

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 14, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **Tamil Nadu – to supply renewable power, including wind and solar energy, to other western states in the country soon**
- ✓ The Raigarh-Pugalur 800kV ultra-high-voltage direct current (UHVDC) transmission line will take renewable power from Tamil Nadu to Western States
- ✓ This line has a total capacity of 6,000 MW
- ✓ As per the initial plan, the line will be used to bring thermal power to the State

CHANGING TRACK	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Asian Development Bank funded Raigarh-Pugalur project, which is worth more than \$640million ➤ The line was for Tamil Nadu, a few MW was to be shared with Kerala
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ultra high voltage current system was to bring not less than 4,000MW ➤ Now Centre has decided to use the line to send renewable power from TN to the western region

- ✓ As per the original policy, nearly 4,000MW of power from pit thermal units in Raigarh was to be brought through this line to Pugalur and from there 1,000MW was supposed to be transferred to Kerala.
 - ✓ But recently the Centre decided to use the line to transmit 3,000MW of wind and solar power from Tamil Nadu to the western states to help them fulfil their renewable power obligations (RPO).
- ✓ According to the Central Transmission Utility (CTU), Tangedco can use the high voltage line to send renewable power but will be paying separately to the utility for using the line
- ✓ As per the agreement, Tamil Nadu can use the line to bring thermal power during summer from the North, when the power demand is high in the state

- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, in a memorandum presented to Union power minister R K Singh last week in Chennai, requested Centre to declare the corridor as strategic and of national importance
- ✓ The request has been placed as the corridor will be used for exporting renewable power from the southern region to rest of the country
- **The Expert Appraisal Committee of the Environment Ministry - has recommended the grant of Environmental Clearance for the development of an economic corridor — the Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) — between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.**
- ✓ The greenfield highway is part of Centre's ambitious scheme Bharatmala Pariyojna and will be implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)
- ✓ The project will start in Dabaspet in Karnataka and end near Devarapalli village on the Tamil Nadu-Karnataka border covering two States — 134.94 km in Karnataka and 45.02 km in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The project is expected to cost ₹756.68 crore.
- ✓ The NHAI submitted before the committee that the new road would provide better, fast, safe and smooth connectivity for commuters between the two States as well as in the region.
- ✓ Further, the development of the proposed road will boost local agriculture and enable farmers to get better value for their products as well as attract more investment to that region
- ✓ The NHAI also added that 12,111 trees would be felled for the project and 206 persons would be affected with regard to property and other structures.
- **On July 13, Tamil Nadu's - Covid-19 death toll crossed 2,000 mark and rose to 2,032, with 66 fatalities reported on the day, including 24 deaths in Chennai.**
- ✓ The State reported 4,328 fresh infections on the day, taking the cumulative caseload to 1,42,798 cases, out of which 48,196 are 'active' under treatment.
- ✓ Out of the total cases, Chennai reported the maximum with 1,141 cases
- ✓ Chennai's neighbours recorded 908 cases on the day with 219 in Chengalpet, 352 in Kancheepuram and 337 in Tiruvallur.
- ✓ Among the Southern districts, Madurai reported 464 cases, Kanyakumari 184, Ranipet 126, Theni 134, Tuticorin 122, Tirunelveli 113, Vellore 129 and Villupuram 136
- ✓ A total of 3,035 patients were discharged on the day.
- ✓ It takes the total number of discharged patients to 92,567, which is nearly 65% of the total infected cases.
- ✓ A total of 44,560 samples were tested during the last 24 hours, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 16,54,008.

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

	Until July 6	July 7	July 8	July 9	July 10	July 11	July 12	July 13	Total
Cases reported	1,14,978	3,616	3,756	4,231	3,680	3,965	4,244	4,328	1,42,798
Recovered and discharged	66,571	4,545	3,051	3,994	4,163	3,591	3,617	3,035	92,567
Deceased	1,571	65	64	65	64	69	68	66	2,032

Persons tested



*CHANGES IN 24 HOURS

As on July 12, 6 p.m.
As on July 13, 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.

