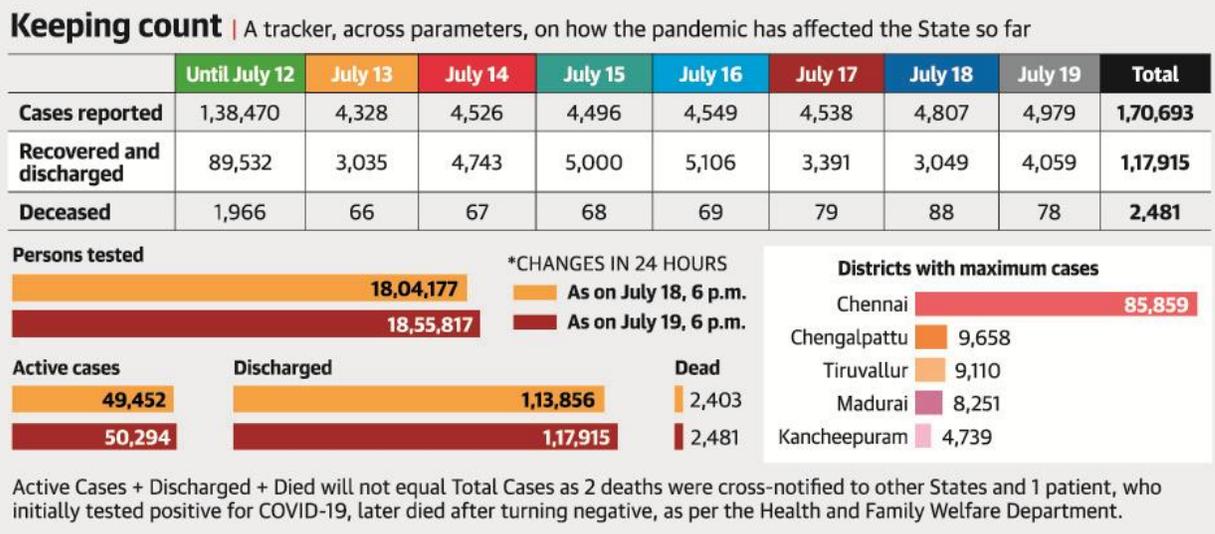


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 20, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- The number of fresh Covid-19 cases reported on a single day in the State - touched a new high on July 19, with 4,979 persons testing positive
- ✓ With this, the cumulative caseload in the state has gone up to 1,70,693
- ✓ Out of this, the total number of active cases crossed 50,000 for the first time and stood at 50,294



- ✓ Further, a total of 4,059 patients were discharged on the day, taking the total number of cured so far to 1,17,915
- ✓ On the day, 78 persons had died, taking the overall death toll to 2,481.
- ✓ Out of the total cases, Chennai accounted for 1,254 cases, taking its cumulative total to 85,859.
- ✓ Apart from Chennai, the neighbouring districts of Tiruvallur - 405 and Chengalpattu - 306 recorded the most number of cases.
- ✓ They were followed by Virudhunagar - 262, Kancheepuram - 220 and Madurai - 206.

- ✓ With one more lab at Government Headquarters Hospital in Cheyyar, Tiruvannamalai approved for Covid testing, the state now has 112 testing facilities.
- ✓ Of them, 57 are government facilities and 55 are private laboratories.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu continued to test more people than any other state with the testing of 51,640 samples on July 19, the highest so far.

STATES

- **The Jammu and Kashmir administration - announced life insurance cover of Rs 25 lakhs to all elected members of urban local bodies and panchayati raj institutions**
 - ✓ The move aims to further strengthen grassroots democracy by providing security to the elected members, who are under constant threat from terrorists.
 - ✓ The Administrative Council met under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor GC Murmu on July 18, 2020
 - ✓ The council has approved the life insurance to sarpanches, elected members of municipal bodies and block development council members.
 - ✓ The insurance will act as guarantee for the family members of the elected representatives.
 - ✓ The decision to provide insurance has been taken so that the families do not face distress and poverty due to untoward incidents.

NATIONAL

- **Santa Anastasia Minor Basilica in Rome, one of the oldest Christian churches and one of the oldest minor basilicas in the world - has been assigned to Kerala based Syro-Malabar Church (SMC) by the Vatican.**
 - ✓ Cardinal Angelo de Donatis, the vicar general of Pope Francis for the diocese of Rome, has issued a decree, assigning the fourth century church to Syro-Malabar Church.



