

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JUNE 22, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- On June 21, Tamil Nadu – reported its biggest single day count of 53 deaths and 2,532 new cases
- ✓ With this, the state’s overall tally has gone up to 59, 377 while the official death toll remains at 757
- ✓ In Chennai, 1,493 people tested positive, taking the total in the city to 41,172.
- ✓ The number of active cases in the state crossed 25,000 for the first time

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

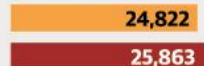
	Until June 14	June 15	June 16	June 17	June 18	June 19	June 20	June 21	Total
Cases reported	44,661	1,843	1,515	2,174	2,141	2,115	2,396	2,532	59,377
Recovered and discharged	24,547	797	1,438	842	1,017	1,630	1,045	1,438	32,754
Deceased	435	44	49	48	49	41	38	53	757

Persons tested



***CHANGES IN 24 HOURS**
 As on June 20, 6 p.m.
 As on June 21, 6 p.m.

Active cases



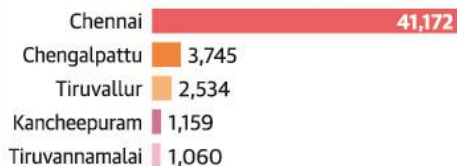
Discharged



Died



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 the Health and Family Welfare Department.

- ✓ Nearly 70% of the fresh cases were reported in Chennai (1,493) and its three neighbouring districts of Chengalpet (121), Kancheepuram (68) and Thiruvallur (120)
- ✓ For the second day in a row, the state has tested more than 30,000 samples.
- ✓ A total of 31,401 samples were tested on the day.
- ✓ With the number of Covid-19 cases rapidly increasing in Chennai, the Greater Chennai Corporation plans to turn Anna University into a 2000-bed Covid care centre.

- ✓ The university has already provided space for a 650-bed quarantine facility at Knowledge Park and the postgraduate hostel on the campus
- **Theni district - has bagged the 'Skoch Gold award' for water conservation and management of water bodies at the national level**
- ✓ The district bagged the award ahead of over 130 districts which were also contesting for the honour.
- ✓ The award ranks the districts based on 12 parameters, which included survey of waterbodies, eviction of encroachment, private public contribution, silt removal, creation of farm ponds, curbing illegal sand mining, green cover through Miyawaki technique, rejuvenating defunct borewells and treating and recycling of water, among others.

NATIONAL

- **On June 21, India - registered its biggest single-day spike yet again with the reporting of 15,372 cases for Covid-19 infection, taking the country's caseload to 4,26,397**
- ✓ Also, the country's death count crossed the 400-mark for the first time, after recording 423 casualties on the day.
- ✓ With this, the country's cumulative death toll has now risen to 13,695.
- ✓ Maharashtra accounted for the maximum cases on the day with 3870 fresh cases, taking its caseload to 1,32,075.
- ✓ It is the second highest number of cases recorded on a single day, after the record 3874 cases reported on the previous day
- ✓ The state also reported 186 deaths, including some pre-dated casualties, to take the cumulative toll over the 6,000-mark to 6170.
- ✓ On the positive side, 2,35,907 people have been cured across the country, taking the recovery rate to 55.3%.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Delhi reported 3000 fresh infections and 63 deaths, to take the capital's cumulative caseload to 59746 and the toll to 2175.
- ✓ On the day, Delhi has overtaken Tamil Nadu to become the second state with maximum caseload in the country.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu has reported 59377 cases, as on date.
- ✓ Further, five other states registered their biggest single-day spike -Telangana (730), Gujarat (580), Rajasthan (393), Odisha (304) and Kerala (133) – on the day.
- **The External Affairs ministry - has requested diplomatic missions in India to resume visa processing services, considering the gradual lifting of the Covid-induced lockdown in the country**