- ✓ There are a total of 1,456 Covid-19 containment zones across Tamil Nadu as on July 10, with Chennai district having 276 of them, the highest in the State
- ✓ It was followed by Salem with 138 and Madurai with 108.
- ✓ On July 13, the Tamil Nadu government extended till July 31 the period of suspension of bus services by government and private operators across the State.

STATES

- **Madhya Pradesh - will be launching a new campaign named 'Roko-Toko' as a means to tackle the spread of Covid-19 pandemic**
 - ✓ The campaign will focus on those who are not wearing masks in the state
 - ✓ Roko-Toko meaning 'Stop and Campaign' will be implemented through volunteering by select organizations
 - ✓ The collectors in every district across the state will be responsible for selecting the organizations for volunteering.
 - ✓ Under the campaign, the volunteers will be providing a mask to those who are not wearing it in public places and charge Rs 20 from the person as a cost for the mask
 - ✓ The masks under the campaign will be provided to the volunteers or organizations on credit by Urban Local Bodies under the 'Jeevan Shakti Yojana' (JSY)
 - ✓ The JSY scheme was launched by Madhya Pradesh Government in April 2020 for the welfare activities of Urban Women

NATIONAL

- **Google – has announced an investment of \$10 billion (around ₹75,000 crore) in India over the next 5-7 years.**
 - ✓ The money will be used to invest in local companies and build more localised products.

Google for
INDIA
Digitization Fund

- ✓ It's the largest commitment by a global technology major to the country, as on date.
- ✓ The contribution will be diverted through a new fund namely 'Google For India Digitization Fund'
- ✓ The investment follows commitments made by other US tech majors Facebook and Amazon this year.
- ✓ Google's Madurai-born CEO Sundar Pichai had an interaction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 13
- ✓ The virtual meeting was also attended by Union communications and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank
- ✓ Google's proposed investment will be focused in four areas —
 - ✓ affordable access to information in local languages;
 - ✓ building new products for India;
 - ✓ digitising businesses; and
 - ✓ applying technology and artificial intelligence in health, education and agriculture.
- ✓ At the 6th edition of Google for India event, Google announced two new partnerships in India, apart from pledging an investment of Rs 75,000 crore to boost India's digital transformation.
 - ✓ Google will tie-up with Prasar Bharati to launch an 'edutainment' series on Doordarshan on how small businesses can adopt digital tools and adapt to the coronavirus.
 - ✓ Google will partner with CBSE to train over one million teachers in 22,000 schools across India by the end of 2020
- ✓ The tie-up with CBSE aims to deliver blended learning that combines the classroom approach with online learning, using free tools like G Suite for Education, Google Classroom and YouTube.
- ✓ The tech giant also announced \$1 million grant from Google.org for Kaivalya Education Foundation to train 700,000 teachers
 - ✓ The grant to Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF) will come as part of its Global Distance Learning Fund.
 - ✓ Using these funds, KEF will work with the Central Square Foundation and TeacherApp to train 700,000 teachers to deliver virtual education for students
 - ✓ This initiative will enable 'learning at home' over mass media such as TV and radio, wherever smart phones or internet access are not available.

- ✓ Google's commitment is a big boost to India's target of becoming a \$1-trillion digital economy and can help with the initiative of building one lakh digital villages.
- **The results of the Class XII CBSE board exam - were declared on July 13**
- ✓ This year, the pass percentage has touched an all-time high of 88.8% and a student has for the very first time been awarded 100 in all six subjects.

