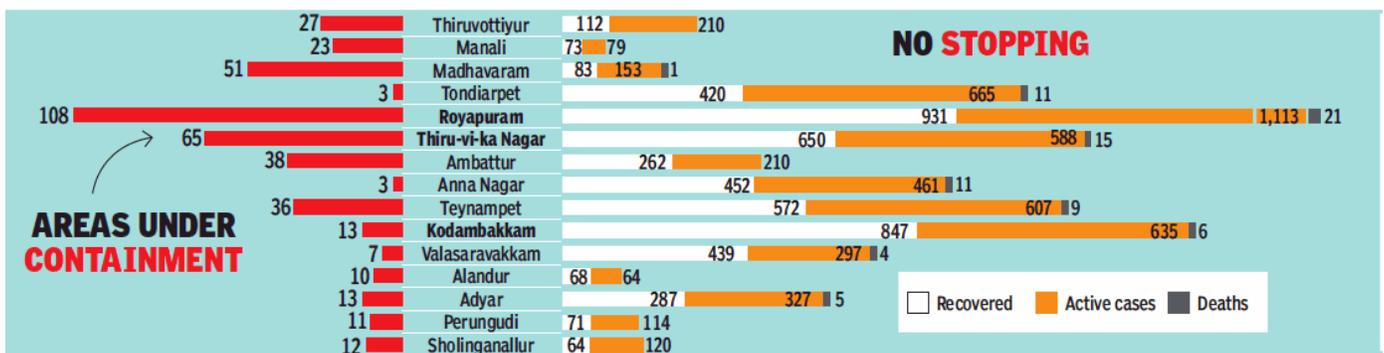
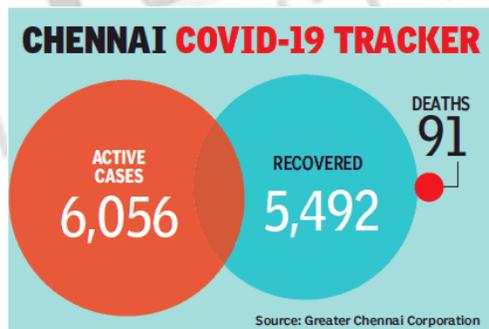




EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 27, 2020

TAMIL NADU

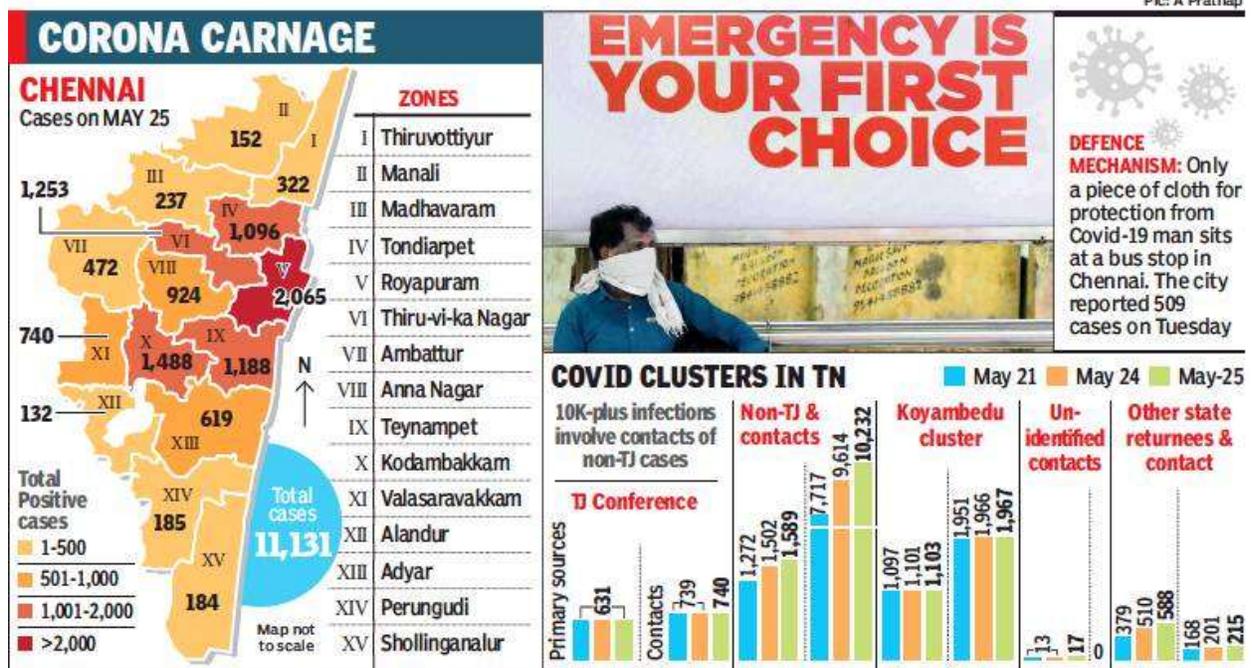
- Tamil Nadu – reported 646 fresh cases on May 26, taking its tally of positive cases to 17,728
- ✓ Chennai reported more than 500 cases for the seventh consecutive day.
- ✓ It accounted for 510 of the 646 cases, taking its total to 11,640.
- ✓ Nine more deaths were reported, taking the state’s toll to 127.
- ✓ Among the fresh cases, 35 people came from Maharashtra, six from Gujarat, three from Telangana and five from Dubai.



