



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JUNE 2, 2020

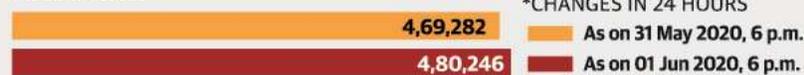
### TAMIL NADU

- On June 1, Tamil Nadu - reported more than 1,000 cases of COVID-19, for the second consecutive day
- ✓ The State reported 1,162 cases, its highest single-day spike so far, taking its tally to 23,145
- ✓ Out of this, 967 were recorded in Chennai alone.
- ✓ The capital city's total number of cases now stands at 15,770, of which 8,181 persons have been discharged.
- ✓ Eleven people were reported dead, pushing the toll to 184, out of which 138 were from Chennai.

**Keeping count** | A tracker, across parameters, on how the pandemic has affected the State so far

	Until May 25	May 26	May 27	May 28	May 29	May 30	May 31	June 01	Total
Cases reported	17,082	646	817	827	874	938	1,149	1,162	23,495
Recovered and discharged	8,731	611	567	639	765	687	757	413	13,170
Deceased	118	9	6	12	9	6	13	11	184

#### Persons tested



#### Districts with maximum cases



Active Cases + Discharged + Died will not equal Total Cases as 2 deaths were cross notified to other States and 1 patient, who initially tested positive for COVID-19, later died after turning negative as per Health and Family Welfare department.

- ✓ Of the 1,162 new patients - 685 men, 473 women and four transgender - 50 persons had returned from other States, which includes 32 from Maharashtra and 10 from Delhi.
- ✓ Apart from Chennai, Chengalpattu reported 48 new cases, Tiruvallur 33 cases, Salem and Tiruvannamalai 10 cases and Kancheepuram nine cases.

- ✓ Coimbatore, which had not reported a case since May 2, reported three 'migrant' cases on the day.
- ✓ The neighbouring Nilgiris, which had no cases since May 9, reported one case from within the district.



- ✓ The following is the summary of the state's 'imported' positive cases as on date –
  - ✓ Persons who returned by international flights – 2,731 – Infected – 92
  - ✓ Persons who returned by domestic flights – 11,872 – Infected – 21
  - ✓ Persons who returned by train – 10,270 – Infected – 244
  - ✓ Persons who returned by road – Infected - 1,271
- ✓ A total of 11,377 samples were tested on the day, taking the total number of samples tested till date increased to 5,03,339.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu received 1.5 lakh more reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test kits recently.
  - ✓ Including this, the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation has a total of 3.6 lakh RT-PCR test kits.
  - ✓ Around two lakh kits are currently available at hospitals.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the government has announced that all peripheral hospitals will start treating mild and moderate cases while severe cases will be reserved for medical colleges
  - ✓ Those who had no symptoms or had very mild symptoms will be taken to Covid-19 care centres
  - ✓ This was announced by health minister C Vijayabaskar
- ✓ At the end of the day, 413 people were discharged after treatment, and the number of people recovered so far is 13,170, while 10,138 people are still in hospitals
- ✓ In the meantime, state health department and Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) authorities have ramped up bed strength in other hospitals in the city, as beds in hospitals in Chennai are almost full
  - ✓ The four peripheral hospitals and the Communicable Diseases Hospital (CDH) in Tondiarpet have given an additional 550 beds for treating Covid patients
  - ✓ These are designated as Covid health centres.
- ✓ The peripheral hospital in KK Nagar has 100 beds, while the Tondiarpet peripheral hospital has 150 beds, the Anna Nagar one has 100 beds, the Periyar Nagar one has 100 beds and the CDH in Tondiarpet adds 100 beds

## **ADDITIONAL BEDS**

> KK Nagar Peripheral Hospital   100
> Tondiarpet Peripheral hospital   150
> Anna Nagar peripheral Hospital   100
> Periyar Nagar Peripheral Hospital   100
> CDH, Tondiarpet   100

- ✓ Chennai will have around 7,600 beds once all these facilities are ready, of which around 3,000 are occupied as on date
- ✓ The other facilities that are being readied are private nursing colleges, dental colleges and the massive 1,400-bed Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board resettlement colony which has been turned into a Covid care centre.
- **On June 1, Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - commissioned 16 new sub-stations in 15 districts of the state through videoconferencing from the secretariat**
  - ✓ With the launch, the quality of power in these districts will improve significantly
  - ✓ These substations, built at a total cost of ₹235 crore, were set up in Namakkal, Tiruppur, Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Kanniyakumari, Nagapattinam, Coimbatore, Thanjavur, Salem and Krishnagiri districts.
  - ✓ In many places, new high-capacity sub-stations have been set up, whereas in other places, capacity of existing ones has been increased.
  - ✓ The biggest substation to be commissioned is in Tirupur — with a capacity of 230/110kV, it cost of ₹75.54 crore.
  - ✓ Three sub-stations have been commissioned on the Nokia campus at Sriperumbudur at a cost of ₹7.46 crore.
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - laid the foundation stone through videoconference for the construction of TIDEL Information Technology Park on June 1**
  - ✓ It will be constructed on behalf of the Industries Department at a cost of ₹235 at Pattabiram near Avadi in Chennai.
  - ✓ The new park will come up in 10 acres with a built-up area of over 5.57 lakh sq.ft.
  - ✓ It would house offices, industrial centres, public infrastructure and a hanging garden, among others in its 21 floors.
  - ✓ The construction is scheduled to be completed within two years and is expected to provide employment to about 25,000 people