- ✓ Emperor Constantine started the construction of the Santa Anastasia basilica during 325-326 AD.
 - ✓ The Church is situated very close to the Colosseum of Rome
 - ✓ It is built on the Palatine Hill, the administrative centre of the Roman Empire.
 - ✓ Until the end of the 7th century, Popes celebrated Christmas mass in this basilica.
 - ✓ St Jerome, the Bible scholar, preached in this church.
 - ✓ Built in the baroque style, the church is famous for its architectural splendour and decorative works.
 - ✓ There are around 7,000 Syro-Malabar Catholics in and around Rome
 - ✓ Earlier, Syro-Malabar bishops made a request for such a church to Pope Francis during their 'ad limina' visit to Rome in 2019.
 - ✓ An 'ad limina' visit is an obligatory visit made by all bishops to Rome during which they pray at the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul
- **On July 19, 2020, the Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering Technology (CIPET) - was accredited by National Accreditation Board for Testing (NABL) and Calibration Laboratories to test and certify Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**



- ✓ The PPE kit includes gloves, face shield, goggles, triple layer face masks, which will be tested as per the international standards.
- ✓ In May 2020, the NABL accredited 8 labs to test prototype samples of PPE, which included government owned factories and ordnance factories of defence ministry.
- ✓ The NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) operates under Quality Council of India.

- ✓ It was functioning under DPIIT (Department of Promotion of industry and Internal Trade), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
 - ✓ NABL provides accreditation to major fields of science and engineering, photometry, non-destructive, radiological, optical and radiological disciplines, histopathology, microbiology, cytopathology, nuclear medicine, genetics, etc.
 - ✓ It has to be recalled that Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET) has been renamed as Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering Technology on May 28, 2020
 - ✓ CIPET is a premier national institution under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
 - ✓ The changed name has been registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act 1975 (Tamil Nadu Act 27 of 1975).
- **On July 19, 2020, Durgapur-based CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute – launched COVID-19 protection System (COPS) for facilitating the disinfection of workplaces**



CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur

COVID Protection System (COPS)



- ✓ The COPS include Contactless solar based intelligent mask automated dispensing unit cum thermal scanner (IntelliMAST), 360-degree car flusher and touchless faucet.
- ✓ These sub units are now available for technology transfer to other manufacturing units for mass production.
- ✓ Solar based Intelligent Mask Automated Dispensing Unit cum Thermal Scanner (IntelliMAST)
 - ✓ The IntelliMAST is an intelligent solar-based surveillance unit.
 - ✓ It identifies body temperature and also checks whether a person is wearing face mask or not.
 - ✓ The in-built thermal scanner detects the rise in body temperature through forehead scanning.
 - ✓ It works under power supply of 40-50 watts
- ✓ Touchless Faucet (TouF)
 - ✓ The TouF system dispenses liquid soap and water from the faucet in a time gap of 30 seconds.

- ✓ It uses touch-free mechanism and works under 10 watts of power supply
- ✓ 360-degree car flusher
 - ✓ The 360-degree car flusher uses sodium hypochlorite solution as disinfectant for the cars.
 - ✓ The system has several specialized nozzle designs to ensure the sanitizer diffused water is evenly spread across the entire car body.
- **Indian Spices exports in the month of June - has increased by 23% as compared to the same month in 2019.**
 - ✓ This was revealed by the data on exports released by the Ministry of Commerce on July 19, 2020
 - ✓ The exports of spices have earned \$359 million in June 2020 as compared to \$292 million in June 2019
 - ✓ As per the data, the overall exports of the country in June 2020 stood at \$21.91 billion as compared to \$25.01 billion in June 2019.
 - ✓ This means, the country's overall exports has declined by 12.41%.
 - ✓ The spices being exported include pepper, ginger, cardamom, coriander, turmeric, celery, fenugreek, nutmeg, mint and spice oils.
 - ✓ The major importers of Indian spices are UAE, France, US, UK, Germany, Australia, Iran, China, Bangladesh and France
- **The Railways - has planned to install surveillance cameras in 7,000 coaches by March 2021 as part of a Video Surveillance System to cover stations and trains.**
 - ✓ In this regard, a high-level committee constituted by the Railway Ministry has devised a standard operating procedure for real-time video surveillance, storage, retention and retrieval of feed generated by CCTV cameras installed in passenger coaches.
 - ✓ The committee comprised of the Executive Director (Telecom Directorate) as convener and the Executive Director (Mechanical Engineering – Coaching), the Deputy Inspector-General (DIG), Railway Board, and the Director (Network Planning and Marketing), RailTel as members
 - ✓ The SOP would consist of details relating to data uploading, retention and retrieval besides defining monitoring and response by security personnel and front line railway officials.
 - ✓ The Railway Board would finalise the SOP conforming to the recommendations of the Research Designs & Standards Organisation (RDSO), a R&D arm of the railways.
 - ✓ Of late, Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) compartments used for Tejas Express, Vande Bharat Express train set coaches and suburban trains (Electrical Multiple Units) were being rolled out with in-built camera facility
 - ✓ The decision to install the surveillance cameras at railway stations/trains is aimed at preventing/detecting crimes

