

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 21, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- On July 20, the Tamil Nadu government - signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with eight industries to attract investments worth  $\square$ 10,399 crore.
- ✓ The move would enable the creation of an estimated 13,507 jobs.



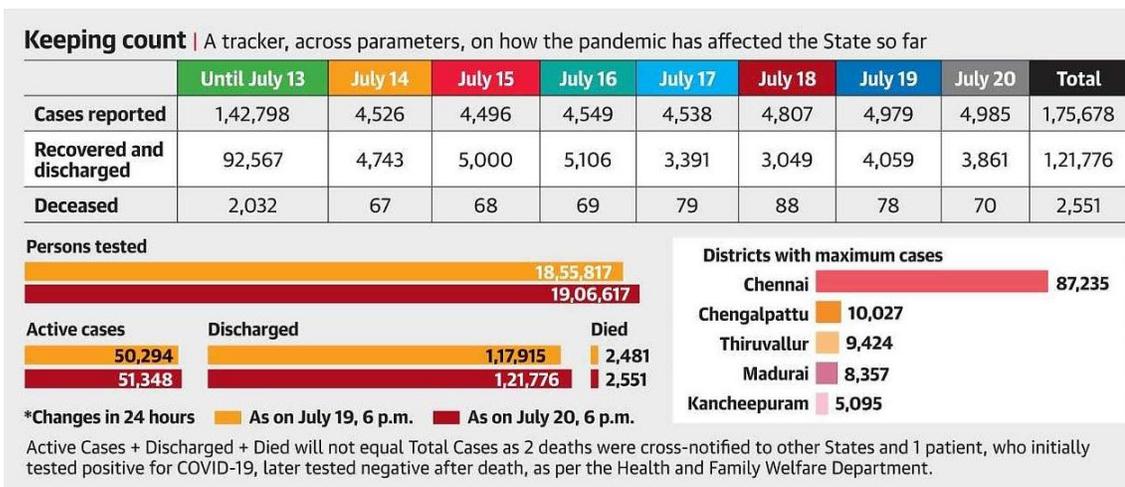
- ✓ The MoUs were signed in the presence of Chief Minister Edappadi. K. Palaniswami and also through video conferencing.
- ✓ Industries minister M C Sampath and chief secretary K Shanmugam were present during the signing of the MoUs.
- ✓ The projects are set to come up in Chengalpet, Kanchipuram, Ranipet, Coimbatore, Erode and Villupuram districts
- ✓ The biggest investment in the state will be made by Vikram Solar, which will pump in  $\square$ 5,423 crore in Kancheepuram to provide employment opportunities to 7,542 people
- ✓ The next big investment was announced by Yotta Infrastructure, a Hiranandani group company, which is planning to invest  $\square$ 4,000 crore to create 2,500 jobs.

- ✓ The proposed Data Centre Park will be built on a 13 acre campus at Hiranandani Parks on the Singaperumal–Oragadam highway.
- ✓ It will host four data centre buildings with a capacity of 20,000 racks, backup generator sets and featuring a total power load of approximately 150-240 MW.
- ✓ Once completed, this data centre park would provide important cloud-based services to companies not only in the State but also across India.
- ✓ Coimbatore-based Aqua group, which manufactures water pumps for agriculture, commercial and domestic sectors, has signed a MoU for ₹200 crore investment in the state.
- ✓ Another Coimbatore-based firm JS Autocast, manufacturer of raw and machined ductile iron castings for international brands, has offered an investment commitment of ₹40 crore.
  - ✓ The funds will be utilised for expansion at Sipcot Perundurai over a period of 2-3 years.
- ✓ Other firms which have signed MoUs include ELGi Equipments and CGD Satharai Private Limited, which will be investing ₹250 crore each.
- ✓ NDR Integrated Industrial Park has signed an MoU worth ₹200 crore, while GI Agro Tech will be investing ₹36 crore to hire around 465 people.
- ✓ On May 27, the Tamil Nadu government had signed 17 MoUs for investments worth Rs 15,128 crore to generate employment opportunities for over 47,000 people.
  - ✓ The investments are to come from companies based in Geneva, Finland, Taiwan, France, Japan, China and the Netherlands among others.
- ✓ As per the recent survey by Projects Today, the state has secured the maximum of 18.6% of the total Rs 97,000 investment made in the entire country from April-June period.
  - ✓ TN is followed by Maharashtra which signed 12 MoUs for Rs 11,229 crore investment.
- ✓ In order to monitor the projects, the state government has setup a Special Investment Promotion Task Force, headed by the chief Secretary of the state
- ✓ **In another development, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami unveiled the foundation stone, through video conference, for construction of a heritage museum at Keeladi in Sivaganga district to display all the archaeological items unearthed at the site.**
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has received ₹83.52 crore from the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM-CARES) Fund**
- ✓ Till now, the State has sanctioned ₹41.32 crore towards expenses incurred for the welfare of migrant labourers in 37 districts of the State starting from May 20.
- ✓ Greater Chennai Corporation was allotted the maximum of Rs. 13.3 crore, as on date.