- **Tamil Nadu Transport Department - launched cashless ticketing system in government buses on June 1, the move seen as a first step towards the ushering of digital payments era**
- ✓ The trial run was introduced in two Chennai buses in the routes of T Nagar to Secretariat and Saidapet to Secretariat and will be soon expanded to other routes across the state depending on the feedback
- ✓ This was announced by MR Vijayabaskar, state transport minister.

#### Details of the functioning of Cashless ticketing system

- ✓ The QR codes were pasted near the entrance and conductor seat.
- ✓ The passengers were instructed to scan this code using their smartphone as soon as they enter the bus through the rear entrance.
- ✓ After taking their seats, the conductor will check the passenger's destination and inform the ticket amount to be paid for the travel.
- ✓ Passengers can pay the ticket amount using Google Pay, PayTm, Amazon Pay or any other Unified Payments Interface (UPI) recognised by banks.
- ✓ A 'Soundbox' in the bus, integrated with the conductors' mobile, will confirm the payment.
- ✓ Both the passengers and conductors will also get their usual text messages from their respective banks for every payment made or received
- ✓ On June 1, as many as 5,659 government buses hit the streets after a gap of two months due to lockdown.
- ✓ These buses were operated from 6 am to 9 pm.

## **STATES**

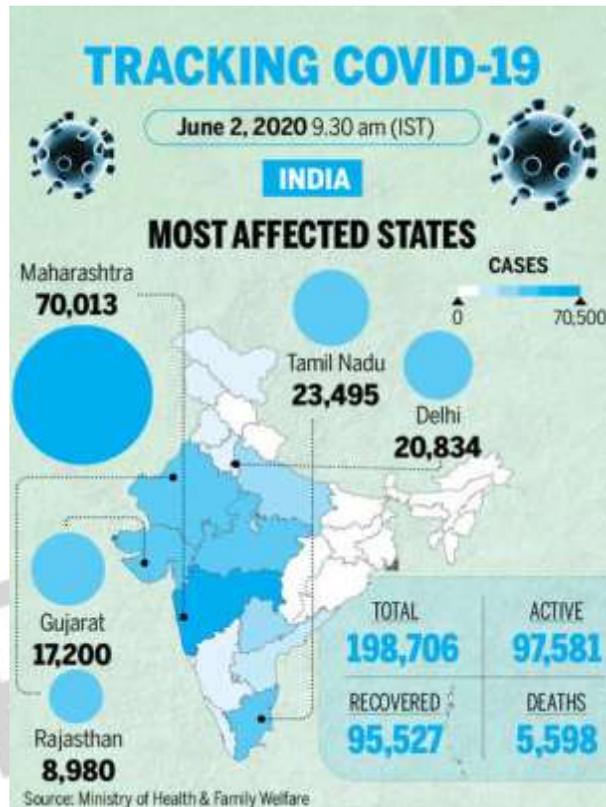
- **On June 1, the southwest monsoon - hit Kerala on its normal date of onset**
- ✓ This is four days earlier than what the IMD had forecast in mid-May
- ✓ This was announced by the Ministry of earth sciences (MoES), while releasing the IMD's second stage long range forecast.
- ✓ As per IMD, this year will not witness drought in any of the four IMD's geographical areas
- ✓ There was only 5% probability of deficient rainfall with a huge 41% probability of normal rainfall, 25% probability of above normal and 14% probability of excess rainfall in the country as a whole.
- ✓ Most parts of India, except for the north-eastern region, are expected to get more rain than normal.
- ✓ North-western India is expected to get 107% of its normal, central India 103% and the southern peninsula 102%.
- ✓ North-eastern India is expected to get only 96% of its long-term average.
- ✓ The rains in July were likely to be 3% above normal, but August would see a 3% decline