SIGN OF NORMALCY

- MEA's June 9 letter says some Indians, who live and work abroad, got stranded after international flights were suspended on March 22
- In some cases, Indians who had submitted passports to foreign missions for visa before lockdown are yet to get their passports back
- Resuming visa services is a sign of normalcy returning post-pandemic

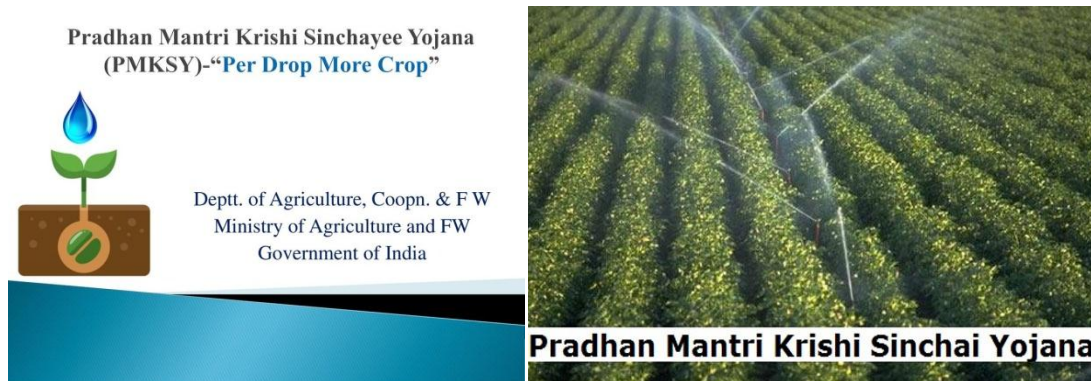
- ✓ The move comes at a time when the government is planning to resume international flights gradually from next month depending on the Covid-19 situation
- ✓ Indians who live and work abroad were stuck in their respective countries, when international flights were suspended on March 22
- ✓ Earlier, the government had suspended the existing visas given to foreigners on March 10 to prevent the spread of viral disease.
- ✓ India has already begun lifting of the restrictions on entry of foreigners in a calibrated manner.
- ✓ The scheduled commercial international flights are suspended till the month-end.
- **On June 21, the country - witnessed the year's first and the deepest annular solar eclipse of the century for over three hours**



- ✓ The eclipse reached its peak in the noon giving the appearance of a 'ring of fire' for around 30 seconds
- ✓ The 'ring of fire' was visible along a narrow corridor running through Chandigarh, Delhi, Shimla and Jaipur.
- ✓ The eclipse is called annular because the orbit of Moon that passes perfectly in front of Sun is elliptical
- ✓ However, it was a partial eclipse in Chennai, with only 34% visible for almost three hours from 10.22am.

- ✓ The annular phase was clearly visible across north and east India – 94% in Delhi, 80% in Guwahati, 78% in Patna.
- ✓ The next solar eclipse in South India is expected to happen only in 2031
- **India – is planning to set up a ‘online’ coal trading platform soon**
- ✓ Under the proposal, the entire coal produced in the country will be traded on this platform, which would be called ‘Coal Exchange’.
- ✓ The pricing of coal will be determined in a transparent manner on the basis of demand and supply in this ‘online’ platform
- ✓ The setting up of India’s first coal trading platform paves the way for the entry of multiple buyers and sellers in the coal sector.
- ✓ It is expected to be the only trading platform for organised sale of coal in India.
- ✓ On June 18, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the auction process of 41 coal blocks for commercial mining
- ✓ Till now, the government had a monopoly on coal mining, due to which, despite having abundant coal, India still imported coal.
- ✓ The Government has already allotted coal blocks to state PSUs for the sale of coal.
- ✓ It has now decided to allow liberalised entries in the coal sector so India will soon have more sellers in the market apart from Coal India.
- ✓ Despite opening up the coal sector for market forces, Coal India Ltd is expected to remain a dominant player in the sector with its production target of one billion tonnes by 2024.
- ✓ Earlier, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced reforms in the coal sector while revealing the fourth tranche of the Atmanirbhar Bharat economic package
- ✓ According to the Coal Ministry, the commercial mining of these coal blocks is expected to generate approximately ₹33,000 crore of capital investment in the country over the next five to seven years.
- ✓ Recently, Jharkhand had challenged the auction process of commercial mining on the ground that the current Covid-19 situation would not fetch market price and tribals would be affected by commercial exploitation of coal mines.
- **The Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmer’s Welfare - has commenced the implementation of the ‘Per Drop More Crop’ component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC).**
- ✓ For the ‘Per Drop More Crop’ component, the centre has provided an annual allocation of Rs. 4000 crore for the year 2020-21
- ✓ Further, the state governments have identified the beneficiaries to be covered under the programme and the fund release to some of the states has already begun.

