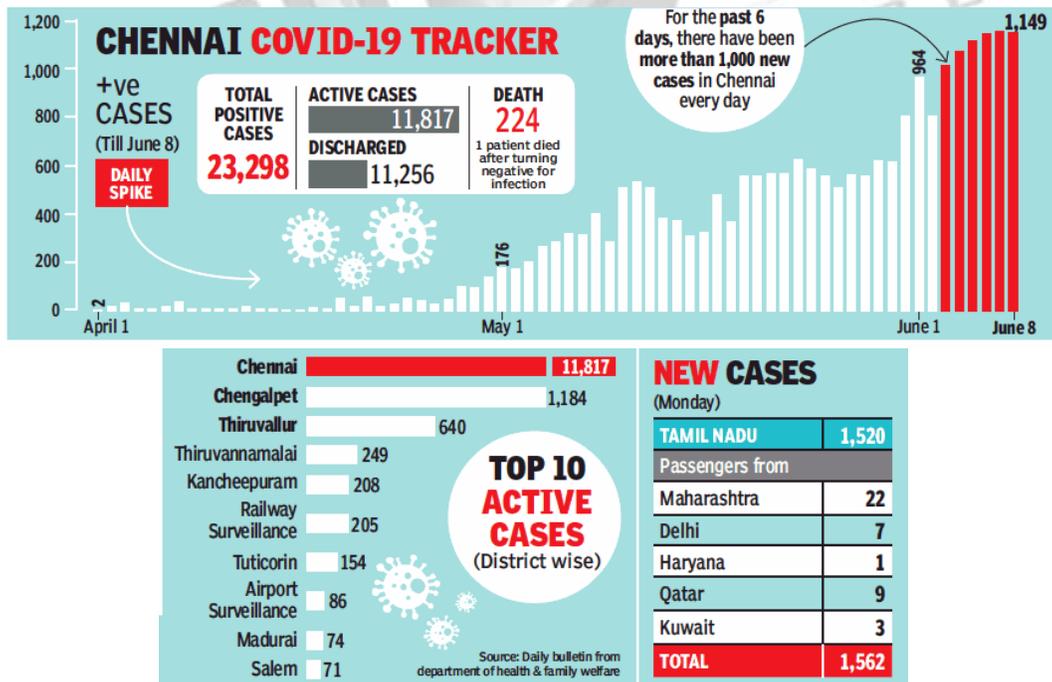




EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JUNE 9, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- On June 8, Tamil Nadu reported 17 Covid-19 deaths and 1,562 positive cases, taking the toll and cumulative tally to 286 and 33,229 respectively.
- ✓ Of the total cases, Chennai accounted for 1,149, taking its total count to 11,817.
- ✓ The new cases included 42 returnees to various parts of state – including 22 from Maharashtra, nine from Qatar and three from Kuwait.



- ✓ Apart from Chennai, neighbours Chengalpet reported 134, Kancheepuram 18 and Tiruvallur 57.
 - ✓ Further, Vellore reported 33 cases, Tuticorin 26, Kallakuruchi 20, Thiruvannamalai 11 and Cuddalore 10.
 - ✓ Nineteen other districts had a single-digit rise in cases

- ✓ A total of 528 people were discharged on the day, taking the total number of recovered persons to 17,527.
- ✓ Of the 15,413 patients under isolation and treatment, 11,817 were in Chennai alone.
- ✓ As on June 5, the containment zones in the state have fallen to 316 as against 568 during the corresponding period the previous week, due to geographical dispersion of cases and contacts.
 - ✓ Chennai, which tops the list with 201 zones, had 254 zones earlier.
 - ✓ Tiruvannamalai and Cuddalore come next with 29 and 26 zones respectively. Chengalpet, which reported 91 zones the previous week, has only seven containment zones now.
 - ✓ After a fall of six zones, Kancheepuram has reported 13 zones now.
 - ✓ All other district has containment zones in single digits.
 - ✓ There were no more containment zones in 21 districts, which include Sivaganga, Erode, Tirupur, Coimbatore, Salem, Tiruvarur, Nilgiris, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Trichy, Vellore, Perambalur, Dindigul, Villupuram, Madurai, Virudhunagar, Tiruvallur, Pudukottai, Karur and Theni.
 - ✓ The state had 1,143 containment zones, as per the first list released by the state government on May 22.
- ✓ On June 8, the Madras high court asked the state government to consider postponing the Class X board exam considering the surge in Covid-19 cases across the state.
 - ✓ Class X board exams are scheduled to start on June 15
 - ✓ A division bench of justices, Vineet Kothari and R Suresh Kumar adjourned the hearing to June 11, after giving the government two days' time to take a stand and inform the court accordingly.
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has sought ₹15,000 crore soft loan from Rural Electricity Corporation (REC) and Power Finance Corporation (PFC) to pay the dues of Tangedco to various power generation companies.**
 - ✓ Earlier, the Centre has announced ₹90,000 crore assistance for discoms across the country to get over their financial crisis.
 - ✓ The loans will be provided for a period ranging between 3 years to 10 years at an interest rate varying from 8.75% to 9.5%
 - ✓ There are 121 solar power generation firms and 2,521 wind power generation firms in the state
 - ✓ The Centre has specified certain preconditions to avail the loan assistance.
 - ✓ One of these conditions is that the state should have cleared all subsidy and other dues it owes to Tangedco, which was already done by the Government