- ✓ In its month-wise forecast, the IMD predicted the highest rainfall, quantitatively, for July — the critical month for sowing of Kharif (summer sown) crops in the country.
  - ✓ The agriculture ministry had already set a target of record foodgrain output (298 million tonnes) for 2020-21 crop year (July-June cycle), following the forecast of normal monsoon by the IMD in April
  - ✓ The monsoon rainfall for the country as a whole is likely to be 102% of the long period average (LPA), which is 2% more than what was assumed during the month of April
  - ✓ The arrival of monsoon in Kerala marks the beginning of the four-month (June-September) rainy season in India
  - ✓ The country is heavily dependent on the South west monsoon for more than half of the country's foodgrain production.
  - ✓ The South west monsoon is considered a 'lifeline' for rabi (winter sown) crops as it contributes to soil moisture for longer period and fills the country's reservoirs for irrigation during winter.
  - ✓ The second stage long range forecast predicts monthwise and geographical distribution of rainfall
  - ✓ It helps in planning for farming operations, hydro-power and disaster management in different states during the rainy season.
- **On June 1, Karnataka government - announced its decision to erect a 120-foot statue of Vivekananda near Muthyalaya Maduvi waterfall**
- ✓ It will be designed similar to the Statue of Sardar Patel in Gujarat, which is situated on a water body in the state.
  - ✓ The statue will be constructed in a three-acre plot near Muthyalaya Maduvi waterfall, which is around 10km away from Bannerghatta National Park
  - ✓ The state government is expected to come up with proper planning and detailed explanation on the project within 15 days
  - ✓ The 'Statue of Unity', the world's tallest statue, is a monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
  - ✓ It stands at 597 feet on the banks of Narmada river in Kevadia district of Gujarat state
  - ✓ Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home minister of independent India

## NATIONAL

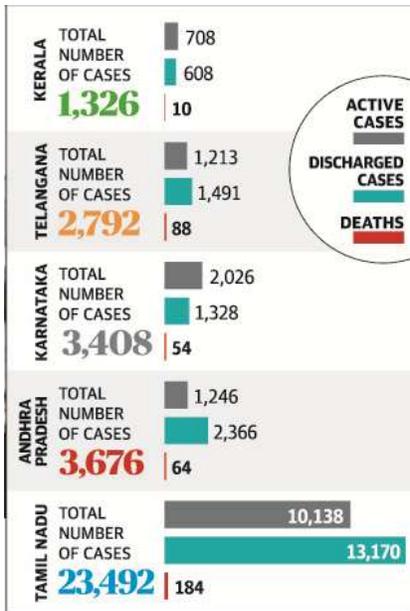
- **On June 1, India – reported 7,573 new Covid-19 positive infections, while the death toll remained above 200 for the fourth straight day.**
- ✓ India had recorded 1,92,630 Covid-19 cases till late on the day, going past France's count of 1,88,882 infections
  - ✓ The day's death toll from the pandemic was 203, the third highest single-day count so far, with the highest number (270) reported on May 29.

- ✓ The total toll from the pandemic rose to exactly 5,600, indicating a case fatality rate of 2.9%
- ✓ A day after overtaking Germany, India went past France in total Covid-19 cases on the day, rising to seventh spot in the list of countries with the highest caseloads of the virus
- ✓ Across India, the total number of Covid patients was over 95,000.



- ✓ On the day, Maharashtra reported a case count of 2,361, which was lower than those reported in the last two days.
  - ✓ Of these, Mumbai reported 1,413 cases, taking the city's count to over 40,000.
  - ✓ The cumulative case count of the state crossed 70,000, accounting for over 36% of all cases in the country.
  - ✓ The state reported 76 more Covid-related deaths, taking the total toll to 2,362, which translates to a case fatality rate of 3.37%, significantly higher than the national average.
  - ✓ Out of this, Mumbai alone accounted for 40 deaths.
- ✓ However, Maharashtra's share of cases in the country is now dropping, as per the trends available.
  - ✓ Maharashtra, which is the worst-hit, accounted for 35% of the total cases in the country from May 26 to 31
  - ✓ It came down sharply from 43% in the previous six days and 41% in the six-day period subsequent to that
  - ✓ Overall, Maharashtra's share in India's Covid-19 cases stands at 37.7%