- ✓ The 'Per Drop More Crop' component of PMKSY focuses on the improvement of water use efficiency at the farm level through micro irrigation technologies, such as drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.



- ✓ This technique will help in water-saving as well as in reducing labour expenses, fertilizer use, and other input costs.
 - ✓ While making the announcement, the Ministry also informed about the creation of Micro Irrigation Fund Corpus of Rs. 5000 crore with the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for innovative and special projects
 - ✓ The fund will be used by the states in resource mobilisation for expanding the coverage of micro irrigation.
 - ✓ Out of the Rs 5000 crore, the micro irrigation funds have already been released to the states of Tamil Nadu for Rs. 478.79 crore and Andhra Pradesh 616.14 crore respectively through NABARD.
 - ✓ The area that has been covered under these projects is 1.76 lakh ha in Tamil Nadu and 1.021 lakh ha in Andhra Pradesh.
 - ✓ An area of 46.96 lakh ha has already been covered under micro-irrigation through PMKSY-PDMC, during the last five years (2015-2016 to 2019-2020).
- **GAIL (India) Ltd. And Petronet LNG Ltd. - joined India's first natural gas online exchange recently.**
- ✓ Both GAIL and Petronet are terminal owners of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).
 - ✓ The other entities that have joined the exchange includes Torrent Power, Manikaran Power and Adani Gas
 - ✓ The trading platform will help in reviving the yet-to-be-completed gas-fuelled power projects and will reduce subsidy and fertilizer prices.
 - ✓ Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has launched the Indian gas trading platform which has been set up by Indian Energy Exchange.
 - ✓ The platform will facilitate the setting up of the market price of gas.
 - ✓ The Indian Gas exchange will be offering six market products initially.
 - ✓ To start with, it will be at three physical hubs in Hazira in Gujarat, Dahej, and Odoru in Andhra Pradesh
 - ✓ The company has been planning of adding more hubs soon.

- ✓ The other members and clients of the natural gas exchange include GMR Group, Geeta Power, Asahi Glass, Piramal Glass, Gujarat State Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd., Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd., Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals, Saint Gobain, Bhagyanagar Gas, Kajaria Ceramics, Maharashtra Natural gas Limited, Gujarat Borosil, and Haryana City Gas.
 - ✓ The consumption of gas in India is around 145 million standard cubic metres a day (mmscmd).
 - ✓ The gas accounts for around 6.2% of India's primary energy mix against the global average of 24%.
 - ✓ The government has been planning to increase this to 15% by 2030.
 - ✓ India's gas demand is expected to be driven by power, fertilizer, steel, and city gas distribution.
- **The Jal Shakti Ministry – has requested more allocation from the Centre for the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), following a shortfall in finance**
- ✓ The Ministry has requested an additional funding of ₹82,000 crore from the 15th Finance Commission for the JJM project to provide drinking water tap connections to every rural household by 2024.
 - ✓ Only 18% of households are currently covered under the project.
 - ✓ The additional funding will be used for capital intensive projects in water scarce areas, and in areas where the water has been contaminated by arsenic or flouride, or has high-salinity levels.
 - ✓ According to the Ministry, there had been a 45% shortfall in financing the project by both the Centre and the States in its first year of 2019-20.
 - ✓ The planned Central share for the year was ₹ 20,798 crore, but the actuals were only at around ₹12,000 crore.
 - ✓ The share due from States was ₹8,329 crore, but the shortfall was more than ₹4,200 crore.
 - ✓ Similarly, in 2020-21 as well, there has been a 32% shortfall at the Central level.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Kathy Lueders – was announced as the first female head of NASA's human space flight program recently.**