- ✓ Further, the move ensures adequate safety of women and children on railway premises.
 - ✓ In August 2019, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court had directed the Southern Railway to conduct a survey with the assistance of experts and install CCTV in train coaches for the safety of the women, children and elderly passengers.
 - ✓ The Railways is also in the process of installing a 'Video Surveillance System' at 6,049 stations
 - ✓ Out of these, the Northern Railway will get the maximum coverage at 725 stations, followed by the Southern Railway with 573 stations
- **On July 19, India – reported a record 40,363 cases, the highest so far, taking the total caseload over the 11 lakh mark.**
- ✓ As many as 673 deaths were reported on the day, which was the second-highest for a single day in the country
 - ✓ The recovery rate in the country stands at 62.5% after the recoveries crossed 1.45 lakh mark.
 - ✓ Ten states reported their highest single-day jump in infections, led by Maharashtra, which registered as many as 9,518 cases on the day
 - ✓ However, the highest jump in cases was reported from Andhra Pradesh, where 5,041 infections were detected
 - ✓ Andhra Pradesh became the only state, apart from Maharashtra, to record 5,000 or more cases in a day.
 - ✓ The other states that recorded their highest single-day surge in the infection were Tamil Nadu (4,979 new cases), Bengal (2,278), Uttar Pradesh (2,250), Gujarat (965), Rajasthan (934), Madhya Pradesh (837), Kerala (821) and Uttarakhand (239).

FIVE STATES HAVE ZERO CFR

Name of State / UT	Case fatality rate (%)	Name of State / UT	Case fatality rate (%)
Manipur	0	Himachal Pradesh	0.75
Nagaland	0	Bihar	0.83
Sikkim	0	Jharkhand	0.86
Mizoram	0	Telangana	0.93
A&N Islands	0	Uttarakhand	1.22
Ladakh (UT)	0.09	Andhra Pradesh	1.31
Tripura	0.19	Haryana	1.35
Assam	0.23	Tamil Nadu	1.45
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	0.33	Puducherry	1.48
Kerala	0.34	Chandigarh	1.71
Chhattisgarh	0.46	J&K (UT)	1.79
Arunachal Pradesh	0.46	Rajasthan	1.94
Meghalaya	0.48	Karnataka	2.08
Odisha	0.51	Uttar Pradesh	2.36
Goa	0.60		

Source: Health ministry

- ✓ India's Covid-19 fatality rate is “progressively falling” and is now below 2.5% for the first time, according to the health ministry
- ✓ Currently, India's case fatality rate (CFR) is at 2.49%.
- ✓ There are 29 states and UTs — including Kerala, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh — with a CFR lower than the national average.
- ✓ Of these, five — Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Mizoram and Andaman and Nicobar Islands — have zero case fatality rate.
- ✓ According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, a total of 1,37,91,869 samples have been tested up to July 18 with 3,58,127 samples being tested on July 18.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The UK military – is proposing to station HMS Queen Elizabeth carrier in the Pacific as a part of International Alliance to counter Chinese incursions.**



- ✓ The vessel is set to sail her maiden deployment in 2021 in Pacific that includes region of South China Sea.
- ✓ The ship will be deployed on the insistence of the United States
- ✓ The US has already sent its warships to the disputed waters in the South China Sea
- ✓ Also, Bunker Hill, a guided missile cruiser has entered Malaysia to counter a Chinese ship that has been carrying out exploratory drilling in the Malaysian seas through a Malaysian state oil company.
- ✓ The International Alliance was launched in June, 2020 by 8 countries - United States, UK, Japan, Germany, Canada, Australia, Norway and Sweden
- ✓ The alliance was formed to counter China's growing expansionist strategies.
- ✓ China has recently introduced 'The Hong Kong Security law' that has earned worldwide criticisms.