- ✓ After several days of reporting over 1,000 fresh cases, Delhi's tally dropped slightly to 990.
  - ✓ However, the country's capital reported 50 deaths, taking the total toll past 500, to 523 casualties.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Gujarat became the third state in India to cross 10,000 discharges of Covid-19 positive patients after Maharashtra (29,329) and Tamil Nadu (13,170)
  - ✓ The state has discharged 10,780 patients post recovery on the day.
  - ✓ Gujarat recorded 423 positive cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total to 17,217.
  - ✓ Out of this, Ahmedabad alone has contributed 314 cases
  - ✓ This is the third consecutive day when state reported 400 plus positive cases.
  - ✓ Earlier, the state has registered 438 cases on May 31 and 412 cases on May 30.
  - ✓ The state also recorded the death of 25 Covid-19 positive patients on the day, increasing the toll to 1063.
  - ✓ The deceased include 22 from Ahmedabad alone.
- ✓ In the highest spike in infections in a single day in Arunachal Pradesh, 16 fresh cases were reported on the day.
  - ✓ All of those who tested positive came from Delhi in a Shramik Special train.
- ✓ Odisha witnessed the highest daily spike in cases so far, with 156 people testing positive for the virus, taking its total tally to 2,104.
  - ✓ Seven patients have died of Covid-19 and two others have died of comorbidities.
  - ✓ The number of infected persons rose to 2,104 and the number of those cured rose to 1,245, leaving the state with 850 active cases.
- ✓ Meanwhile in South India, Karnataka reported a death and 187 new cases, a day after reporting the biggest spike on a single day with 299 positive cases
  - ✓ Among the new cases, 117 are inter-State travellers.
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh reported two more deaths, taking the total fatalities to 64.
  - ✓ The State reported 105 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, which includes 76 locals, 28 migrant workers and one foreign returnee.
  - ✓ With this, the state's Covid-19 tally has gone up to 3,676 with 1,246 active cases.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Kerala's case graph continued to rise after another 57 were tested positive on the day, with 55 among this being "imported" cases of infection
- ✓ The total number of cases in Telangana touched 2,792 after 94 people testing positive for the infection.
- ✓ Another six patients died on the day, taking the toll to 88.
- ✓ With a larger number of Covid-19 patients recovering, the case fatality rate has declined steadily to 2.83% from 3.3%
  - ✓ The case fatality rate refers to the percentage of deaths of the total infected cases



- ✓ Meanwhile, as per the health ministry estimates, 230 new deaths and 8,392 fresh cases were recorded on the day
- ✓ With this, the death toll due to Covid-19 rose to 5,394 and the number of cases have climbed to 1,90,535 in the country.
- ✓ The recovery rate in the country is progressively increasing and has reached 48.19%.
  - ✓ Earlier, on May 18, it was 38.29%, on May 3, it was 26.59% while on April 15, it was 11.42%
- ✓ Comparing India's case fatality rate with other countries with high number of deaths, the ministry said the global case fatality rate was 6.19%.
  - ✓ It was highest in France at 19.35%, followed by Belgium at 16.25%, Italy at 14.33% and the UK at 14.07%.
- ✓ The testing capacity had increased in the country through 676 laboratories, including 472 government and 204 private ones.
- ✓ Cumulatively, 38,37,207 samples have been tested so far, whereas 1,00,180 samples were tested on May 31.
- **On June 1, the government - cleared a new definition for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), broadening the scope of medium-sized units to a greater scale.**
  - ✓ Further, the government had also decided to keep the export turnover outside the ambit of the overall turnover for calculating the categorisation of businesses.
  - ✓ **According to the new definition, MSMEs with investment of Rs 1 crore and Rs 5 crores have been classified as Micro units.**
  - ✓ **The MSMEs with annual turnover between Rs 10 crore and Rs 50 crores are classified as small units.**
  - ✓ **The MSMEs with annual turnover of Rs 50 crore and above upto Rs 250 crore are classified as medium units.**

## NEW NORMS

	Old		In ₹ cr	Proposed	New
	Mfg	Services			
<b>Micro</b>	0.25	0.1	<b>Investment</b>	1	1
			<b>Turnover</b>	5	5
<b>Small</b>	5	2	<b>Investment</b>	10	10
			<b>Turnover</b>	50	50
<b>Medium</b>	10	5	<b>Investment</b>	20	50
			<b>Turnover</b>	50	250

The new definition has done away with the distinction between manufacturing and services units; it has brought in two parameters – investment and turnover – instead of earlier system where investment in plant and machinery was the sole criteria to define MSMEs

- ✓ The new definition also allows businesses with an investment of up to ₹50 crore to be classified in the medium enterprises segment.

### Existing and Revised Definition of MSMEs

Existing MSME Classification			
Criteria : Investment in Plant & Machinery or Equipment			
Classification	Micro	Small	Medium
Mfg. Enterprises	Investment < Rs. 25 lac	Investment < Rs. 5 cr.	Investment < Rs. 10 cr.
Services Enterprise	Investment < Rs. 10 lac	Investment < Rs. 2 cr.	Investment < Rs. 5 cr.

**OLD** ←

Revised MSME Classification			
Composite Criteria : Investment And Annual Turnover			
Classification	Micro	Small	Medium
Manufacturing & Services	Investment < Rs. 1 cr. and Turnover < Rs.5 cr.	Investment < Rs. 10 cr. and Turnover < Rs.50 cr.	Investment < Rs. 20 cr. and Turnover < Rs.100 cr.