- ✓ She was appointed as the new Associate Administrator of HEO- Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate.
 - ✓ Lueders was a commercial crew manager and has been involved in sending NASA's astronauts to space on private spacecrafts since 2014.
 - ✓ Kathy Lueders worked on the inaugural private crewed flight DEMO-2 from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida in May 2020.
 - ✓ Lueders began her career in NASA in 1992 and later moved on to the International Space Station (ISS) Program, where she served as a transportation integration manager.
 - ✓ She also led commercial cargo resupply services to the ISS.
 - ✓ She was responsible for NASA oversight of international partner spacecraft visiting the ISS.
- **Ramon Magsaysay awards - have been cancelled this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.**
- ✓ This was announced by the Manila-based Ramon Magsaysay foundation recently
 - ✓ This is the third time that the annual awards have been cancelled in the last six decades - the first time was due to a financial crisis in 1970 and the second time when a disastrous earthquake hit the Philippines in 1990.
 - ✓ The Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award, which is named after seventh Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay who died in a plane crash in 1957.
 - ✓ The award was established in April 1957 by the trustees of the Rockefeller Brothers fund along with the cooperation of the Philippine government.
 - ✓ The award is conferred by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation
 - ✓ It is given to Asian individuals who achieve excellence in their respective fields and to honour those who selflessly serve to help others.
 - ✓ The awards are known as Asia's version of the Nobel Prize
 - ✓ They were initially given in five categories- journalism, literature and creative communication arts; public service; government service; community leadership and peace and international understanding.
 - ✓ However, these five categories were discontinued in 2009.
 - ✓ So far, the award has been conferred to more than 330 individuals including world leaders such as late Philippine President Corazon Aquino and Mother Teresa.
 - ✓ In the year 2019, Indian Journalist Ravish Kumar was chosen among the five winners.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **India - joined international and multi-stakeholder initiative 'Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence' (GPAI) as its founding member.**
- ✓ This was announced by Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad on June 15, 2020

- ✓ With this, India has joined the leading nations of the world including the UK, EU, US, and Australia among others.
- ✓ The global initiative aims to guide 'responsible' development and use of Artificial Intelligence, with emphasis in human rights, diversity, inclusion, innovation, and economic growth.
- ✓ It will also provide assistance to the cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related platforms.
- ✓ The initiative will also ensure better understanding of the opportunities and challenges around Artificial Intelligence (AI) while using the diversity and experience of the participating countries.
- ✓ Union Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad had also launched the National AI Portal in order to pool the best ideas and resources on AI in a single platform, so that it can be utilised across various industries and sectors.
- ✓ The other nations that have joined the partnership are France, Canada, Germany, Japan, Italy, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, and Singapore.
- ✓ Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) will be supported by a Secretariat.
- ✓ It will be hosted by OECD- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, as well as by the two other Centres' of Expertise - one each in Paris and Montreal.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **A new 'injectable' drug under the brand name 'Covifor' – will be launched soon in the country for the treatment of Covid-19 patients**



- ✓ It will be a generic version of Remdesivir drug, which was developed by Gilead Sciences of United States
- ✓ The drug will be produced by Hetero, a drug-maker with headquarters in Hyderabad
- ✓ The company has received approval from the Drug Controller-General of India (DCGI) to manufacture and sell the drug in the country.