- ✓ Apart from Chennai, there were 25 new cases in Tiruvallur, 22 in Chengalpattu, 13 in Kancheepuram, six in Tiruvannamalai, four in Cuddalore, three in Vellore,

two each in Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Madurai, and one each in Kanniyakumari, Ranipet, Tirupattur and Thoothukudi.

- ✓ Six districts – Virudhunagar, Salem, Ramanathapuram, Kallakuruchi, Dindigul and Ariyalur – have started reported new ‘positive’ cases, following the return of natives from other states.
- ✓ A total of 10,289 samples were tested on the day, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 4,31,739.
- ✓ At the end of the day, there were 8,256 active cases, while 9,342 had recovered from the viral infection.
- ✓ The State’s recovery rate stands at 52%, as on date.
- ✓ On May 26, 611 people were discharged from various hospitals.
- ✓ Among the nine deaths reported on the day, the youngest was a 45-year old woman and the oldest being an 80-year old man with comorbidities.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami chaired a meeting with the medical experts committee to discuss the way forward for the state from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ During the meeting, doctors warned that unless testing was increased to identify and treat people in the early stages of the infection, Chennai would end up with two lakh cases and more than 1,400 fatalities by June-end.



- ✓ The State is planning to roll out prevention, management and treatment plans separately for people below and above the age of 40.
- ✓ In the above 40 group, there will be extensive planning for those with chronic ailments
- ✓ Similar to the registry of pregnant women, the state is planning a separate registry for the elderly, people with diabetes, hypertension, heart, kidney and lung diseases.

- ✓ In a related development, the Greater Chennai Corporation has reported a sudden decrease in COVID-19 containment zones in the city after no positive cases were reported for 14 days.
 - ✓ The number of containment zones was reduced to 420 on May 26 from more than 1,150 in all the 15 zones.
 - ✓ The largest number of 125 containment zones has been removed each from Royapuram zone and Thiru. Vi. Ka. Nagar zone
- **The Tamil Nadu government - is scheduled to sign memorandums of understanding (MoU) with 17 foreign investors on May 27, intending to bring in investments worth ₹15,000 crore to the state**
- ✓ The State government will sign the MoUs in the presence of chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami
 - ✓ Most of the investors will join the event through video conferencing, with some local representatives expected to join at the Secretariat.
 - ✓ Some of the investors have been in talks since November last year and the deals have materialised now.
 - ✓ The state-run ELCOT is making arrangements for video calls with the heads of the firms for the MoU signing event
 - ✓ The investments are expected to be made in various fields like mobile making, truck making, data centres, auto components and electric vehicles
 - ✓ The investors are hailing from countries like Germany, Finland, Japan, China, France and Taiwan.
 - ✓ The chief secretary-led special task force for investment promotion, industries department and its wings, SIPCOT and Investment Facilitation Cell have been instrumental behind the initiative, with TN Guidance playing a main role in attracting the investors.
 - ✓ The 16-member special investment promotion force had its first meeting last week to attract investors from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and the USA
 - ✓ These companies are likely to relocate their manufacturing bases from China post Covid-19, to diversify their supply chain.
 - ✓ Much of the projects to be signed are new, and some, for which MoUs were finalised recently, are in the process of deciding the location for setting up the plants.
- **Tangedco – will continue to supply at least 13,000 million units of free power to 21.40 lakh agriculture-related connections to farmers as the kuruvai season is set to begin.**
- ✓ However, the Centre has mandated direct benefit transfer to farmers as one of the conditions for the discom to get funds from Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) and Power Finance Corporation (PFC) as part of the ₹90,000 crore package recently.