**NEW** ←

- ✓ Over the last few weeks, the government has announced a series of steps to revive the MSME sector.
- ✓ **On the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of a new portal called Champions — ‘Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength’**
  - ✓ The platform will facilitate handholding, grievance redressal, encourage entrepreneurial talent and discovering new business opportunities of MSMEs.
  - ✓ It will be available in the webpage ‘champions.gov.in’
  - ✓ The portal will assist the MSME’s in capturing new opportunities, including manufacturing of medical equipment and accessories such as PPEs and masks and supply them in national and international markets.

- ✓ Apart from the definition, the cabinet also approved provision of ₹20,000 crore as subordinate debt, or loans from unsecured creditors, to provide equity support to nearly two lakh stressed MSMEs.
  - ✓ Equity infusion of ₹50,000 crore for MSMEs through Fund of Funds (FoF) was also cleared by the cabinet
  - ✓ This will also provide an opportunity to MSMEs to get listed on stock exchanges
  - ✓ Some of the cabinet's recommendations had been made by an expert committee headed by former Sebi chairman U K Sinha
  - ✓ As part of the package to tackle Covid-19, the Centre had announced a collateral-free top-up loan facility for small businesses, based on a guarantee, through the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme
  - ✓ These facility will enable them to pay salaries, rent, and restocking expenses
  - ✓ There are more than 60 million MSMEs in the country, contributing to 29% of India's GDP and are offering 110 million jobs.
  - ✓ The MSMEs also contribute 48% of total exports of India.
- **On June 1, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs - launched a micro-credit scheme 'PM SVANIDHI' to provide affordable loans for street vendors**
- ✓ The scheme was earlier announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on May 14 as part of the economic package for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown.
  - ✓ The Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi Scheme (PM Svanidhi) is aimed at benefiting over 50 lakh vendors who had their businesses operational on or before March 24.
  - ✓ The scheme is valid till March 2022
  - ✓ To facilitate the speedy implementation of the scheme, an online portal and mobile application were being developed by the Government.
  - ✓ The ₹5,000 crore micro-lending scheme will benefit street vendors, who can avail loans up to ₹10,000.
  - ✓ Through the scheme, a network of banks, micro-finance institutions and self-help groups are empowered to hand out loans to street vendors
  - ✓ However, it will be availed by only those vendors who were in business before the lockdown at nominal rates for those repaying on time.
  - ✓ Timely or early repayment will entitle the borrowers for an interest subsidy of 7%
  - ✓ The subsidy will be credited into the beneficiary's bank account through direct benefit transfer on a six-monthly basis.
  - ✓ The scheme will be beneficial to vendors who sell vegetables, fruits, ready-to-eat street foods, tea, pakodas, breads, eggs, textiles, apparel, footwear, artisan products, books/ stationeries apart from barbers, cobblers, laundry service providers and pan shop owners
  - ✓ The Centre intends to use the new scheme to encouraging digital transactions with a monthly cashback module built in.

- **Airlines - have been allowed to keep middle seats occupied, if flights have high passenger loads and sufficient seat capacity.**
- ✓ However, passenger seated on the middle seat will need to be given a wrap-around gown in addition to the face mask and shield.
- ✓ These instructions were part of an order issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on May 31.
- ✓ The order will be effective from June 3
- ✓ As per the order, the members of the same family can be allowed to sit together.
- ✓ However, it mandates to keep the seat between two passengers vacant.
- ✓ The order is binding on all airlines, charter and private jet operators, whether Indian or foreign, operating domestic or international flights.
- ✓ It also says “no meals or drinking water shall be served on board except in extreme circumstances arising due to health reasons”.

#### Key aspects of the DGCA Order

- ✓ The airlines have also been directed to set the air-conditioning system in such a way that the air gets replaced at the shortest possible intervals.
  - ✓ The aircraft will have to be sanitised after the end of each sector when there is no passenger on board.
  - ✓ However, on transit flights, when passengers are on board, the vacated seats (including its contacts) will be sanitised.
  - ✓ At the end of the day, each aircraft will be deep-cleaned as per procedure.
  - ✓ Special attention has to be given to the seat belts and all other contact points.
  - ✓ All the flying/cabin crew will be given full protective suits.
  - ✓ The airlines will also carry out health check-up of all the crew regularly.
  - ✓ This will be implemented on domestic and international flights of 2-3 hour duration.
  - ✓ On longer flights, packed meals can be served to minimise crew-passenger contact
  - ✓ On March 23, the DGCA had directed airlines to keep the seat between two flyers vacant on domestic flights
  - ✓ However, the aviation ministry later said this would render airlines financially unviable and that the practice was not being adopted elsewhere.
  - ✓ On May 6, the DGCA had directed Air India to ensure strict compliance of the SOP for operations of evacuation flights under Vande Bharat mission.
  - ✓ Further, on May 26, the aviation ministry constituted an expert committee of three eminent doctors — AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria, Indian Council of Medical research DG Balram Bhargava and heart surgeon Dr Naresh Trehan — to review and further strengthen the public health related protocols of air travel.
- **On June 1, the Centre - announced higher minimum support price (MSP) of 14 Kharif (summer sown) crops for 2020-21, after getting the nod of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**

- ✓ With this, the government has increased the support price of summer crop paddy from ₹1,815 per quintal to ₹1,868 per quintal.