- ✓ Under the law, China now has control over defence and external affairs of Hong Kong.
- **The global deaths due to Covid-19 pandemic – has risen to nearly 603,000 as countries from the US to South Africa struggle to contain a surge of new infections.**
- ✓ The United States tops the list with over 1,40,000, followed by more than 78,000 in Brazil, 45,000 in the United Kingdom and 38,000 in Mexico.
- ✓ The WHO said that 259,848 new infections were reported on July 18, its highest one-day tally yet.
- ✓ The number of confirmed infections worldwide has passed 14.2 million, with 3.7 million in the US and more than 2 million in Brazil.
- ✓ South Africa now ranks as the fifth worst-hit country in the pandemic with more than 3,50,000 cases, or around half of all those confirmed on Africa.
- ✓ On July 19, Bangladesh's medical regulatory body, Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) approved the final or phase-3 human trial of a Covid-19 vaccine by a Chinese firm, Sinovac Biotech Ltd.
- ✓ **Scientists have confirmed for the first time that the coronavirus can't be transmitted to people by mosquitoes**
- ✓ This finding adds evidence to WHO's claim that the disease is not mosquito-borne.
- ✓ As per the study, the virus is unable to replicate in three common species of mosquitoes — Aedesaegypti, Aedesalbopictus and Culexquinquefasciatus, and hence can't be transmitted to human

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On July 19, the United Arab Emirates - launched 'Hope', an unmanned space probe to Mars from the Tanegashima Space Center in Japan**
- ✓ It was launched aboard H2A rocket from southern Japan
- ✓ The space probe is expected to reach the Red Planet by February 2021, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of UAE's unification- an alliance of seven emirates.



- ✓ The historic space mission is the Arab world's first interplanetary mission
- ✓ It has made UAE the first Arab nation to achieve the feat.
- ✓ The UAE's Mars probe aims to provide a comprehensive image of the weather dynamics and study the atmosphere of the Red Planet
- ✓ The probe's launch had been twice delayed earlier because of bad weather.
- ✓ The Mars probe will serve as a foundation for a much bigger goal of building a human settlement on Mars within the next 100 years
- ✓ Hope space probe will travel 495 million km to space with a cruise speed of 121,000 km/hr in the first Arab mission to reach Mars
- ✓ The Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) is spearheading the Mars project and more than half of the people working on the project are nationals of Emirates.
- ✓ With the successful launch of the Mars probe, UAE becomes the fifth nation in the world, after India, former Soviet Union, the US and the European Space Agency.
- ✓ Dubai has hired architects to imagine and recreate a Martian city in its desert as "Science City", at a cost of around \$135 million.
- ✓ UAE has been making several advancements in the space sector in the recent past
- ✓ UAE's Hazza al-Mansouri had become the first Emirati to travel to space and visit the International Space Station in September 2019.
- ✓ He was a part of a three-member crew that blasted off on a Soyuz rocket from Kazakhstan for an eight-day mission.
- ✓ UAE's space probe is one of three Mars missions scheduled for this year
- ✓ The other proposed Mars missions include Tianwen-1 from China and Mars 2020 from the United States.
- ✓ These missions aim to take advantage of the period when Mars is closest to the Earth.
- ✓ In October 2020, Mars is expected to be comparatively close to the Earth at about 38.6 million miles away.
- ✓ However, unlike the other two Mars missions, which aim to land on the red planet, UAE's mission will orbit the planet for 687 days or one whole Martian year.
- ✓ Only India, US, USSR and European Space Agency have been successful till now in sending missions to orbit the Red planet.
- ✓ India had created history by becoming the first country to successfully insert its Mars Orbiter Mission, Mangalyaan, in the Martian orbit in its first attempt on September 24, 2014.

SPORTS

- **Indian Grandmaster, P. Harikrishna - won the Chess960 event of the 53rd Biel International Chess Festival in Switzerland.**
- ✓ It is the first high-profile chess tournament taking place over-the-board amidst the ongoing covid-19 pandemic.

- ✓ The World No. 26 from Guntur, who is now living in Prague, scored 5.5 points from seven rounds to top the field of 8 players



- ✓ The 15-year-old Germany's Vincent Keymer (5 points) finished second while Radoslaw Wojtaszek (4.5) of Poland settled for the third spot.
- ✓ Chess960 is one of the three events of the main section of the Biel festival, the others being rapid and classical.
- ✓ Chess960 is a format invented by the late World champion Bobby Fischer
- ✓ In this format, the game is played with the pieces randomly shuffled on the back rank of either player, because of which the advantage of opening theory is minimised.