- ✓ Since 2011, 1.68 lakh farm connections were added until January 2020 and 4 lakh more applications are pending with Tangedco for free connections.
 - ✓ The Tangedco provides not less than 1500MW to 2000MW to the farmers, especially during evening.
 - ✓ Almost for all agri-related connections, the power will be available in all three phases so that they will be able to draw water using the motors
 - ✓ Recently the government issued an order allowing the farmers to increase their motor capacity up to 15 horse power.
 - ✓ For Tangedco, the kuruvai season is also the wind season.
 - ✓ Wind power generation also starts from 6pm and thus it is only the wind power which is being supplied to farmers
 - ✓ The government subsidy for free power to farmers, including those under self-finance scheme, has increased to Rs 4,172 crore in 2019-20 as against Rs 292 crore in 2011.
 - ✓ The farmers' subsidy contributes nearly 51% of the total subsidy which the government gives towards providing free power to domestic users, hut dwellers, weavers and others
- **The Tamil Nadu Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TNRERA) - has added one more month to the deadline for registration and completion period of all the registered projects on account of 'force majeure' (unforeseeable circumstances that prevent someone from fulfilling a contract) due to Covid-19.**
- ✓ It has extended the completion period of registered projects by five months a few weeks earlier
 - ✓ The move is based on an advisory from the Union ministry of housing and urban affairs.
 - ✓ The extension is expected to benefit hundreds of ongoing projects, as construction work has come to a standstill due to the virus outbreak.
 - ✓ As per the details on the TNRERA portal, the completion period of these projects was scheduled between 2020 and 2024 depending on the project size.
 - ✓ According to the Tamil Nadu Real Estate (regulation and development) Rules, 2017, all the ongoing housing projects with a minimum of eight units meant for sale must be registered with the realty regulator.
- **Madras University vice-chancellor P Duraisamy - completed his three year tenure on May 26.**
- ✓ He took over as the head of prestigious university when university was going through a bad phase with allegations of corruption and financial crisis crippled the university.
 - ✓ Earlier, on May 22, the university Syndicate had constituted a four-member Convenor Committee to oversee the affairs of the University of Madras till a successor was chosen.



- ✓ The Convenor Committee comprise of Higher Education Secretary Apoorva (Chairman), 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.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the vice-chancellor search panel, headed by Jawaharlal Nehru University VC M Jagadesh Kumar, has called for applications from eminent academicians
- ✓ The new vice-chancellor is expected to be appointed by the end of June, after the processing of applications.
- **DGP Prateep V Philip - replaces M S Jaffer Sait as the new CB-CID chief.**
- ✓ The latter has been posted as DGP civil supplies-CID.
- ✓ Philip was one of the officers in charge of security of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at Sriperumbudur and suffered pellet injuries after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.



- ✓ Earlier, he had served as DIG intelligence, Tiruchi city commissioner of police and DIG of Tirunelveli.
- ✓ He was also the first officer to create 'friends of police' unit to assist the mainstream police personnel
- ✓ Philip won the inaugural prestigious 'Her Majesty, the Queen's Award for Innovation' in Police Training and Development, 2002.

- ✓ He will retire from the service in September next year.

STATES

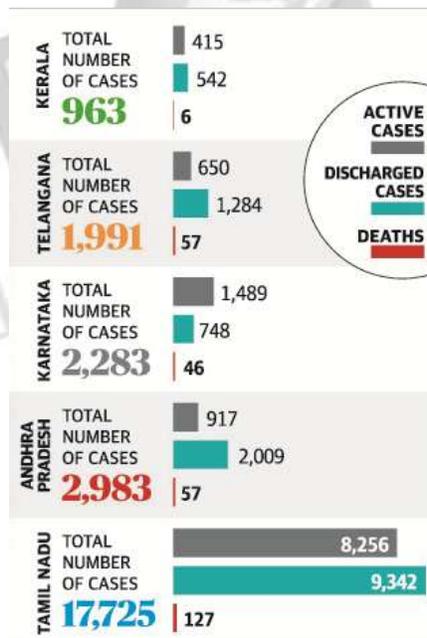
- **The UP government - is formulating a new policy to provide employment to migrant workers, who have returned to their native villages from various states**
 - ✓ As per the new policy, the state will offer low-cost shops and houses to migrant workers.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the state government has also completed skill mapping of 16 lakh workers
 - ✓ It is a first of the kind exercise in UP and perhaps across the country
 - ✓ The skill mapping will help the government to create skill-specific jobs for these migrants.
 - ✓ So far, several carpenters, those who have worked in the real estate industry, drivers, gardeners, painters etc have registered with the government.
 - ✓ The state MSME department will stay in touch with them to find them suitable jobs.
 - ✓ The urban development department is expected to develop a plan for cheap housing and rentals for migrant workers
 - ✓ The state chief secretary will coordinate with various departments for drafting the plan.
 - ✓ The local bodies and private builders will be roped in to provide space to the workers in multi-storied buildings.
 - ✓ For this, relief in floor area ration, GST etc could be provided to the builder.
 - ✓ Also, the government buildings and land will be identified for creation of dormitories and shops, along with water, power and sewer facilities
 - ✓ The rents could also be reduced for migrant workers for both residential and commercial use of a property.
 - ✓ Earlier, the State has announced the setting up of Workers (employment and livelihood) Welfare Commission for the migrant workers
 - ✓ Using the skill set data obtained, district level employment offices will try and provide jobs 'locally' while the state-level committee will help in getting jobs outside the home districts.
- **The new J&K domicile law - came into force in the UT on May 24 this year**
 - ✓ According to the new domicile law, migrants can apply for the permanent residence certificate by providing 'valid' documents
 - ✓ The documents include those containing inclusion of the migrant names in the electoral rolls of 1988, proof of registration as a migrant in any state, or any other valid stipulated document.
 - ✓ This will also be applicable to the migrants not registered with the relief and rehabilitation department of the UT