Commodity	2020-21	2019-20
Paddy (Common)	1,868	1,815
Paddy (Grade A)	1,888	1,835
Jowar (Hybrid)	2,620	2,550
Jowar (Maldandi)	2,640	2,570
Bajra	2,150	2,000
Ragi	3,295	3,150
Maize	1,850	1,760
Tur (Arhar)	6,000	5,800
Moong	7,196	7,050
Urad	6,000	5,700
Groundnut	5,275	5,090
Sunflower Seed	5,885	5,650
Soybean (yellow)	3,880	3,710
Sesamum	6,855	6,485
Nigerseed	6,695	5,940
Cotton (Medium Staple)	5,515	5,255
Cotton (Long Staple)	5,825	5,550



- ✓ The MSP of cotton was increased by ₹260 per quintal to ₹5,515 for medium staple variety, and by ₹275 per quintal to ₹5,825 for long staple variety.
- ✓ The highest increase in MSP has been proposed for nigerseed (₹755 per quintal), followed by sesamum (₹370 per quintal) and urad (₹300 per quintal).
- ✓ The hike is, however, primarily tilted in favour of coarse cereals (bajra and maize) and pulses (arhar and urad) in terms of percentage of return to farmers over their cost of production.
- ✓ The move has been in sync with the central government's policy to encourage farmers to go for less water consuming crops such as coarse cereals than the water-guzzling paddy.
- ✓ The focus on oilseeds is aimed at reducing import bills as the country's production doesn't meet its demand.
- ✓ Under new MSPs, the expected returns to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest in case of Bajra (83%), followed by urad (64%), tur (58%) and maize (53%).
- ✓ For rest of the crops, return to farmers over their cost of production is estimated to be at least 50%.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the Union Cabinet also extended the repayment date for standard short-term loans upto ₹3 lakh for agriculture and allied activities, till August 31, 2020.

- ✓ Also, the government's umbrella scheme Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Saraks Han Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) will help the farmers in providing better return to their investment.
- ✓ Apart from this, the farmers are provided food security through PM-KISAN (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi) scheme and also through Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan yojana.
  
- **On June 1, the Election Commission - announced biennial elections to 24 Rajya Sabha seats on June 19**
- ✓ This includes 18 seats, where polling was deferred earlier and six seats falling vacant in June and July.
- ✓ The polling was earlier scheduled for March 26, which was then postponed due to the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown.
- ✓ The elections will be held to four Rajya Sabha seats each from Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka; three each from Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; two from Jharkhand and one seat each from Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram
- ✓ The decision to conduct the election was taken at a full commission meeting — attended by chief election commissioner Sunil Arora and election commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra
- ✓ The meeting discussed all factors, including the Unlock 1.0 guidelines issued by the home ministry on May 30 and also inputs from chief electoral officers of the states concerned, while taking the decision.
- ✓ The Election Commission had earlier issued a notification on March 6, 2020, in order to fill 55 seats in Rajya Sabha from 17 states with a scheduled polling on March 26
- ✓ A total of 37 candidates were declared elected after the last date of withdrawal on March 18.
  
- **The Rath Yatra in Puri this year - is likely to be observed without the participation of devotees.**
- ✓ The yatra is scheduled for June 23.



- ✓ The Odisha Government is likely to issue an official order on restriction of devotees later this week.
  - ✓ Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik and Puri king Dibyasingha Deb are likely to make an appeal to devotees to cooperate with the government in smooth conduct of the festival in a controlled and restricted manner amid the coronavirus scare.
  - ✓ The temple's managing committee had proposed to the state government to host the Rath Yatra without the presence of devotees
  - ✓ The Rath Yatra will take place on Grand Road
  - ✓ During the Yatra, the iconic chariots with the sibling deities of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are pulled by devotees from the Jagannath Temple to the Gundicha Temple during the festival.
  - ✓ As per the committee members, the rituals of Rath Yatra will be performed inside the temple and aboard the chariots outside the shrine by a limited number of servitors.
- **On June 1, INS Jalashwa - set sail from Colombo in Sri Lanka to Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu with 685 Indian citizens onboard, under Phase 2 of Operation Samudra Setu by the Navy.**