- ✓ The product is being manufactured at the Hetero's facility in Hyderabad, while its Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) is being developed at Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam.
- ✓ The drug has been approved in the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed cases of Covid-19 in adults and children, hospitalised with severe symptoms of the disease.
- ✓ Covifor (Remdesivir) will be available in a 100-mg vial (injectable) which has to be administered 'intravenously' in a hospital setting under the supervision of a healthcare practitioner
- ✓ Since the product has been approved for emergency use and in hospital/institutional set up only, it will not be available in 'retail' mode through chemists.
- ✓ Instead, Covifor will be made available to hospitals treating Covid-19 patients.
- ✓ The supplies are expected to begin within a week.
- ✓ Each 100 mg vial is likely to be priced between ₹5,000 and ₹6,000.
- ✓ The drug is to be administered only after getting the consent of patients.
- ✓ This antiviral medication was developed by the United States biopharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences Inc for treatment of Hepatitis C.
- ✓ United Kingdom, Singapore, and Japan are some of the countries where the drug has been approved for the treatment of Covid-19 cases.
- ✓ The product is being launched under a licensing agreement with Gilead Sciences to provide access to Covid-19 treatment in low and middle-income countries.
- ✓ Besides Hetero, other drugmakers, including Jubilant Lifesciences, Mylan, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Biocon company Syngene and Zydus Cadila Healthcare, have entered into deals with Gilead Sciences for the manufacture of the drug.

APPOINTMENTS

- **The United States Senate - confirmed the appointment of India-born American scientist Sethuraman Panchanathan as the Director of National Science Foundation (NSF)**



- ✓ The NSF is the premier body in the U.S. that supports research and education in fields of fundamental science and engineering.

- ✓ Dr Panchanathan is an alumnus of University of Madras, Indian Institute of Science and Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- ✓ Earlier, U.S. President Donald Trump nominated him as the Director of NSF in December 2019
- ✓ However, his appointment was pending endorsement from the U.S. Senate as per the appointment process.
- ✓ NSF has an annual budget of around \$8.3 billion in 2020
- ✓ It was the funding source for roughly 25% of all U.S. government supported research in colleges and universities.
- ✓ Dr Panchanathan took up a teaching tenure in University of Ottawa before moving to Arizona State University, where he currently holds multiple positions apart from the Chief Research and Innovation Officer.
- ✓ He was earlier appointed by former U.S. President Barack Obama as a member of the National Science Board that establishes policies for NSF.
- ✓ Dr Panchanathan is widely known in the research and academic circles in US
- ✓ His areas of interest include innovation, particularly in the areas of assistive technologies and in higher education.

SPORTS

- **The Sports Ministry of India – is planning to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence under the Khelo India Scheme.**
- ✓ The proposed Centres of Excellence aims to create a robust sporting ecosystem in various states
- ✓ Every State and UT will have one such Centre of Excellence.
- ✓ As a first step, the sports ministry has already identified state-owned sports facilities in 8 states - Odisha, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland
- ✓ These facilities will be upgraded into Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE).
- ✓ The respective State/UTs will be responsible to run the centre and build capacity to run it into a world-class sporting facility.
- ✓ The funds for expert coaches, equipment, support staff, infrastructure will be provided by the Centre through the Khelo India Scheme.
- ✓ The eight centres will be provided with a grant based on the actual amount finalized as per the requirement indicated after a comprehensive gap analysis study.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of States/UTs to identify and develop the talent in each sport for which the funding has been received by the centre.
- ✓ The move is seen as the first step in the right direction to promote talent from various States and train them into elite athletes who will medals for the country in all the major international tournaments, especially the Olympics.

CONTAINMENT ZONES IN CHENNAI – A REPORT

- As on June 21, Chennai's suburbs – have reported more containment zones than the core city
- ✓ Tambaram had 76 containment zones while all of Chennai city had only 64.
- ✓ It is exactly opposite of the picture from four weeks ago, when Tambaram had 18 containment zones and Chennai city 369.