DEEP IN DEBT

Power bill payments dropped by 80% during the lockdown, worsening the financial crisis for Tangedco



<p>➤ Total money pending from Tangedco to various power companies as on March 31 - ₹15,000 crore</p>	<p>the discom owes the state government around the same amount towards electricity tax collected</p>
<p>➤ The state government has told the Union power ministry that all subsidies due have been paid to the discom from its side. Various TN government departments owe Tangedco ₹1,800 crore,</p>	<p>➤ Loans from Rural Electricity Corporation (REC) and Power Finance Corporation (PFC), if approved, will be for a period ranging from 3 years to 10 years, provided in two tranches</p>

- ✓ Other conditions include –
 - ✓ The discom should not have any dues to be paid to Central agencies.
 - ✓ There must be a liquidation plan for clearing unpaid bill dues, through three annual instalments, by the state governments for their departments, enterprises and local bodies
 - ✓ There must be a plan for settling the unpaid subsidy to the discom.
- ✓ However, Tamil Nadu categorically opposed two conditions imposed by the Centre –
 - ✓ REC and PFC paying the money directly to power generation companies, to clear the dues of Tangedco
 - ✓ Direct benefit transfer (DBT) of subsidies to farmers and other consumers.
- ✓ Tangedco's financial condition has worsened since imposition of the lockdown as tariff collection has dropped by almost 80%.
- ✓ The Centre's loan assistance scheme comes with a two-year moratorium on repayment.
- ✓ The discom will prepare a plan, in consultation with the Union Power ministry, to reduce its losses over a period of three of four years, which will be further endorsed by the state government.
- **The state government - is likely to promulgate an ordinance giving effect to 10% horizontal reservation for students of government schools in medical admission**
 - ✓ The reservation will be applicable for students who clear NEET from this academic year.
 - ✓ It will be like a special reservation, like the current reservation for sportspersons, children of ex-servicemen and differently-abled
 - ✓ The horizontal reservation is well within the vertical reservation available to SC/ST/OBC/ general categories in education.

- ✓ However, to avail the reservation, the students must have studied from 'Class VI to Class XII' in government schools.
- ✓ The ordinance will be promulgated based on the recommendations made by Justice P Kalaiyaran-led commission in its report filed on June 8

CLASS VI TO CLASS XII MANDATORY

 <p>➤ In 2016, 34 govt students joined med colleges. After NEET, only 14 govt students got admission to medical courses</p>	<p>Horizontal reservations cut across the vertical reservations – what is called interlocking reservations... The reservations in favour of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes may be called vertical reservations whereas reservations in favour of physically handicapped can be referred to as horizontal reservation</p> <p>– Supreme Court about horizontal reservation in Indra Sawhney vs. Union of India case</p>
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- ✓ The panel was constituted by the state government last March to analyze the reason for less number of government school students getting admission to medical colleges
- ✓ Tamil Nadu had 3,350 MBBS seats last year.
 - ✓ In 2016, before NEET-based admissions were commenced, 34 students from government schools joined medical colleges in the state.
 - ✓ In the last three years, after NEET came into effect, only 14 government school students got admission to medical courses
- ✓ The commission comprising secretaries of school education, law, and health and family welfare departments, besides educationists
- ✓ While the TN government unanimously passed two bills earlier to exempt the state from NEET, the Union government withheld both bills after two years
- **The Indian Coast Guard - has moved one of its offshore patrol vessels — the ICGS Sujay — from Paradip in Odisha to Chennai.**



- ✓ The ship will now be in Chennai under the operational and administrative control of the commander, coast guard region (East).
- ✓ ICGS Sujay is a 105-metre vessel fitted with 30mm CRN 91 gun and advanced navigational and communication system, sensors and machinery.