- ✓ INS Jalashwa arrived at the East Container Terminal of the Colombo Port on the morning of June 1.
- ✓ After this, INS Jalashwa will repatriate another 700 Indian citizens from Male in the Maldives to Thoothukudi.
- ✓ Under Phase 1 of Op 'Samudra Setu', the Navy has evacuated 1,488 Indian nationals from Male to Kochi.
- ✓ This operation is being executed in close coordination with the Ministries of External Affairs, Home Affairs and Health among others

## **SUPREME COURT**

- **In a pioneering development, a virtual court of the Supreme Court - went paperless on June 1 and judges heard cases without having a single paper and case files on their table.**
- ✓ It was an unusual sight which took place in virtual court number three of SC.

- ✓ On the virtual court, only three chairs were put up on the dais prior to assembling of the judges, without the usually stacked case files
- ✓ Even more unusual was the three judges — Justices D Y Chandrachud, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi — walking in with their laptops.
- ✓ They opened their laptops and started hearing cases
- ✓ However, most lawyers connected through video links were seen using paper case files.
- ✓ During the arguments, the judges were seen making notes on the laptop as the hearings continued without any issues.
- ✓ If all judges in the SC, high courts and trial courts follow the process, then the judiciary will save 10 billion sheets of paper and thousands of trees from being felled for the purpose every year.
- ✓ The first move to make SC proceedings paperless was initiated by then CJI J S Khehar in 2017
- ✓ He brought in large-screen computers which were placed before the judges in the first five courts.
- ✓ But the judges, who had worked with case files and physically turned pages to go through petitions, were uncomfortable with the sudden decision to go paperless
- ✓ Soon, the huge computers were folded and used as table tops.
- ✓ Later, these were removed to the storeroom
- ✓ The Supreme Court had constituted a committee headed by Justice Chandrachud to streamline filing of cases and their categorisation for grouping
- ✓ It has also been tasked to prepare standard operating procedures for digitisation and e-filing of cases in all HCs and district courts.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **In Latin America - the Covid-19 outbreak grew more serious with infections passing the one million mark.**
- ✓ However, countries across Europe took bolder steps in easing coronavirus lockdowns
- ✓ Covid-19 has now killed over 372,000 million people and infected over 6 million
- ✓ In Brazil, which has more than half a million known infections, President Jair Bolsonaro defied social distancing recommendations and came out in public wearing no face mask
- ✓ However, the virus rages on in Brazil and other parts of South America, with the situation in Chile, Bolivia and Peru also worsening.
- ✓ In a grim new landmark, infections in Latin America and the Caribbean surged past one million.
- ✓ On a happier note, Spain has seen no Covid-19 deaths in a 24-hour period for the first time since March.
- ✓ In Britain, some schools reopened on June 1, but the decision drew criticism

- ✓ Leaders in Russia too faced criticism for easing curbs in Moscow despite the high number of cases.
- **The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) - is set to become the biggest funder of the World Health Organisation (WHO), after the recent announcement of US President Donald Trump in “terminating” the relationship with it**

<b>TOP CONTRIBUTORS</b>		
<b>Country/ Entity</b>	<b>\$ million</b>	<b>% of total</b>
US	893	15.9
Gates Foundation	531	9.4
UK	435	7.7
GAVI*	371	6.6
Germany	292	5.2
Japan	214	3.8

Updated till Q4 2019 | Source: WHO  
\* Formerly the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation

- ✓ This would be the first instance in which a private foundation becoming the biggest funder on a United Nations agency.
- ✓ However, among the top 10 donors to the organization, only four are member countries and one is the European Commission.
- ✓ The rest are all non-state actors or philanthropies.
- ✓ When the WHO was constituted, its constitution stipulated that it should primarily be financed through regular contributions from member countries, called “assessed contributions”, according to the country’s wealth and population.
- ✓ However, due to the reluctance of member countries to increase the assessed annual contributions, the WHO has been increasingly dependent on voluntary contributions from countries and non-state actors, weakening its autonomy.
- ✓ Its budget, just over \$5.6 billion in 2019, is less than the revenue of a big hospital in the US.
- ✓ Also, more than three-quarters of the WHO’s funds are specified voluntary contributions meant for specific programmes like polio eradication or TB, leaving the organisation with no flexibility in spending.
- ✓ Hence, the agency has struggled to find funds in responding to situations like the outbreak of Ebola and now the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison – will come together for their first-ever virtual summit on June 4**