- ✓ The law will benefit nearly one lakh Pakistani refugees who migrated to J&K during Partition
- ✓ They are now entitled to the 'Permanent Residence Certificate' which enable them to enjoy the right to government jobs and a host of other facilities available to permanent J&K domiciles.
- ✓ The new domicile rules also grant them permanent resident status with full voting rights
- ✓ Earlier, on March 21, the central government had redefined the domicile rule for Jammu and Kashmir
 - ✓ According to the new rules, all the people who have been residing in the union territory for at least 15 years or who have studied there for seven years and appeared in class 10th/12th examination in an educational institution located in J&K are eligible for 'permanent resident' status.
- ✓ Further, on April 1, the Home Affairs Ministry had ordered the adaptation of the Jammu and Kashmir state laws 2020
 - ✓ As per the new laws, the state jobs will be reserved for those who fulfill the criteria of being a 'domicile' of the union territory.

NATIONAL

- **On May 26, India's count of Covid-19 cases stands at 1,47,758 - all set to cross the 1.5 lakh mark, while the death toll from the pandemic remains at 4,345, as per reports from state governments.**
- ✓ However, the number of fresh infections dropped slightly to its lowest number in the past six days at 5,502 while the deaths related to the virus rose by 172, the second highest single-day toll so far.
- ✓ The number of people who had recovered from the virus had risen to 64,239.
- ✓ With a spike in cases, Mumbai was among the world's four cities recording the highest number of cases in the past few days
 - ✓ The other cities being Moscow, Sao Paulo and New York
- ✓ On May 26, the city added 1,002 new cases, while the state reported 2,091 cases, taking the overall count of cases to 54,758.
 - ✓ The death toll in Mumbai climbed by 39 to reach 1,065 on the day
 - ✓ Maharashtra reported 97 Covid-19 deaths, the highest in a single day so far, taking its death toll to 1,792.
- ✓ On May 26, all the six states worst-hit by the Covid-19 epidemic — Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Delhi, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh —recorded a drop in cases as compared to the previous day
- ✓ However, the count rose in other states.
- ✓ Bihar recorded 231 new cases, Assam 95 and Kerala 67, the latter being the highest single-day number for the state.
- ✓ The surge in cases was high in the hill states as well, with J&K reporting 91, Uttarakhand 44 and Himachal Pradesh reporting 24 fresh infections.

- ✓ New cases were recorded in a number of northeastern states, including Nagaland (1), Manipur (3) and Tripura (11).
- ✓ Gujarat reported 27 more Covid-related deaths in the past 24 hours, taking the state's death toll to 915.
 - ✓ The state has second highest deaths in the country after Maharashtra which has recorded 1,792 mortalities.
 - ✓ National hotspot Ahmedabad continued to report the highest deaths in state as 23 more people succumbed to the coronavirus.
 - ✓ Gujarat recorded 361 new cases out of which 251 were from Ahmedabad alone
 - ✓ With the new cases, there are now eight districts with 100 or more Covid-19 positive cases in the state.
- ✓ Kerala recorded a major spike in COVID-19 cases on the day with 67 persons testing positive.
 - ✓ Out of this, 60 cases were detected in expatriates and non-resident Keralites from other parts of the country
 - ✓ Of the total of 963 cases reported so far in Kerala, 542 have recovered while six deaths have been recorded.



- ✓ Andhra Pradesh reported 97 fresh cases, taking its total tally to 2,983 with 917 active patients.
 - ✓ One more death was reported, taking the toll to 57.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has approved the A.P. government's proposal to conduct Convalescent Plasma therapy at the Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences in Tirupati
- ✓ Telangana recorded another 71 positive cases — the third highest number of cases reported in a day since March 2.
- ✓ The highest of 79 was recorded earlier on May 11.