PASS PERCENTAGE SOARS TO NEW HIGH OF 89

No. Of Students With Marks	2019	2020
Above 90%	94,299	1,57,934
Above 95%	17,693	38,686
Overall Pass %	83.4	88.8

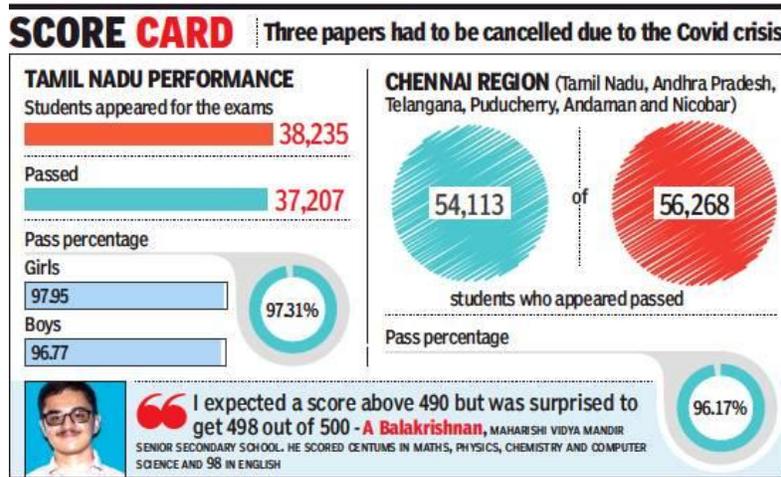


Lucknow's Divyanshi Jain scored 100% in humanities stream. She got a perfect 100 in five papers & was, according to the new marking plan, awarded 100 in geography, her 6th paper, which couldn't be held |

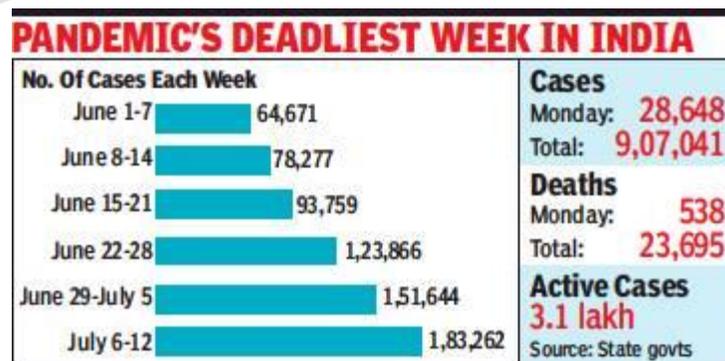
- **Girls outshine boys** by 6 percentage points (pass percentage of 92.2 as against 86.2)
- Overall pass percentage across the country improves by 5.4 to 88.8, a new high
- **Thiruvananthapuram** region fares the best with a success rate of 97.7%

- ✓ The number of students scoring 90% and above for the first time crossed the one lakh mark this year
 - ✓ It has increased from 94,299 last year to 1,57,934 this year.
- ✓ The number of students scoring 95% and above has also more than doubled to 38,686 from last year's 17,693
- ✓ A unique marking scheme was adopted this year by the CBSE as exams in 12 subjects could not be held due to the disruption caused by Covid-19 and the lockdown.
 - ✓ Under the circumstances, it was decided to take the average of the best three scores from the papers that a student could appear for and award that to each of the other papers.
 - ✓ In case a student could appear for only three papers, then the average of the best two scores was taken for this purpose
- ✓ Divyanshi Jain, a student at Navyug Radiance Senior Secondary School, Lucknow, scored a perfect 600/600 by appearing in five subjects only.
 - ✓ She was awarded 100% for geography, for which she did not appear, according to the new marking scheme
- ✓ The board has announced that for the papers for which examinations could not be held in July, it will hold optional examinations at a conducive date later
- ✓ This year 87,651 students have got a compartment for having failed in more than two subjects but the term "fail" has been replaced with "essential repeat" and the word "fail" will not be mentioned anywhere.
- ✓ The government-run Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas recorded the highest pass percentage of 98.7%, with Kendriya Vidyalayas stood second at 98.62%.

- ✓ From Chennai region, A Balakrishnan from Maharishi Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School scored 498 out of 500 marks with Centums in maths, physics, chemistry and computer science
- ✓ Tamil Nadu recorded a pass percentage of 97.31% and stood second in the country
 - ✓ The Chennai region, which includes Tamil Nadu and a few other States, recorded a pass percentage of 96.17.



