energy units in India for Rs 1,554 crore.
 - ✓ Interestingly, KKR also has an investment in Jio's telecom infrastructure rival, Bharti Infratel.
 - ✓ RIL has also backed KKR India's debt fund.
- ✓ Jio's equity valuation of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of ₹5.16 lakh crore remains unchanged with KKR's proposed investment
- ✓ KKR, headquartered in New York, was founded in 1976 by George Roberts and Henry Kravis.
 - ✓ Since its inception, KKR has made investment of more than \$30 billion in technological companies and has been strategically investing in India since 2006.
 - ✓ KKR's alternative credit business in India is carried out through KKR India Financial Services (KIFS), Mumbai.

- ✓ Over the last month, leading technology investors such as Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista and General Atlantic had announced total investments of ₹78,562 crore in Jio Platforms.

Company Name	Investment Value	Stake
Facebook	Rs 43574 crore	9.99% stake
General Atlantic	Rs 6,598.38 crore	1.34% stake
Vista Equity Partners	Rs 11,367 crore	2.32% stake
Silver Lake	Rs 5,655.75 crore	1.15% stake
KKR	Rs 11,367 crore	2.32% stake

- ✓ Jio Platforms is a next-generation technology platform focused on providing high-quality and affordable digital services across India
- ✓ It has more than 388 million subscribers in the country.

SPORTS

- **Badminton World Federation (BWF) - released a revamped calendar on May 22 for the schedule of its various tournaments.**
- ✓ As per the revised calendar, international badminton is all set to resume with the Hyderabad Open on August 11 in Gachibowli Stadium
- ✓ The \$90,000 Hyderabad Open, a BWF Tour Super 100 event, has been allotted the August 11-16 slot, provided there is no further escalation of the spread of the pandemic in the country.
- ✓ Though not many top players used to compete in this tournament, this year it may be different, as this will be the first international tournament in five months
- ✓ The \$400,000 India Open BWF Super 500 tournament, originally scheduled to be held in March, will now be held in New Delhi from Dec 8-13
- ✓ The annual \$170,000 Syed Modi India International Super-300 tournament will be staged in Lucknow from Nov 17-22.
- ✓ However, this World Tour Super 300 tournament clashes with the cash-rich \$1,350,000 Indonesia Open, a World Tour Super 1000 event.
- ✓ According to the revised schedule, 22 tournaments were allotted to be completed within five months
- ✓ The China Open Super 1000 will be the first major event after the restart, which will be held in Changzhou.
- ✓ Apart from the World Tour events, BWF's premier team competition, the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals, will be held from October 3 to 11 at Aarhus, Denmark.

- ✓ However, four tournaments — German Open, Swiss Open, European Championships and Australia Open — have been suspended while 10 tournaments including the Badminton Asia Championships were cancelled.
- ✓ Like other sporting events, badminton too has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic
- ✓ There has been no on-court action since the conclusion of the All-England Badminton Championships on March 15.
- ✓ In another sports development, the 2020 edition of the T20 World Cup, one that was scheduled to be played between mid-October and mid-November, is being postponed.
- ✓ The postponement of the 2020 edition allows BCCI to plan the hosting of the 13th edition of the IPL in that space.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

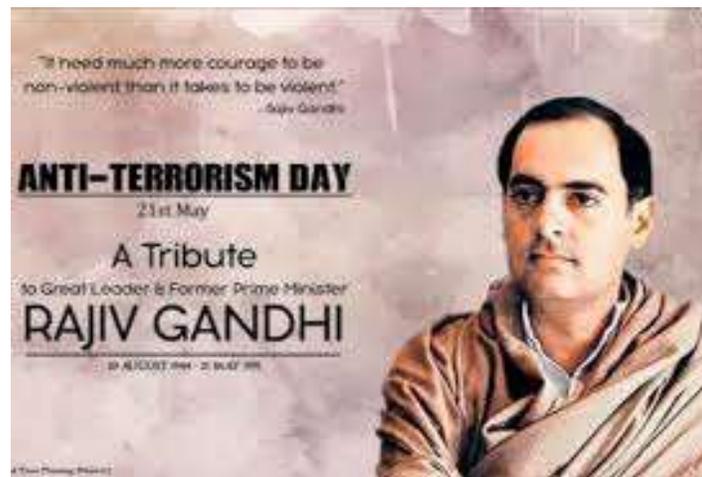
➤ **International Day for Biological Diversity – May 22**



22 MAY 2020
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Our solutions are in nature

- ✓ The day, observed every year by the United Nations, aims to create awareness about the biodiversity issues in the world.
- ✓ Theme 2020 - Our Solutions are in nature
- ✓ The resolution to observe the day was first adopted in 1992.
- ✓ The first ever International day for biological diversity was observed in 1993.
- ✓ The day was initially celebrated on December 29 till 2000, as on this day the Convention on Biological Diversity came into effect.
- ✓ It was later shifted to May 22 to commemorate the adoption of convention at Rio Earth Summit.

➤ **National Anti-Terrorism Day – May 21**



- ✓ The day is observed to mark the death anniversary of the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- ✓ Rajiv Gandhi was the sixth Prime Minister of India.
- ✓ He served as the Prime Minister of the country between 1984 and 1989.
- ✓ He was assassinated in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu in May 1991, while he was campaigning for a Lok Sabha candidate
- ✓ The day aims to create awareness about terrorism and its impact on human society, apart from spreading the message of peace and humanity.

REPORT

LOW RISK OF SPREADING FROM SURFACES: CDC

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its guide on how the coronavirus spreads

➤ The CDC website now emphasises the virus “spreads easily between people” but “does not spread easily in other ways”, like from contaminated surfaces or between people and animals

➤ The agency says the risk of transmission from surfaces is very low and may only be possible if a person touches a surface with the virus and then touches their mouth, nose or eyes

➤ Though studies have shown that the virus can last on surfaces like metal, plastic and paper for several days, the virus usually degrades within hours of being outside a host. So it's safe to receive packages or pick up the newspaper but one should regularly wash one's hands with soap and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home

➤ But CDC maintains that person-to-person transmission – through respiratory droplets expelled while coughing, sneezing and talking – is the most common way the infection is spreading.

The risk is highest in crowded and enclosed spaces like offices, religious sites and movie theatres