- ✓ One more death was reported, taking the State's toll to 57.
 - ✓ A total of 101 new cases were reported in Karnataka over 24 hours, taking the tally to 2,283.
 - ✓ India's COVID recovery rate has improved from 26.59 % on May 2 to 41.61% on May 26
 - ✓ India had a Covid-19 fatality rate of 2.87%, which was among the lowest in the world.
 - ✓ From 3.38% in April, the fatality rate came down to 2.87% even as the global average was 6.4%
- **On May 26, the government - announced that the Aarogya Setu will remain as an 'open source' App**



- ✓ With this, the government has given access of the App's source code to the developers' community, indicating its commitment to the core design principles of transparency, privacy and security.
- ✓ As on date, the App has been downloaded by 115 million.
- ✓ Earlier, it has emerged as the fastest App to reach 15 million in 13 days and 100 million in 41 days
- ✓ The government also invited the developers' community to help identify any vulnerabilities or code improvement in App to make it more robust and secure.
- ✓ Towards this objective, the government has launched a new programme named as '**Bug Bounty**'
- ✓ Under the initiative, the government partners with security researchers and Indian developers' community to test the security effectiveness of Aarogya Setu and also to improve security.
- ✓ It will be open to Indian and foreign nationals, but only Indians will be eligible for rewards offered under the scheme.
- ✓ As per the programme, the government will reward up to ₹3 lakh to anyone who points out security vulnerability in the app source code, and up to ₹1 lakh for pointing out a suggestion or improvement in the source code.
- ✓ The Centre had detailed various measures taken to keep the App safe
- ✓ It also has a data destruction policy, among other features, to make it a safe and secure tool.

- ✓ The source code of the Android version is available on Github, the global platform for software development, and it is open for review and collaboration.
 - ✓ The IOS version of the application will be released along with the server code within the next two weeks.
 - ✓ Currently, around 98% of the Aarogya Setu users are on Android platform.
 - ✓ The Aarogya Setu App has been very useful for contact tracing and is of a very high order
 - ✓ More than 3,000 hotspots at the grass root level predicted 3-17 days ahead of time.
 - ✓ Over 1.4 lakh people have been alerted of potential risk of contracting Covid-19 infection
- **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – has clarified that the use of hydroxychloroquine drug as a prophylaxis has been approved based on observational studies in India, as it has indicated antiviral properties with no major side-effects.**
- ✓ The WHO had suspended testing of hydroxychloroquine for Covid-19 patients a day earlier
 - ✓ ICMR director general Balram Bhargava has said that anti-malarial medicine can be continued as preventive treatment against Covid-19 in high-risk people, as it remains safe and effective after considering the balance of risks and benefits.
 - ✓ The ICMR recently expanded the drug's use for frontline workers after cautioning about its application in certain cases.
 - ✓ The doses prescribed by India were low (two 400mg tablets to start with and then one tablet a week) and did not compare with those being tested by the WHO.
 - ✓ The drug has been used for long and seen as safer than chloroquine
 - ✓ In India, HCQ is approved as prophylactic treatment for frontline workers, healthcare workers and family members taking care of Covid-19 patients.
 - ✓ HCQ was one of four drug-combinations being tested in a global clinical trial, called Solidarity Trial, coordinated by the WHO.
 - ✓ The other drug combinations are - Remdesivir; Lopinavir/Ritonavir; Lopinavir/Ritonavir with Interferon beta-1a.
 - ✓ As per the latest study published in the medical journal Lancet, the drug gives no benefit, but causes additional harm of cardiac arrhythmia
 - ✓ The results are based on the analysis of 96,000 hospitalised SARS-CoV-2 patients across six continents
- **Large swarms of Desert Locusts - have entered India's Rajasthan through Pakistan in search of crops and greenery for their food.**
- ✓ The locust menace is steadily spreading its wings in north India and headed towards Delhi from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.



- ✓ The locust warning organization (LWO) predicts attacks in urban areas of Rajasthan besides Jaipur, where swarms have already entered
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh government preparing for the possibility of a second attack near Jhansi
 - ✓ It is planning to divert the swarms by playing drums and arranging high decibel loud music by hiring DJs.
 - ✓ Another swarm is now located in Indore in Madhya Pradesh
 - ✓ The LWO, a body under the ministry of agriculture, also blamed Pakistan for not eliminating the insects' biggest breeding ground in Baluchistan, which is responsible for their movement in far-flung areas like Jaipur.
 - ✓ The preparations include positioning of water tankers and fire tenders filled with pesticides to be sprayed on locusts.
 - ✓ The swarm entered 18 districts in Rajasthan and four districts each in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, as recorded by LWO.
 - ✓ The locusts swarms began from Iran in 2019, migrating to Pakistan and now have entered India in Rajasthan, Punjab, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
 - ✓ The desert locust is one of the species of grasshopper family and is scientifically known as *Schistocerca gregaria* (Forsk.).
 - ✓ They are insatiable eaters and they consume food equal to their body weight in the day time.
 - ✓ The locusts feed on green and leafy plants in farm lands, green crops and pastures.
 - ✓ They typically move in swarms covering 5 km to 130 km in a day and each swarm consists of 150 million locusts in every square kilometre.
 - ✓ A locust swarm in one square kilometre can destroy crops meant for consumption by over 35,000 people in a day
- **Google - has accorded its approval to the mobile 'virtual queue management' app, Bev Q, of the Kerala Government**
- ✓ Following the approval, the App is available for download on Google Play Store.