- ✓ The amount would be used towards accommodation facilities, food arrangements, medical treatment and transport arrangement for the migrant workers.
  - ✓ The Centre had, in May, announced that ₹ 1,000 crore would be granted to the States and Union Territories from the PM-CARES Fund for strengthening the existing measures being taken for the welfare of migrant labourers.
  - ✓ The funds will be disbursed in two instalments of ₹ 500 crore each.
  - ✓ The funds were to be distributed through the National Disaster Management Authority.
- **Senior bureaucrat, P. Amudha - has been appointed as Joint Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a senior-level reshuffle involving 16 officials on July 20.**



- ✓ Amudha was a 1994-batch IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre
  - ✓ She has been transferred from the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussorie, where she is serving as a professor.
  - ✓ The appointees will serve the Centre under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs till 2022
- **On July 20, Tamil Nadu - recorded 4,985 fresh cases of Covid-19, taking the state's cumulative tally to 1,75,678**



- ✓ The state also reported 70 deaths on the day, taking the total toll to 2,551.
- ✓ As many as 3,861 persons were discharged on the day after treatment, taking the cured total to 1,21,776.
- ✓ As on date, 51,348 persons are undergoing treatment as 'active cases' across the State.
- ✓ A total of 52,087 samples were tested on the day, indicating that over 50,000 persons were tested for the infection for the second consecutive day.
- ✓ This took the total number of persons tested till date to 19,06,617.
- ✓ Among the total cases reported, Chennai topped the table with 1,298 cases.
- ✓ The capital city is followed by Tiruvallur (454), Chengalpet (354), Kancheepuram (329), Thoothukudi (199), Tirunelveli (180), Virudhunagar (169), Tiruvannamalai (148), Coimbatore (134), Vellore (114), Theni (107), Madurai (106) and Tenkasi (103)

## STATE

- **The Rajasthan government - has withdrawn its "general consent" to the CBI to conduct raids and investigations in the State**
  - ✓ In this aspect, the state government issued a notification requiring the CBI to take prior consent of the state government for investigation of an offence under section three of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946.
  - ✓ Earlier, in June 1990, the then Rajasthan government had refused to give such "general consent" to the Centre.
  - ✓ A similar action related to CBI had been taken by West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh governments in 2018, alleging that the Centre was misusing the agency to harass opponents
- **On July 20, the Chhattisgarh government - launched its unique 'Godhan Nyay Yojana', said to be the country's first such scheme**
  - ✓ As per the scheme, the government will procure cow dung from livestock rearers, produce vermicompost and sell it in the market to make animal husbandry more profitable.
  - ✓ Chief minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated the scheme on Hareli — Chhattisgarh's most important agriculture festival – which was celebrated on the day of the new moon in month of Saavan.
  - ✓ Under the scheme, the government will procure cow dung at Rs 2 per kilogram, including cost of transportation.
  - ✓ Women selfhelp groups will use it to produce vermicompost, which will be sold at Rs 8 a kilo.
  - ✓ As per the government, the scheme will give a boost to rural economy, create employment opportunities and give a much-needed fillip to promoting organic agriculture in the state.