SPEAKING NUMBERS

Guidelines for creating containment zones is the same for city and the suburbs

SUBURBS CONTAINMENT

Number of people in isolation camps at Tambaram and Pallavaram

- May 3rd week | 282
- June 3rd week | 332

Case growth in Chengelpet district

- May 3rd week | 655
- June 3rd week | 3,745

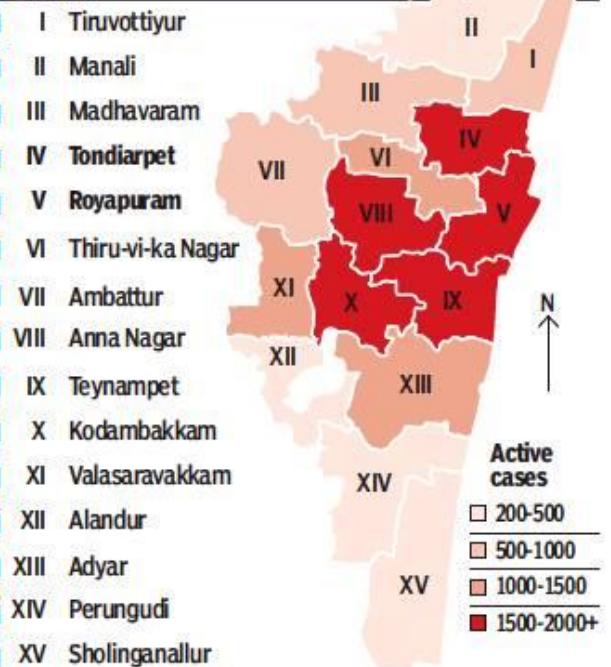
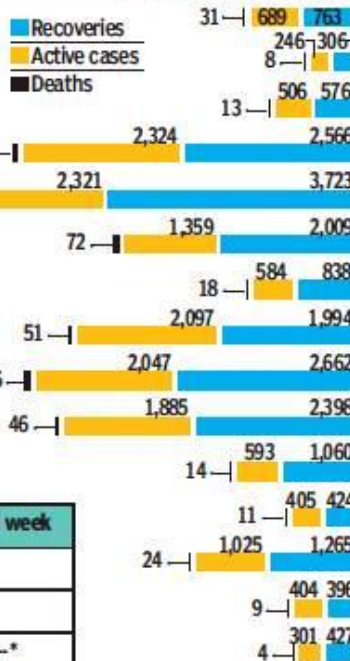
➤ Deaths | 49

Rules for declaring a containment zone

- Street has five primary cases or 20 positive contacts
- Local authorities take call on sealing individual houses

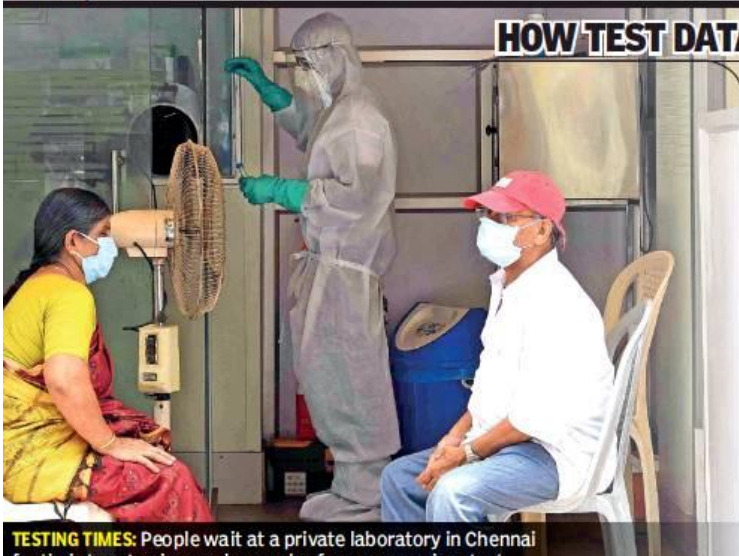
NUMBER OF CONTAINMENT ZONES

Location	May 3rd week	June 3rd week
Chennai City	369	64
Tambaram	18	76
Pallavaram	28	-NA-*