- ✓ Due to the Covid-19 crisis, commerce students couldn't write two papers (business studies and IT) while science students couldn't write computer science exam
- ✓ Students were awarded marks in these subjects based on their best three marks in other subjects.
- **India's Covid-19 caseload - zoomed past the 9 lakh mark, after adding more than 28,600 cases and 538 deaths in the country on July 13.**



- ✓ On the day, 28,648 new cases emerged across the country, taking the total caseload to 9,07,041, as per data collated from state governments.
- ✓ With 538 more deaths, India's Covid-19 toll rose to 23,695.
- ✓ The country still has around 3.12 lakh active cases under treatment in various hospitals and Covid care centres.

Road to recovery

The recovery rate of COVID-19 patients improved to 63.02% on Monday. The 19 States with a higher recovery rate than national average are:

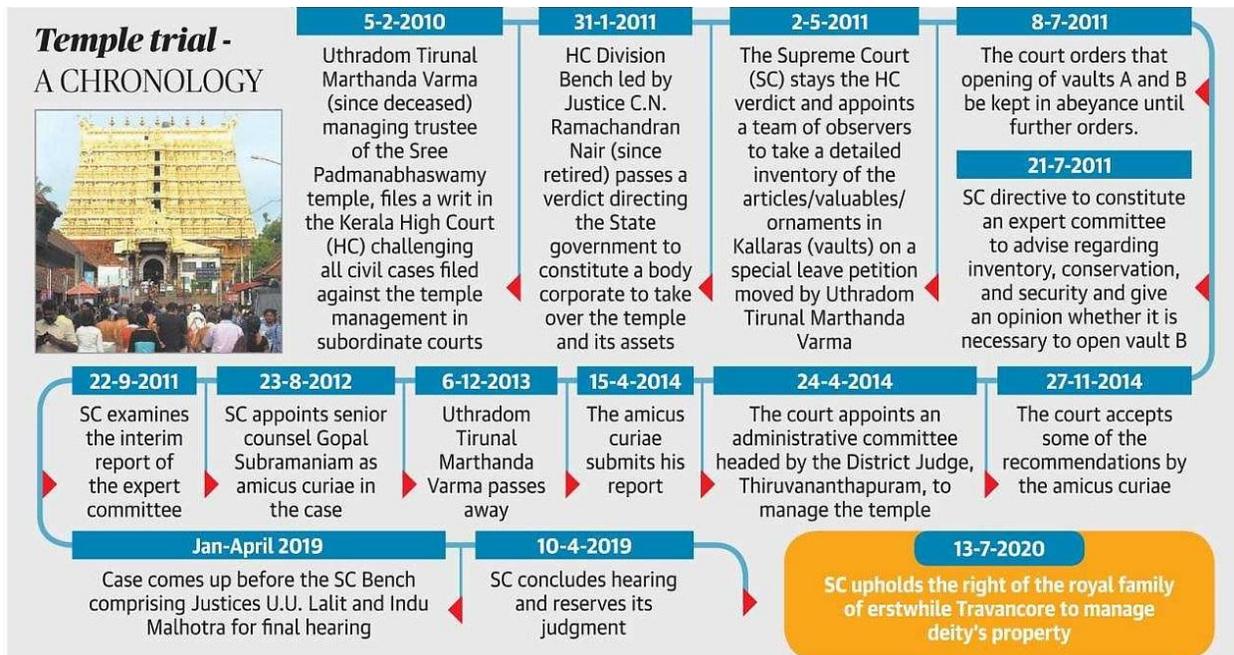
State/UT	Rate	Gujarat	69.7%
Ladakh (U.T.)	85.5%	Tripura	69.2%
Delhi	80.0%	Bihar	69.1%
Uttarakhand	78.8%	Punjab	68.9%
Chhattisgarh	77.7%	Odisha	66.7%
Himachal	76.6%	Mizoram	64.9%
Haryana	75.3%	Assam	64.9%
Chandigarh	74.6%	Telangana	64.8%
Rajasthan	74.2%	T.N.	64.7%
M.P.	73.0%	U.P.	64.0%