- ✓ Bev Q is a mobile app which will generate virtual tokens in a bid to reduce rush at liquor outlets.
 - ✓ The approval by Google enables the reopening of liquor outlets by the Kerala Government in compliance with physical distancing norms.
 - ✓ The app was developed by the Kochi-based startup Faircode Technologies Private Limited
 - ✓ It was submitted for the approval of Google after two-level testing
 - ✓ Faircode Technologies was chosen by a committee chaired by the IT Secretary from among 26 start-ups registered with the Kerala Startup Mission based on technical and financial feasibility.
- **The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) - has achieved a new milestone in the construction of a 440-m tunnel below the densely populated Chamba town on the Rishikesh-Dharasuroad National Highway in Uttarakhand.**



- ✓ Called as Chamba tunnel, it was inaugurated by Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari on May 26
 - ✓ The tunnel is part of the efforts to boost the annual Chardham yatra.
 - ✓ The foundation stone of Char Dham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojana (Char Dham Highway Development Project) was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 27 December, 2016
 - ✓ It is a two lane National Highway project currently under construction in Uttarakhand with a total investment of around Rs. 12000 Crore.
 - ✓ Originating from Rishikesh, Char Dham highway network will have four distinct routes connecting the four holy places in Uttarakhand namely Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri.
- **India's crude steel output declined by 65% to 3.13 million tonnes in April 2020, as per a report released by the World Steel Association recently**
- ✓ In comparison, India had produced 9.02 million tonnes of steel in April 2019.
 - ✓ Also, India's steel output in March 2020 declined by 14% in comparison to March 2019

- ✓ This decline is attributed to the nationwide lockdown imposed on March 25, 2020 to check the spread of COVID-19 pandemic in India.
- ✓ As per the World Steel report, the global steel output declined by 13%, from 157.67 million tonnes in April 2019 to 137.09 million tonnes in April 2020.
- ✓ China had reported a 1.7% fall in its steel output in March 2020 at 78.97 million tonnes.
- ✓ China is the largest crude steel producer in the world, accounting for more than 51% of the global steel output.
- ✓ It has produced 85.03 MT steel in April 2020, which marks a marginal rise of 0.2% as compared to 84.87 MT in April 2019.
- ✓ The United States also reported a decline in its steel production, as it had produced 4.96MT of crude steel in April 2020, which is 32% lower than 7.35MT in April 2019.
- ✓ Japan also reported a 23% fall in its steel production from 8.64 MT in April 2019 to 6.61 MT in April 2020.
- ✓ India had become the world's second-largest steel-producing country in January 2019, replacing Japan.
- ✓ According to the World Steel Association, India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 106.5 MT, which is up by 4.9% from 101.5 MT in 2017.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The deaths from the coronavirus pandemic in the US - is all set to cross over 1,00,000 on May 26**
- ✓ The US president Donald Trump refused to follow healthcare experts recommending shutdowns and social distancing, and is now aggressively pushing for complete reopening of the country
 - ✓ The President claims that he has controlled the pandemic and infections and death rates are falling.
 - ✓ He also resumed calling the pathogen a "China virus".
- ✓ As Brazil and India struggle with surging coronavirus cases, the WHO has warned that the world is still in the middle of the first wave of outbreak, not the second wave.
- ✓ The announcement has dashed hopes for a speedy global economic rebound and renewed international travel.
- ✓ According to WHO, countries where infections are declining could still face an "immediate second peak" if they relax soon on lockdown measures.
- ✓ Brazil has 3,75,000 coronavirus infections and has counted over 23,000 deaths
- ✓ Meanwhile, Russian President Putin announced that the postponed military parade marking the 75th anniversary of the allied victory in the World War II will take place on June 24.
- ✓ According to the Russian President, the country has passed the peak of the outbreak



Countries	Infected	Death	
United States	1,670,101	98,426	188 countries/ regions hit
Brazil	374,898	23,473	
Russia	362,342	3,807	5,543,439+ infected globally
United Kingdom	266,590	37,130	
Spain	236,259	27,117	
Italy	230,555	32,955	347,836+ have died
France	183,067	28,460	
Germany	180,802	8,349	2,266,394+ have recovered
Turkey	157,814	4,369	
India	150,600	4,349	Source: Johns Hopkins University

- ✓ With over 1,500 new infections in the past 24 hours, the number of Covid cases in Pakistan crossed 58,300 on the day.
- ✓ Also, 37 new deaths raised the tally of fatalities to 1,205.