- ✓ It will encourage use of organic fertilizers and minimize use of chemicals, serving as a big boon for farmers and cattle-rearers.
- ✓ Further, fertility of soil will also improve along with the nutrition level of crops
- ✓ The cow-dung procurement plan is implemented jointly with Suraaji Gaon Yojana to build 5,000 cowsheds.
- ✓ The Suraaji Gaon Yojana is already launched in the villages, and 2,785 cowsheds have been built

## NATIONAL

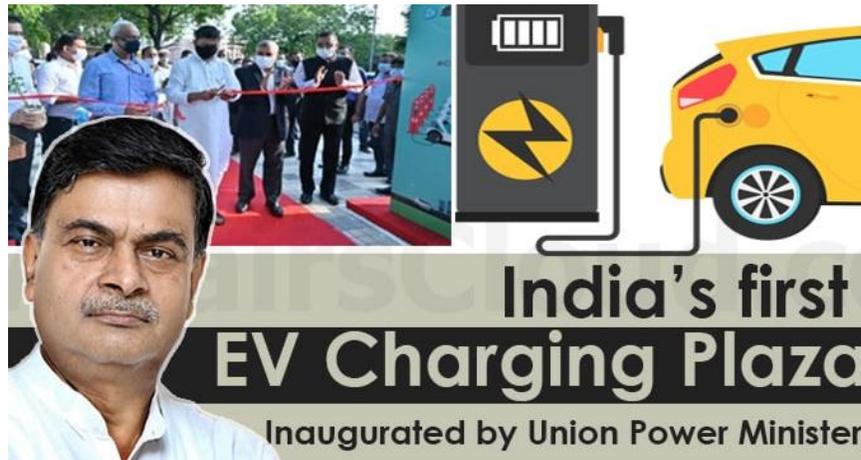
- **On July 19, 2020, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies - announced that the 'safeguard duty' on solar cells imported from China, Vietnam and Thailand will be extended for one more year starting from July 31, 2020**
  - ✓ However, the countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia have been exempted.
  - ✓ The import duties are to be imposed on all solar cell products whether or not assembled in panels or modules.
  - ✓ The existing safeguard duty was imposed on July 2018.
  - ✓ The reason for imposing import duties on solar cells is because the import from certain countries has been affecting the domestic industry.
  - ✓ Therefore, to protect the domestic industries and boost indigenous production, it becomes essential to restrict the imports
  - ✓ The provision of safeguard duty is envisaged by GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), 1994.
  - ✓ It allows a member of WTO to temporarily restrict imports of a product to safeguard its domestic industry.
  - ✓ A huge portion of solar cells is being imported from China
  - ✓ China has been dumping its low-quality solar cells at cheapest prices after the US and European Union closed their solar cells imports from China.
  
- **On July 20, 2020, the International Trade Union Confederation - released the ranking of 144 countries on degree of respect for workers' rights**
  - ✓ India was ranked among the least performing 10 countries in the list.
  - ✓ The other nine least performing countries include Brazil, Bangladesh, Columbia, Kazakhstan, Honduras, Philippines, Egypt, Zimbabwe and Turkey.
  - ✓ The new countries that have entered the list of 10 worst countries for workers were India, Honduras and Egypt.
  - ✓ The Middle East region has been named the worst region in the world for working people.
    - ✓ This is mainly due to the ongoing insecurity and conflicts in Syria, Palestine, Syria, Libya, Yemen coupled with most regressive region of worker representation and union rights.
  - ✓ As per the report, around 85% of the countries violated the right to strike and 80% violated right to collectively bargain.

- ✓ Also, the number of countries that denied freedom of speech has increased from 54 in 2019 to 56 in 2020
  - ✓ Further, the workers that were exposed to violence had restricted access to justice in 72% of the countries
  - ✓ The ranking of the countries has been made based on the value of Global Rights Index, which is prepared based on 97 parameters.
    - ✓ This includes workers' rights, right to strike, freedom from violent conditions.
  - ✓ The ITUC, based in Brussels, Belgium, was established in 2006.
    - ✓ It was formed on the merger of International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and World Confederation of Labour.
    - ✓ India is a member of ITUC.
- **On July 20, 2020, the Minister of food Processing Industry Harsimrat Kaur Badal - inaugurated the first Mega Food Park in Mizoram through video-conferencing**



- ✓ The Zoram Food Park (non-governmental) inaugurated in Mizoram will provide employment to 5,000 persons
- ✓ It will also benefit 25,000 farmers in primary processing centre and core processing centre.
- ✓ The park is expected to bring an annual turnover of Rs 450-500 crores in about 30 food processing units.
- ✓ The Zoram Food Park has been established under Mega Food Park Scheme of Government of India
- ✓ As per the scheme, 19 mega food parks have already become functional, with six of them being in North East
  - ✓ Further, there are 18 mega food park projects that are under implementation
  - ✓ Under the Mega Food Park Scheme, the Centre will provide financial assistance of Rs 50,000 crores per mega food park project.