- ✓ It carries 12 officers and 94 men, who undertake swift search and rescue operations along with law enforcement and patrol.
 - ✓ The ship is designed to carry one twin engine light helicopter and five high-speed boats including two quick reaction inflatable boats
 - ✓ It is also capable of carrying pollution response equipment to contain oil spills at sea.
- **The Poondi reservoir in Tiruvallur district to Chembarabakkam - has started receiving Krishna river water from Kandaleru in Andhra Pradesh at the rate of 3,150 cusecs (cubic feet per second) over the past nine days**
- ✓ The water has been released to Chembarabakkam reservoir at the rate of 300 cusecs. The Chembarabakkam reservoir now has a storage level of 2,111 mcft (million cubic feet) against the capacity of 3,645 mcft.
 - ✓ At present, about 70 million litres of water is being released from Chembarabakkam to the city residents.
 - ✓ Further, another 180 million litres of water from Veeranam lake is also being supplied to many parts in the city.
 - ✓ When the water levels dip in Veeranam lake, water drawn from Chembarabakkam will be increased
 - ✓ The Andhra Pradesh government will release water for another 22 days until the complement of 0.6 tmcft (thousand million cubic feet) is reached.
 - ✓ Red Hills reservoir, which also supplies water to the city, has 2,700 mcft of water storage against its capacity of 3,300 mcft.
- **Tamil Nadu industries department - has said the state has achieved a conversion rate of almost 90% of MoUs signed in the second edition of Global Investors' Meet (GIM)**
- ✓ These include projects, which have already commenced commercial production and several others that are in various stages of implementation across the state.
 - ✓ During GIM II held in January 2019, a total of 304 MoUs to bring in large projects were signed.
 - ✓ The government had also signed 12,360 MoUs with MSMEs to attract ₹32,206 crore investments.
 - ✓ In all, the total investment committed in the GIM II event was ₹3,00,431 crore.
 - ✓ The MoUs were signed with major industries, representing biggies in the manufacturing sector, MSMEs and investors in housing, tourism, agriculture, higher education, school education, energy and IT sectors.
 - ✓ Of the 304 major projects for which MoUs were signed, 59 projects, accounting for 20%, have already commenced commercial production.
 - ✓ Another 209 projects, accounting for 69%, are in an advanced stage of implementation.
 - ✓ All these projects will commence commercial production within the next one year.

- ✓ In the case of GIM I too, barring the power sector projects, the conversion rate was good.
- ✓ Of the 98 projects for which MoUs were signed, 71 are now in an advanced stage of implementation
- **The heritage structures under the purview of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) - will continue to remain shut in Tamil Nadu.**
- ✓ The Union culture ministry had allowed 75 ASI monuments across the state, having places of worship in its premises, to be thrown open to the public on June 8.
- ✓ But Tamil Nadu has decided not to open these monuments and temples immediately now, considering the surge of Covid-19 spread in the state
- ✓ ASI's Chennai Circle maintains 420 monuments and heritage sites throughout the state, which is highest located within a single circle in the country.
- ✓ Apart from these sites, Fort Museum that comes under the jurisdiction of the ASI and located at Fort St. George in Chennai will also remain closed.
- ✓ The state has two UNESCO certified sites as Group of Monuments at Mamallapuram in Chengalpet district and Great Living Chola Temples at Thanjavur and Ariyalur districts.
- ✓ ASI is the custodian of all centrally protected monuments in the country.