- ✓ During the meeting, both the PMs will focus on an “ambitious agenda” which will include a mutual logistics sharing agreement
- ✓ With this, India will have logistics agreements with all the Quad countries.
- ✓ Apart from that, the leaders will discuss about the ways in improving regional and multilateral institutions including the Covid, science and technology cooperation as well as on cybersecurity and critical technology, defence and maritime issues in the Indo Pacific, critical mineral supply chains, education and water resource management.
- ✓ Earlier, the Modi-Morrison summit has been postponed twice, once because of the Australian bushfires and then the pandemic.
- ✓ Both the countries have a much closer defence relationship, as demonstrated by the regular AUSINDEX exercises

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **The Space Commission - has cleared a proposal to set up a National Space Activities Promotion Board, as a first step towards the privatization of India’s space program**
- ✓ Now, the proposal will be sent to the Prime Minister’s office, which is expected to give its nod for the move which puts an end to Indian Space Research Organisation’s monopoly in the Indian space sector.
- ✓ The proposal came as a result of a year-long process initiated by the PMO to reform strategic sectors.
- ✓ Earlier on May 16, Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the government would make future projects for planetary exploration and outer space travel open for private sector.
- ✓ The proposed board will have powers independent of Isro.
- ✓ It may have a chairman and members drawn from different strategic government sectors as independent experts
- ✓ The board will provide the roadmap for the private companies to take up research and development of rockets and satellites, besides taking up space missions.
- ✓ The PMO will decide on its constitution and autonomy
- ✓ Leading space leaders such as the US and China, besides the European Space Agency, have been encouraging private companies to be part of their space programme
- ✓ However, India had kept its core activities within Isro and outsourced manufacturing of components for rockets and satellites from private companies.
- ✓ In June 2019, the PMO had set up a committee headed by Union minister Nitin Gadkari to study and suggest measures to strengthen the country’s strategic sectors.
- ✓ A deputy secretary in the PMO has been coordinating the reform plan for the space sector.

- ✓ After several rounds of discussions, the space commission approved the proposal on May 20.
- ✓ Four days earlier, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the government would allow private players to share Isro's assets
- ✓ The space commission is chaired by the Isro chairman and comprises about a dozen secretaries of the Union government, besides the national security advisor

## ECONOMY

- On June 1, Global ratings agency Moody's Investors Service - downgraded India's sovereign rating to the lowest investment grade 'Baa3' from 'Baa2'

1st DOWNGRADE BY MOODY'S IN 22 YRS		HELP FOR MSMEs, FARMERS	
Rating & Action			
June 1998	Ba2, Downgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Govt decides to keep exports out of turnover calculation for MSMEs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ MSP hiked for 14 crops, led by nigerseed, where procurement is negligible</li> </ul>
Feb 2003	Ba1, Upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Medium enterprises can have investment up to ₹50 cr, turnover of up to ₹250 cr, higher than previously announced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Focus on boosting cultivation of nutri-cereals such as bajra and urad and tur daal</li> </ul>
Jan 2004	Baa3, Upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Two funds, to support ailing small businesses and capacity augmentation, cleared by Cabinet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ MSP for paddy raised by 3%</li> </ul>
Nov 2017	Baa2, Upgrade		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Farmers can repay bank loans up to August without losing benefit of interest subsidy</li> </ul>
June 2020	Baa3, Downgrade		

- ✓ It had cited the risks of low growth, significant deterioration in the government fiscal position and stress in the financial sector for its action.
- ✓ The downgrade comes against the backdrop of the deterioration in the country's growth prospects due to the Covid-19 induced national lockdown
- ✓ Moody's had upgraded the country's rating to Baa2 in November 2017.
- ✓ The downgrade by Moody's comes nearly 22 years after it lowered India's rating on June 19, 1998 following the country's nuclear tests.
- ✓ The lowering of the rating brings it on a par with S&P and Fitch which rate India at BBB (minus), the lowest investment grade.
- ✓ According to Moody's, the country's GDP growth has declined from a high of 8.3% in fiscal 2016 (ending March 2017) to 4.2% in fiscal 2019 and expects India's GDP to contract by 4.0% in fiscal 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic and related lockdown measures
- ✓ However, it expects the GDP to grow by 8.7% in fiscal 2021 and closer to 6.0% thereafter.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY

- World Milk Day – June 1



- ✓ The day is observed to create awareness about the various activities associated with the dairy sector.
- ✓ It is celebrated every year by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations since 2001.
- ✓ The day was chosen as several other countries were celebrating milk day on that particular day
- ✓ Theme 2020 - The 20th Anniversary of World Milk Day
- ✓ India is the largest producer of milk.
- ✓ India celebrates National Milk Day on November 26.
- ✓ The day marks the birth anniversary of Verghese Kurien
- ✓ He is known as Father of Milk Revolution in India, who launched Operation Flood in the year 1970
- ✓ The operation aimed at doubling milk availability per person in the country.