- On July 20, 2020, the Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy, R K Singh -inaugurated first public Electric Vehicle charging plaza at Chelmsford club in New Delhi



- ✓ The charging Plaza was established by EESL (Energy Efficiency Services Limited) and NDMC (New Delhi Municipal Council)
- ✓ It consists of five electric vehicle chargers of different specifications.
- ✓ During the occasion, the minister also inaugurated another new initiative by name 'RAISE'.
  - ✓ RAISE refers to 'Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency (RAISE).
  - ✓ It is a joint initiative of EESL and USAID.
  - ✓ The RAISE initiative aims to improve bad air quality in workspaces all over the country.
  - ✓ It was launched in partnership with US Agency for International Development (USAID) MAITREE programme
  - ✓ The initiative focuses to improve indoor air quality, energy efficiency and thermal comfort in the office air conditioning of EESL.
  - ✓ It has shown 80% improvement in air quality parameters with no implement hassles.
  - ✓ The RAISE initiative has been launched under the 'Healthy and Energy Efficient Buildings' initiative
- ✓ This initiative was launched by USAID MAITREE programme and EESL on the World Environment Day (June 5, 2020)
- ✓ The initiative aims to address the challenges of air conditioning system so that they are healthy and energy efficient.
- ✓ MAITREE refers to 'Market Integration and Transformation Programme for Energy Efficiency'
- ✓ It has been launched under US-India bilateral partnership between USAID and Ministry of Power.

- **The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports – has signed an agreement with UNICEF to empower youth volunteers across the country to achieve Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**
- ✓ The Government of India has signed the agreement with YuWaah of UNICEF.
- ✓ The association provides a platform Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and NSS volunteers.
- ✓ The YuWaah initiative was launched by UNICEF in India in November 2019.
- ✓ It is a multi-stake holder platform aiming to guide the youth volunteers to become future entrepreneurs.
- ✓ The initiative promotes access to foundational and 21st century skills for youth inside and outside formal education system.
- ✓ This includes life skills, foundational skills, flexible learning and scaling impactful delivery models

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **On July 20, Britain - announced it would suspend its extradition treaty with Hong Kong**
- ✓ The move follows an escalation of a dispute with China over its introduction of a national security law for the former British colony.
- ✓ As per the Britain authorities, the treaty would be suspended immediately and an arms embargo would be extended to Hong Kong.
- ✓ Australia and Canada suspended extradition treaties with Hong Kong earlier this month.
- ✓ Last week Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered equipment from China's Huawei Technologies to be purged completely from Britain's 5G network by the end of 2027

## **INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

- **India and the South African Customs Union - held a virtual meeting to discuss the aspects of Preferential Trade Agreement.**
- ✓ The South African Customs Union consists of South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho
- ✓ The discussions held between India and the South African Customs Union focused on achieving a Preferential Trade Agreement
- ✓ The Indian side of the dialogue was led by the Joint Secretary of Department of Commerce, Srikar Reddy
- ✓ In 2019-20, the overall trade between India and Africa stood at \$66.7 billion, out of which India-SACU trade alone was \$10.9 billion.
- ✓ India has been committed to and supporting the manufacturing and industry in Namibia in areas such as irrigation, agriculture, ICT, renewables, pharma, and medical supplies