COVID PROGRESS IN TAMIL NADU – A REPORT

Pic: A Prathap



HOW TEST DATA IS COLLATED

- ICMR says patients being tested have to be register with it
- The patient name and contact details are captured in an exclusive RTPCR app by labs or hospitals
- The app generates a number
- Without it, sample cannot be collected by the lab
- After test, report is sent to patient and fed into the app
- ICMR keeps track on the number of samples and result

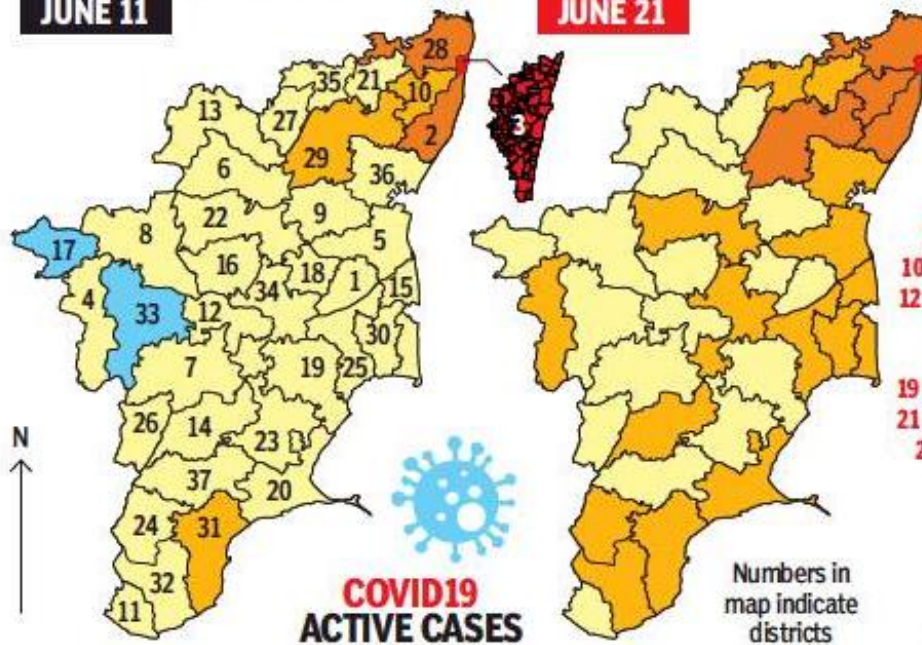
TESTING TIMES: People wait at a private laboratory in Chennai for their turn to give swab samples for a coronavirus test

THE SPREAD

With districts across the state reporting positive cases, the Covid-19 heat map of Tamil Nadu has changed for the worse in the past 10 days

JUNE 11

JUNE 21



TAMIL NADU DISTRICTS

- 1 Ariyalur; 2 Chengalpet;
- 3 Chennai; 4 Coimbatore;
- 5 Cuddalore; 6 Dharmapuri;
- 7 Dindigul; 8 Erode; 9 Kallakurichi;
- 10 Kancheepuram; 11 Kanyakumari;
- 12 Karur; 13 Krishnagiri; 14 Madurai;
- 15 Nagapattinam; 16 Namakkal;
- 17 Nilgiris; 18 Perambalur;
- 19 Pudukottai; 20 Ramanathapuram;
- 21 Ranipet; 22 Salem; 23 Sivagangai;
- 24 Tenkasi; 25 Thanjavur; 26 Theni;
- 27 Thirupathur; 28 Thiruvallur;
- 29 Thiruvannamalai;
- 30 Thiruvarur; 31 Tuticorin;
- 32 Tirunelveli; 33 Tirupur;
- 34 Trichy; 35 Vellore;
- 36 Villupuram; 37 Virudhunagar

**COVID19
ACTIVE CASES**

Numbers in
map indicate
districts