STATES

- **On June 8, the Telangana government - decided to promote all Class 10 students without exams as it was not practically possible to conduct the exams due to spread of coronavirus in the state.**
- ✓ Chief minister K Chandrashekhara Rao announced that all the Class 10 students would be promoted to the next class by giving grades to them based on their internal assessment marks.
- ✓ Two days ago, the government had decided to postpone the exams which were scheduled to begin on June 15
- ✓ A total of 5,34,903 students were to appear in the exams.
- ✓ Out of 11 papers for six subjects, exams were held in March for three papers pertaining to two subjects.
- ✓ Last month, the government had promoted all students of Classes 1 to 9 to the next class without conducting the exams.
- ✓ The government will take a decision later on the degree/post graduate courses examinations based on the progress of Covid-19 spread in the state

NATIONAL

- **India's Covid-19 count - rose to 2,65,960, after the reporting of 9,395 fresh cases on June 8, as per data from state governments.**

- ✓ However, this was a decline from the count of the last two days, when 10,434 and 10,785 cases were reported on June 6 and 7 respectively.
- ✓ However, the death toll remained high with 271 fatalities recorded during the day, taking the total casualties to 7,467.
- ✓ Mumbai became the first Indian city to record 50,000 Covid-19 infections, with the addition of 1,311 new cases on the day, reaching 50,085.
 - ✓ It was followed by Delhi, a distant second at 29,943 caes.
 - ✓ In comparison, the Chinese city of Wuhan, the first epicentre of the pandemic, has an officially declared total of 50,340 cases
- ✓ Mumbai reported its highest single-day toll of 64 deaths out of 109 in Maharashtra on the day.
- ✓ Delhi too reported as many as 62 deaths, many from earlier days, while Gujarat witnessed 31 deaths and Tamil Nadu 17.
- ✓ Haryana also reported 11 deaths, its highest so far in 24 hours.
- ✓ As usual, the largest number of new cases recorded on the day came from Maharashtra at 2,553.
- ✓ At least three states reported their highest single-day jump in infections — Tamil Nadu (1,562 new cases), Jharkhand (187) and Manipur (100).
- ✓ The number of fresh infections remained high in Delhi at 1,007, Gujarat (477), Bengal (426), Uttar Pradesh (412), Haryana (406) and Karnataka (308), among others.
- ✓ The new cases in Kerala crossed the 2,000 mark, with 91 persons testing positive on the day.
- **Four States, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Odisha — have said that the ASI monuments and temples under their jurisdiction will not be opened due to the current coronavirus situation in these states.**
- ✓ Earlier, the Union culture ministry announced that 820 centrally-protected monuments with places of worship on their premises will be thrown open to public from June 8
- ✓ The centrally-administered Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir, which is home to nine such 'monuments' where prayers are offered, has also decided that they will be closed to public.
- ✓ The ASI's Agra Circle in Uttar Pradesh, where 14 such monuments are located, will also remain shut to public until further notice.
- ✓ This includes the Humayun mosque in Itmadpur and three places of worship near and in the Taj Mahal premises — the Fatehpuri Masjid, the mosque inside its complex and the Kali Masjid
- ✓ A total of 65 monuments in Maharashtra, 28 in Rajasthan, 46 in Odisha, and 75 in Tamil Nadu will remain closed due to the current coronavirus situation in these states.
- ✓ In Odisha, all the ASI monuments including the Jagannath Temple in Puri will remain closed till June 30.

- **On June 8, a special court - partly allowed a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for confiscation of properties owned by diamantaire Nirav Modi, an accused in the multi-crore Punjab National Bank fraud case**
- ✓ This is a first such order passed under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018



- ✓ However, special judge V C Barde significantly exempted properties that are secured to PNB and a consortium of banks either through mortgage, hypothecation or guarantee from confiscation.
 - ✓ The court held that the assets shall be attached by the ED under the provisions of the Fugitive Economic Offenders (FEO) Act within one month.
 - ✓ Nirav Modi, currently lodged in a UK jail, was declared a fugitive economic offender in December 2019.
 - ✓ Under the FEO Act, once an accused is declared as a fugitive economic offender, his/ her properties can be confiscated directly to the central government.
- **The ministry of Health and Family Welfare - has issued a draft notification allowing import of unapproved new drugs by hospitals or medical institutions for compassionate use in treatment of patients.**
 - ✓ The patients may be suffering from life threatening disease or disease causing serious permanent disability or disease requiring therapy for a medical need, which has not been permitted in the country
 - ✓ The move is expected to help severely-ill Covid-19 patients in getting experimental drugs from abroad
 - ✓ The Ministry has notified these changes in the New Drugs and Clinical Trials (Amendment) Rules
 - ✓ However, the drug has to be in phase 3 of clinical trial in the country from where it is being imported or in any other country
 - ✓ To get the medicine, the hospital or the medical institution will have to make an application to the central drug regulator seeking permission.
 - ✓ Also, if any hospital prescribes a new drug for these purposes, then that may be approved to be manufactured in a limited quantity subject to provisions of the rules.
 - ✓ The manufacturer of new drug will have to obtain consent in writing from the patient to whom the medicine has been prescribed or his legal heirs