- ✓ In 2018-2019, India-Namibia bilateral trade was \$135.92 million where India's export values at \$82.37 million and imports stood at \$53.55 million.
- ✓ The mining sector has been an area of mutual interest as Namibia is rich in Uranium, copper, diamonds, phosphates, and other minerals.
- ✓ From Indian side, the technological knowledge in engineering, IT, railways, pharmaceuticals, and SME's has been of interest to Namibia.
- ✓ Exports from India to South Africa include vehicles and components, drugs and pharmaceuticals, transport equipment, footwear, chemical, engineering goods, textiles, rice, dyes and intermediaries, gems and jewellery, etc.
- ✓ Imports from South Africa to the country include steam coal, gold, phosphoric acid, copper ores, and concentrates, manganese ores, aluminium ingots, and other minerals.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Scientists at Oxford University – have announced that their experimental coronavirus vaccine 'ChAdOx1 nCoV-19' has shown a protective immune response in human trials.**

### Major breakthrough

ChAdOx1 nCoV-19, Oxford University's experimental COVID-19 vaccine, has been shown to prompt a positive immune response among participants who took the shot

- Researchers began testing the vaccine candidate in April in as many as **1,077 participants**

- It uses a modified virus known to cause infections in chimpanzees and the genetic information contained in SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19



boosted the immune system as well

- According to a study published in the journal *Lancet*, the vaccine candidate produced neutralising antibodies and
- Around **70%** of people on the trial developed either fever or headache as side effects, which researchers said could be managed with paracetamol

- High-risk people, such as health workers and the elderly, should be prioritised to receive vaccination, the study added

- ✓ British researchers first began testing the vaccine in April in about 1,000 people, with 50% of them being administered the experimental vaccine
- ✓ As per the latest research findings, the scientists have found that their experimental Covid-19 vaccine produced a dual immune response in people aged 18 to 55 that lasted at least two months after they were immunised.
- ✓ The dual advantage refers to the increasing evidence of T-cell response as well as antibodies, which could be very important in controlling COVID-19
- ✓ Numerous countries including Germany, France, the Netherlands, Italy, U.S. and the U.K. have all signed deals to receive hundreds of millions of doses of the

vaccine — which has not yet been licensed — with the first deliveries scheduled by the year end.

- ✓ The Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII) is aiming to develop a Covid-19 vaccine by the end of the year
  - ✓ It has said it would be commencing human trials of its Oxford vaccine in the country from August.
  - ✓ The SII has entered into a partnership with AstraZeneca to manufacture a billion doses of the vaccine developed by Oxford University.
- **A giant 'sea cockroach' - has been discovered by the researchers from Singapore during a marine survey at the bottom of the Indian Ocean.**



- ✓ The marine survey was conducted by Peter Ng of the National University of Singapore.
- ✓ His team has collected over 12,000 deep-sea creatures during the survey
- ✓ The team from University of Singapore has undertaken a 14 day expedition to the deep sea off the coast of West Java in Indonesia
- ✓ The newly discovered cockroach has been identified as belonging to a new species and is given the name 'Bathynomus raksasa'.
- ✓ The giant Bathynomus is a deep-sea crustacean that is able to grow up to 20 inches (50 cm) in size.
  - ✓ This makes it the second-largest isopod species that has been known till now.
- ✓ Even though they have been nicknamed as sea cockroaches, the 14 legged creatures are more closely related to other marine species such as shrimps and crabs.
  - ✓ These creatures are also capable of sustaining long periods of time without any food.
- ✓ Isopods are able to grow up to 50 cm and have been classified as 'supergiants'.
  - ✓ There are currently 20 species of giant isopods, which also includes the newly discovered 'sea cockroach'.
- ✓ During this expedition, researchers have also discovered 12 other new species.

- **NASA - has rescheduled the launch of James Webb Space Telescope to October 31, 2021.**
- ✓ The launch was earlier scheduled for March 2021.
- ✓ The new launch window was announced by the space agency based on a recent risk assessment of the remaining assembly and test activities before the launch
- ✓ The agency has also accounted for the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and other technical issues before announcing the new date.
- ✓ The final series of complex environmental tests of the full observatory is expected to be completed this year followed by a final deployment of the telescope and sun shield.
- ✓ The James Webb Space Telescope is expected to revolutionise the understanding of the universe.
- ✓ The observatory will help detect light from the first generation of stars and galaxies that formed in the early Universe and will study the atmospheres of habitable exoplanets.
- ✓ The European Space Agency (ESA) is contributing two critical scientific instruments - NIRSpec spectrograph and the MIRI mid-infrared instrument and the Ariane 5 launch vehicle to the Webb observatory.
- ✓ James Webb Space Telescope will become the first mission to complete an intricate and technically-challenging series of deployments during its journey to space.
  - ✓ It will orbit about one and a half million kilometers from Earth.
  - ✓ During the launch, the observatory will remain folded and hence it will be taken to the launch site in the 'folded' condition and fitted inside the Ariane 5 launch vehicle.
  - ✓ Then it will unfold its delicate five-layered sunshield until it reaches the size of a tennis court.
  - ✓ Then, the observatory will deploy its 6.5 m primary mirror equipment, which will help detect faint light of distant stars and galaxies.
- ✓ The James Webb Space Telescope will remain as the next great space science observatory, after the Hubble Space Telescope
- ✓ It is an international project led by NASA in collaboration with its partners- the European Space Agency and the Canadian Space Agency.