PERSONALITIES

- **Pulitzer winning Indian-American physician, Siddhartha Mukherjee and Indian-origin higher education leader, Satish Tripathi - have been appointed as the members of New York's commission by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo**
- ✓ The commission will focus on kickstarting the state's economy post Covid-19 pandemic outbreak
- ✓ The New York Governor made the announcement on May 24, 2020.



- ✓ He stated that New York's Blue-Ribbon Commission will focus on improving telehealth and broadband access using innovative technologies.
- ✓ The New York Commission will recommend ways to recover the state's economy, considering the repercussions of the losses due to the Covid-19 outbreak
- ✓ It will be chaired by former **Google CEO Eric Schmidt** and comprise 15 members
- ✓ The Indian-origin American, Siddhartha Mukherjee is a hematologist and oncologist.
 - ✓ He is currently employed as an assistant professor of medicine at Columbia University Medical Center.
 - ✓ Earlier, he had won the Pulitzer Prize for his book 'The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer' in 2011
- ✓ Satish Tripathi is the President of University at Buffalo at the State University of New York.
 - ✓ He had graduated from Banaras Hindu University
 - ✓ Tripathi holds three master's degrees - one in computer science from the University of Toronto and two in statistics from Banaras Hindu University and the University of Alberta.
 - ✓ Tripathi is a leader in the national higher education community
 - ✓ He currently serves on the board of directors for the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) and the Association of American Universities (AAU).
- **Indian economist Abhas Jha - has been appointed World Bank's Practice Manager for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management for South Asia region.**
- ✓ The announcement was made by the World Bank recently.



- ✓ His appointment comes at a time when the highly severe Cyclone Amphan hit Bangladesh and Indian coastal states- West Bengal and Odisha- causing huge destruction and damage.

- ✓ In his new role, Abhas Jha will support the South Asia region (SAR) Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change team to connect and collaborate across the globe.
- ✓ He will also be responsible for delivering innovative and high-quality development solutions to the World Bank to strengthen disaster risk management and climate action in the South Asia region.
- ✓ Jha had joined the World Bank in 2001 in the office of the Executive Director for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka.
 - ✓ After that, he also handled Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia and East Asia and the Pacific regions.
 - ✓ He was previously serving as the Practice Manager for Urban Development and Disaster Risk Management in the East Asia and Pacific region.
 - ✓ His area of jurisdiction includes India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Maldives.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On May 26, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd - said it would begin a clinical trial in India to test a combination of two anti-viral drugs, favipiravir and umifenovir, as a potential Covid-19 treatment.**
 - ✓ The new combination clinical trial will be called FAITH – (FA vipiravir plus Um I fenovir (efficacy and safety) Trial in Indian Hospital setting).
 - ✓ In this regard, Glenmark has already secured Indian regulatory approval for the study
 - ✓ The study will enroll and analyse 158 hospitalized patients with moderate Covid-19 in two groups
 - ✓ The first group will be receiving Favipiravir and Umifenovir, while the second group will receive Favipiravir, both along with standard supportive care, as part of the treatment protocol
 - ✓ The duration of treatment will be 14 days and patients will be discharged after clinical cure and two consecutive negative tests.
- **Novavax, a US biotechnology company – will start the human trial of a coronavirus vaccine candidate in Australia on May 26**
 - ✓ The company is planning to inject 131 volunteers in the first phase of the trial to test the safety and efficiency of the potential vaccine candidate.
 - ✓ The animal testing phase suggested the vaccine is effective in low doses.
 - ✓ Novavax could manufacture at least 100 million doses this year and 1.5 billion in 2021, in case the vaccine could prove to be a game-changer.
 - ✓ The results of the first phase of clinical trials in Melbourne and Brisbane are expected to be known in July
 - ✓ If successful, thousands of candidates in several countries would then become involved in a second phase.

- ✓ The trial began with six volunteers being injected with the potential vaccine in Melbourne on May 26.
- ✓ Novavax candidate is called a recombinant vaccine.
 - ✓ The company uses genetic engineering to grow harmless copies of the coronavirus spike protein in insect cells in a laboratory.
 - ✓ Scientists extracted and purified the protein, and packaged it into virus-sized nanoparticles.
 - ✓ Recently, Novavax created a nanoparticle flu vaccine that passed late-stage testing, by using the same process.
- **NASA - has renamed its next-generation space telescope - Wide-Field Infrared Survey Telescope (WFIRST), after it's first chief astronomer Nancy Grace Roman.**



- ✓ The WFIRST will now be called 'the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope' or 'Roman Space Telescope'
- ✓ The telescope is set for launch in 2025.
- ✓ Roman is considered as the mother of Hubble Space Telescope, the world's most powerful space telescope, which was launched 30 years ago.
- ✓ WFIRST is considered as a successor to the Hubble and Webb space telescopes.
- ✓ Roman joined NASA in 1959, six months after the establishment of the agency.
 - ✓ She served as the Chief of Astronomy and relativity in NASA's Office of Space Science.
 - ✓ Under her leadership, NASA launched four Orbiting Astronomical Observatories between 1966 and 1972.
 - ✓ Roman passed away in 2018, leaving a tremendous technological legacy behind.