- ✓ Then, the manufacturer should contact to the ethics committee of the hospital or medical institution for obtaining its specific recommendation for manufacture of such new drug
 - ✓ This new clause will provide early access of medication to the patients suffering from rare diseases, especially children with Orphan diseases or with Spinal muscular atrophy
 - ✓ The government has requested stakeholders' comments on the draft rules within 15 days, after which the final notification will be released.
 - ✓ In 2019, the centre had notified the New Drug and Clinical Trials Rules to provide the regulations for trials.
 - ✓ Remdesivir has been used in Europe under the 'Compassionate use' clause for the treatment of Covid-19.
 - ✓ India has no such provision of compassionate use of drugs.
- **Mumbai-based Bharat Serums and Vaccines (BSV) - has received regulatory approval to initiate clinical trials of critical care drug, Ulinastatin, for Covid-19 patients.**
- ✓ Ulinastatin is used in India for severe sepsis and other critical clinical conditions like acute pancreatitis.
 - ✓ The company has been granted approval by the drug regulator to conduct a clinical study on Ulinastatin, for mild-to-moderate acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) patients with Covid-19.
 - ✓ With this, the company joins other domestic firms including Glenmark, Sun Pharma, Biocon and Nova Lead Pharma that are conducting trials of potential drugs for Covid-19.
 - ✓ As there is no approved and proven treatment against SARS-CoV-2 virus yet, only experimental drugs are being used as supportive therapy.
 - ✓ With respect to Ulinastatin, clinical trials on 120 patients are expected to start at hospitals over the next three weeks, and results will be available by December.
 - ✓ Though there is no scientific study on Ulinastatin yet, certain countries like China are believed to have used it already for Covid-19 therapy.
 - ✓ Ulinastatin is a comparatively older drug, available in the country since 2012 and manufactured by few companies including BSV.
 - ✓ Around one million vials, costing ₹1500 each, have been used in the country.
 - ✓ The company's brand, UTRYP had sales of ₹24 crore for the 12-month period ended April.
 - ✓ The therapy is expected to cost around ₹30,000-₹50,000 per patient for a protocol of minimum seven days.
- **Adani Green Energy Ltd - has bagged the world's largest solar bid involving a total investment of roughly \$6 billion (Rs. 45,000 crore)**
- ✓ The company is expected to set up the facilities in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

- ✓ The offer involves building a photovoltaic (PV) power plant of 8,000 MW (8 GW) and setting up a domestic solar panel manufacturing capacity of 2,000 MW (2 GW)
 - ✓ As per the agreement, the 8 GW of solar development projects will be implemented over the next five years.
 - ✓ The first 2 GW of generation capacity will commence by 2022 and the subsequent 6 GW capacity will be added as 2 GW annual increments till 2025.
 - ✓ The solar cell and module manufacturing capacity of 2 GW will be set up by 2022.
 - ✓ The project is expected to create 400,000 direct and indirect jobs.
 - ✓ It is also expected to displace 900 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.
- ✓ Meanwhile, another independent power producer, Azure Power Global Ltd has won the bid to build a PV project of 4,000 MW and solar kit manufacturing capacity of 1,000 MW.
- ✓ This is based on the offering of domestic manufacturing-linked solar power projects from the state-run renewable energy agency SECI (formerly Solar Energy Corporation of India)
- ✓ India's domestic solar cell manufacturing capacity currently stands at 3,300 MW and module-making capacity is 8,000 MW.
- ✓ As per the bidding norms, the domestic manufacturing linked projects have a higher tariff ceiling of Rs 2.93 per unit against the average Rs 2.60 for general projects.
- ✓ The Rajasthan government has approved the company's proposal for setting up solar infrastructure at Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jalore and Barmer.
- ✓ Kutch is expected to be the preferred location in Gujarat.
- ✓ Adani Green Energy Ltd has set a target of achieving an installed generation capacity of 25 GW of renewable power by 2025.