- ✓ India's Covid-19 recovery rate now stands at 63.01% with 5,53,471 people having recovered in the country so far.
- ✓ On the day, at least six states reported their highest single-day surge in cases, with Andhra Pradesh reporting 1,935 infections, Uttar Pradesh 1,664, Gujarat 902, Madhya Pradesh 575, Punjab 357 and Chhattisgarh 184.
- ✓ Maharashtra recorded 6,497 fresh coronavirus cases, its lowest increase in the last six days.
 - ✓ With this, the overall Covid-19 cases in the state stood at 2,60,924
 - ✓ The number of patients currently under treatment in the state is over 1.05 lakh.
- ✓ According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), during the last 24 hours, 2,19,103 samples were tested.
 - ✓ The cumulative number of samples tested as of now is 1,18,06,256.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On July 13, the Supreme Court - restored the right of "Managership or the Shebaitship" of Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala to the royal family of Travancore**
- ✓ The apex court also ruled that the administration of the temple will be managed by an administrative committee headed by a district judge of Thiruvananthapuram
 - ✓ It will also consists of other members, including chief 'Thantri' of the temple and three others nominated by the trustee, the Kerala government and the culture ministry.
- ✓ The verdict puts an end to another much awaited long-drawn case to administer the affairs of the temple
- ✓ Earlier in 2011, the Kerala High Court directed the State to take over the temple and exhibit its treasures for public viewing in a museum according to the 26th Constitutional amendment, which put an end to private entities enjoyed by erstwhile rulers

Temple trial - A CHRONOLOGY



- ✓ It had also held that the royal family could not claim to be in control or management of the temple as successor to the last Travancore ruler Sree Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma who died in July 1991.
- ✓ The family had challenged the order of the Kerala high court in the Supreme Court
- ✓ A bench of Justices U U Lalit and Indu Malhotra ruled in favour of the royal family over right to manage and administer the affairs of one of the richest temples of the world.
- ✓ The bench, however, refrained from directing unlocking of 'Kallara (vault) B' which is said to be containing a large amount of treasures in terms of gold and other precious items.
 - ✓ It left it for the administrative committee to take a call on the issue.
 - ✓ The court had earlier directed preparation of an inventory of ornaments and precious stones in Kallara A to F, except the Vault B.
- ✓ The bench also directed appointment of an advisory committee to advise the trustee and ensure regular annual audit of the finances of the temple
 - ✓ It will comprise of a retired HC judge nominated by the chief justice of the Kerala HC as the chairperson, one eminent person to be nominated by the trustee; and a reputed chartered accountant to be nominated by the chairperson in consultation with the trustee.
 - ✓ The court said all members of both the committees will be Hindus.
- ✓ Both committees should start functioning within the next two months and an executive officer should be appointed without delay.
- ✓ The primary duties of the committees would be to preserve the treasures and properties.
- ✓ The court ordered an audit to be conducted for the past 25 years.
- ✓ Audit results have to be filed annually with the State Accountant General.