REPORT

18 states may lose more than 10% of their GDP

India is headed into its first recession in four decades thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic with the GDP growth rate tipped to drop into negative territory in fiscal year 2020-21. While no state is expected to be spared the impact of the outbreak, the worst-hit ones, which also happen to be more prosperous, are staring at a considerable setback, shows an analysis by SBI

-6.8%

GDP growth estimate for 2020-21. The estimate for 2019-20 is now pared down to 4.2% as against 5% projected earlier

₹30.3 lakh cr

Gross State Domestic Product in 2020-21 loss due to Covid-19 for all states, which is 13.5% of total GSDP. While the budget estimates pegged the GDP for FY21 at ₹24.9 lakh crore, the loss in nominal GDP of ₹30.3 lakh crore means the revised figure is tipped to be ₹194.6 lakh crore



Does not include UTs except J&K and Delhi, and North East states which have no cases

STATE/UT	COVID-19 ZONES				LOSS (₹ CR)	% OF GSDP
	0	20	40	60 80 100%		
MAHARASHTRA					4,72,433	15.4
TAMIL NADU					2,86,357	14.9
GUJARAT					2,61,386	15.0
UP					2,53,259	13.1
KARNATAKA					2,02,407	11.4
BENGAL					1,99,069	14.6
DELHI					1,69,234	18.8
RAJASTHAN					1,53,733	14.1
ANDHRA					1,49,289	14.9
TELANGANA					1,45,563	14.6
KERALA					1,13,785	12.6
MP					1,08,012	11.5
HARYANA					1,06,969	12.6
PUNJAB					83,035	13.6
BIHAR					74,249	11.5
ODISHA					54,033	9.4
JHARKHAND					35,530	10.0
CHHATTISGARH					30,790	8.5
UTTARAKHAND					29,137	10.2
ASSAM					26,387	7.0
J&K					23,494	13.1
HIMACHAL					17,728	10.0
GOA					5,580	6.3
TRIPURA					4,335	7.4
MEGHALAYA					3,181	8.0

75% The first 10 states will account for 3/4th of the total loss, led by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, the three states that also have the largest number of cases in the country

The maximum loss – of around 50% cumulatively – will lie in the Red zones, where almost all the big districts are located. The combined loss for Red and Orange zones will be about 90% of the total loss. Green zone districts, where 80% of the population is located in rural areas and which are almost open for all activities, will account for the remaining 10% loss

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY DROPS SHARPLY FROM FY19

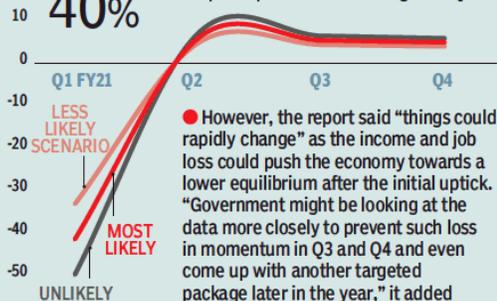
- In March, automobile sales fell to a 123-month low of 10.5 lakh units. Annually, FY20 sales were down 17.8% compared to FY19
- Fewer vehicle registrations during the lockdown have had a severe impact on revenue collection

YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE (%)

	Transactions	Revenue
One month before the lockdown	3.2	28.1
Lockdown Phase 1	-91.1	-88.6
Phase 2	-95.3	-90.7
Phase 3	-84.9	-83.6
Phase 4	-73.6	-69.5

FIRST QUARTER OF FY21 TO SEE BIG DECLINE

- The report estimates the economic loss in Q1 2020-21 will exceed 40%
- There could be a "smart recovery" in Q2 GDP, clocking 7.1% if demand can be sustained. The Q3 and Q4 growth also look much better, with an average of 6%, but the bump in Q2 could reduce with a bust in the pent up demand subsiding after Q2



CASES COULD PEAK BY END-JUNE

- In May, India's daily new cases have been rising consistently despite the lockdown. At the current rate, SBI estimates that the case tally won't peak until the end of June
- Cases will then see a sharp drop through July and August before flattening out in mid-September
- However, this projection is based on the current growth rate of cases and could be affected by unforeseen events, like the cyclone in West Bengal, and the continuing migrant workers crisis

Source: SBI Ecowrap Issue No.14, FY21