- **On June 8, the Centre - has rolled out a new SMS facility for taxpayers filing 'nil' monthly GST returns.**
 - ✓ Henceforth, the taxpayers can file 'nil' returns through a SMS sent to 14409.
 - ✓ The new facility will enable easier GST compliance for over 22 lakh registered taxpayers who had to otherwise log into their account on the common portal and then file their returns every month.
 - ✓ As per the new facility, businesses with no entry in all the tables in form GSTR-3B can file return through an SMS using the registered mobile number
 - ✓ Further, the said return will be verified by a using one-time password (OTP) facility.
 - ✓ The GST return has to be filed by every registered person irrespective of business profits.
 - ✓ If there are no invoices issued in a month, then NIL GST return can be filed

- ✓ Last month, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) had introduced a new rule in Central GST rules indicating furnishing of 'nil' return by SMS facility.
- ✓ There are over 1.2 crore businesses registered under GST, as on date.
- ✓ The GST bill was first introduced in 2014 as the Constitution (122nd) Amendment bill.
- ✓ GST, an indirect tax, was introduced on July 1, 2017 across the entire country, replacing a whole range of state and central taxes.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On June 8, New Zealand - lifted all social and economic restrictions except border controls after declaring that it was free of the coronavirus**
- ✓ With this, New Zealand has become one of the first countries in the world to return to pre-pandemic normality.
- ✓ The nation will now move to the lowest level of its four-tier virus response system-level 1 from midnight.
- ✓ All public and private events, the retail and hospitality industries and public transport were allowed to resume without the distancing rules in the country
- ✓ The country has imposed 75 days of restrictions, including a strict lockdown for about 7 weeks
- ✓ During the strict lockdown, most businesses were shut and everyone except essential workers had to stay home.
- ✓ New Zealand, a country of 5 million population, has reported 1,154 infections and 22 deaths from Covid-19 since the virus arrived in late February.
- ✓ According to Health officials, the last known infected person had recovered in New Zealand and it has been 17 days since the last new case was reported
- ✓ But still, everyone entering the country will continue to be tested and quarantined.
- ✓ The country is also planning to commence the sporting events too
- ✓ In this regard, New Zealand Rugby's Super Rugby Aotearoa will become the first top-level sporting competition in the post-COVID world to proceed with crowds in the stands.
- ✓ Meanwhile, exactly 100 days since its first case of coronavirus was confirmed, New York City is slowly recommencing the normal life from June 8
 - ✓ New York City reported more than 2,05,000 infections and nearly 22,000 casualties.
 - ✓ As many as 4,00,000 workers could begin returning to construction jobs, manufacturing sites and retail stores in the city's first phase of reopening
 - ✓ The UN headquarters in New York, too, is preparing to reopen in three phases with new workplace measures.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Britain rolled out 14-day quarantine for all overseas arrivals, prompting uproar from the aviation industry.

- ✓ The UK toll rose by 55, the fewest since lockdown was declared on March 23.
- ✓ Saudi Arabia could limit numbers at the annual haj pilgrimage to prevent a further outbreak of coronavirus, after cases in the country topped 100,000

ECONOMY

- **The Indian economy is estimated to shrink by 3.2% in 2020-21, as per the World Bank's latest report released on June 8.**
- ✓ The World Bank, in its latest June 2020 Global Economic Prospects, downgraded its projection of growth of India by -9%.
- ✓ As per the report, the economic growth slowed to an 11-year low of 4.2% in 2019-20
- ✓ The farm sector is expected to be the only sector displaying some growth, unaffected by the lockdown.
- ✓ Economists, brokerages, multilateral agencies, banks have estimated the economy to contract sharply in 2020-21 due to the impact of the lockdown on several key sectors, such as manufacturing, construction and services
- ✓ The other international rating agencies such as Fitch ratings, Moody's Investor Service, S&P Global Ratings have all predicted India's growth rate as 4% to 5% in the year 2020-21
- ✓ According to World Bank, the global economy is forecasted to shrink by 5.2% this year.
- ✓ This will represent the deepest global recession since the second World War
- ✓ The recession will be contributed by several countries experiencing declines in per capita output since 1870.
- ✓ China is expected to slow to 1% this year and rebound to 6.9% in 2021, as activity gradually normalises there and lockdowns are lifted around the world.
- ✓ The growth outlook is predicted on China and other major countries in the region, without considering the impact of second wave of outbreaks.
- ✓ In South Asian region, other economies such as Bangladesh is expected to grow at 1.6% and Nepal is expected to grow at 1.8% in 2020