- ✓ The court ordered status reports to be filed by the second week of December 2020.
- ✓ A further report should be filed after audit on March 31, 2021.
- ✓ The Padmanabhaswamy temple, located in Thiruvananthapuram, was rebuilt in its present form by the Travancore Royal House in the 18th century
- ✓ The Travancore Royal Family ruled southern Kerala and some parts of Tamil Nadu before the integration of the princely state with the Indian Union in 1947.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **The Iranian government – had announced its decision to construct an earlier proposed rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan, on its ‘own’ without the assistance of Indian government**
- ✓ In this regard, India and Iran signed an agreement to construct a rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan in 2016
- ✓ The decision of Iran has cited the delays from the Indian side in funding and starting the project.
- ✓ Last week, Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami inaugurated the track-laying process for the 628 km Chabahar-Zahedan line, which will be extended to Zaranj across the border in Afghanistan.
- ✓ For completing the project, approximately \$400 million has been allocated from the Iranian National Development Fund
- ✓ The entire project would be completed by March 2022 without any assistance from the Indian government
- ✓ The development comes as China finalises a massive 25-year, \$400 billion strategic partnership deal with Iran
- ✓ Because of the US sanctions, India has already ‘zeroed out’ its oil imports from Iran
- ✓ The railway project was being discussed between the Iranian Railways and the state-owned Indian Railways Construction Ltd (IRCON)
 - ✓ It was meant to be part of India’s commitment to the trilateral agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan to build an alternate trade route to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
 - ✓ In May 2016, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Tehran to sign the Chabahar agreement with Iranian President Rouhani and Afghanistan President Ghani, IRCON had signed an MoU with the Iranian Rail Ministry for the railway line.
- ✓ However, Iran government officials have rejected reports that suggested Chabahar port, where India took charge of operations at one terminal last December, would be leased to China.
- ✓ Iran and China are close to finalising a 25-year Strategic Partnership which will include Chinese involvement in Chabahar’s duty-free zone, an oil refinery nearby, and possibly a larger role in Chabahar port as well.

- ✓ However, Iran proposed a tie-up between the Chinese-run Pakistani port at Gwadar and Chabahar last year
- ✓ It has also offered interests to China in the Bandar-e-Jask port 350km away from Chabahar, as well as in the Chabahar duty-free zone.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The US drug regulator, FDA – has granted ‘fast track’ designation and approval to two experimental coronavirus vaccines jointly developed by German biotech firm BioNTech and US pharma giant Pfizer**
- ✓ The candidates, BNT162b1 and BNT1-62b2, are the most advanced of the at least four vaccines being developed by the companies.
- ✓ If the trials are successful, and the candidate gets regulatory approval, the firms said they expect to make 100 million doses by 2020-end
- ✓ The fast track status by the FDA is granted to speed up the review of new drugs and vaccines that show the potential to address unmet medical needs
- ✓ **Meanwhile, a Russian institute has claimed that it has completed human trials for its vaccine candidate**
- ✓ The Covid-19 vaccine was developed by Russia’s Gamalei Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology
- ✓ The trial on first and second group of volunteers has been found to be successful, as per the institute’s report.
- ✓ However, there was no detail given on when this vaccine would enter production stage.
- ✓ According to the World Health Organisation, there are at least 21 vaccines that are undergoing human trials across the world.
- ✓ India has also begun clinical trials of its two potential vaccine candidates- Bharat Biotech and ICMR's COVAXIN and Zydus Cadila's ZyCov-D.
- **The United States - accounts for highest number of coronavirus cases in the world with 33,66,515 confirmed cases and 1,37,191 deaths, as on July 13.**
- ✓ Brazil ranks second with 18,66,176 confirmed Covid-19 cases and 72,151 deaths
- ✓ India accounts for the world's third-highest number of coronavirus infections with 8,49,553 confirmed cases and 22,674 deaths.
- ✓ Russia stands fourth in the world in terms of total confirmed coronavirus cases with 7,27,162 Covid-19 cases and 11,335 deaths
- ✓ Globally, around 1,25,52,763 Covid-19 cases have been detected, which includes more than 564,000 deaths

DEFENCE

- **The Navy - is expected to start receiving new twin-engine aircraft carrier-based fighter aircraft being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) by 2032**

- ✓ The proposed fighter aircraft will replace all the Russian MiG-29K carrier jets in service by the year 2034.
 - ✓ Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) is manufacturing these fighter aircrafts
 - ✓ The Navy currently operates Russian-origin carrier INS Vikramaditya and expects to have the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-I) Vikrant operational by 2022.
 - ✓ With a second carrier to come in, the Navy is planning a global tender for 57 carrier-based twin-engine fighter aircrafts.
 - ✓ Last January, the naval Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) successfully completed arrested landing and take-off on board Vikramaditya and has since undertaken several trials.
 - ✓ Based on the experience of the carrier landing, the DRDO has offered to develop a twin-engine deck-based fighter for the Navy.
 - ✓ The Navy currently has 45 Russian MiG-29K aircrafts in its repertoire.
- **The Israel Weapon Industries Assault Rifles', Arad and Carmel - will be manufactured at the PLR Systems Private Ltd in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind district.**
- ✓ This will be a major boost to the domestic small arms industry and as well as the Make in India initiative.
 - ✓ IWI's Carmel and Arad assault rifles were of a caliber 5.56 X 45 mm, while Carmel assault rifle has a Rate of Fire (RPM) in between 700-1000 rounds per min
 - ✓ PLR (PLR- Precise Lethal Reliable) is an Indian Joint Venture Company with the Israel Weapon Industries (IWI)
 - ✓ It is also the first private sector small arms manufacturing plant to be established in India
 - ✓ The PLR manufacturing facility was inaugurated at Malanpur Industrial Area of Bhind on 4th May 2017
 - ✓ For the Indian Armed Forces, PLR has manufactured Small Arms and Ammunition such as TAVOR Assault Rifle, X95 Assault Rifle, NEGEV Light Machine Gun (World's Lightest Assault Machine Gun), GALIL Sniper Rifle and UZI Sub Machine Gun
 - ✓ IWI was formerly owned by the Israel Government and was privatized in 2005

ECONOMY

- **The United States - remains as the top trading partner of India during the Financial Year 2019-20**
- ✓ This is the second consecutive Financial Year that the United States has become the top trading partner of India
 - ✓ This was revealed based on the data from the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry
 - ✓ United States surpassed the People's Republic of China to become the top trading partner of India in the FY 2018-19.

- ✓ In 2018-19 bilateral ties between India and US were at \$87.96 billion, while in 2019-20 it increased further to \$88.75 billion.
 - ✓ India continues to maintain a trade surplus over the United States as the trade deficit of the United States in FY 2019-20 was \$17.42 billion.
 - ✓ In 2018-19 United States trade deficit was \$16.86 billion.
- **NITI Aayog – has presented the second Voluntary National Review (VNR) of India on the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations**



- ✓ The VNR report provides a comprehensive detailed account of the schemes and initiatives taken by India for the successful implementation and adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda of the United Nations.
- ✓ The 2nd VNR report of India has also highlighted the features and responses of India under the 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' Campaign
- ✓ The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) was set up as a global platform for reviewing the progress on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations to be achieved by the year 2030
- ✓ Under the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the HLPF meets for eight days every year in the month of July
- ✓ India's first VNR was presented in 2017 by NITI Aayog
- ✓ The monitoring and adaptation of the Sustainable Development Goals in India are overseen by the NITI Aayog.

SPORTS

- **On July 13, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) - confirmed that next season's Indian Super League (ISL) and I-League will be held at a single venue each.**
- ✓ The ISL is likely to kick off the Indian domestic season in Goa on November 21
 - ✓ The I-League is expected to start a couple of weeks later and will be held in Kolkata.
 - ✓ The matches will be played behind closed doors, according to the AIFF
 - ✓ Kolkata will also host the Under-17 Women's World Cup starting in February next year

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ Bhanu Jayanti – July 13



- ✓ The day was celebrated across Nepal and West Sikkim district in India
- ✓ The day marks the 206th Birth Anniversary of Bhanubhakta Acharya
- ✓ He was the first writer to translate the great epic of ancient India- Ramayana from Sanskrit to Nepali
- ✓ Bhanubhakta Acharya was born in Nepal's Tanahu district.
- ✓ He received his education in Sanskrit initially from his Grandfather and later he moved to Varanasi to continue his education in Sanskrit.
- ✓ His translation of Ramayana in the Nepali language was one of the most notable contributions in Nepali Literature