## **DEFENCE**

- **On July 20, 2020, the US Navy carrier USS Nimitz - conducted 'PASSEX' maritime drills with Indian warships near the Andaman and Nicobar islands**
- ✓ The exercise comes amid a high alert by the Navy in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) due to the stand-off with China along the border in Ladakh.
- ✓ As part of the exercise, four frontline naval ships, Shivalik, Sahyadri, Kamorta and Rana including a stealth corvette, teamed up with carrier USS Nimitz and three other U.S. ships in the eastern Indian Ocean near the islands.



- ✓ USS Nimitz, the U.S. Navy's and the world's largest aircraft carrier, is returning from the South China Sea through the Malacca Straits.
  - ✓ In South China Sea, it recently conducted military exercises along with the USS Ronald Reagan carrier strike group to support the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet
  - ✓ The Indian Navy had conducted similar PASSEXs with the Japanese Navy and the French Navy in the recent past
  - ✓ Last week, ships under the Eastern Naval Command had conducted exercises in the Bay of Bengal off the A&N islands.
  - ✓ On June 27, JS Kashima and JS Shimayuki from the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) training squadron had conducted a PASSEX with INS Rana and INS Kulish in the Indian Ocean.
  - ✓ PASSEX is a passage exercise in practicing cooperation.
  - ✓ A passage exercise is normally conducted when there is an opportunity in contrast to pre-planned maritime drills.
- **The Indian Air Force (IAF) - is all set to induct the first batch of five Rafale fighter jets from France at the Air Force Station, Ambala, on July 29, subject to weather conditions.**
- ✓ The final induction ceremony will take place in the second half of August
  - ✓ To operate the jets, IAF aircrew and ground crew have undergone comprehensive training on the aircraft, including its highly advanced weapons systems
  - ✓ The induction of Meteor Beyond Visual Range air-to-air missile, widely recognised as a game changer for air combat, Scalp long-range stand-off attack air to ground missile, and MICA multi-mission air-to-air missiles into the IAF's inventory will give the IAF an edge in the neighbourhood.
  - ✓ According to its manufacturer, MBDA, Meteor has a 'no-escape zone' many times greater than any other air-to-air missile.
  - ✓ The Rafale induction and operationalisation will be on top of the agenda during the Air Force Commanders' Conference (AFCC) to be held from July 22 to 24 with the theme "IAF in the Next Decade".

- **On July 20, 2020, the Defence Ministry - signed a contract with the Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) to procure 1,512 mine plough devices at a cost of Rs 557 crores**
- ✓ The Mine Plough is a device that is fitted with T-90 tanks to clear minefields.
- ✓ The induction of mine ploughs has been planned to be completed by 2027.
- ✓ A mine plough is a tank mounted device that clears a lane through a minefield allowing other vehicles to follow
- ✓ The contract has 'Buy and Make' categorization with a minimum of 50% indigenous manufacturing of the devices.

## **ECONOMY**

- **The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) - has launched an e-campaign on Voluntary Compliance of Income Tax for the fiscal year 2018-19.**
- ✓ The 11-day e-campaign will run for 11 days from July 20-July 31, 2020 for the convenience and benefit of the taxpayers.
- ✓ It will focus on the taxpayers and assesseees who are either non-filers or have discrepancies/deficiencies in their returns for the FY 2018-19
- ✓ The key objective of the campaign is to help taxpayers validate their financial transaction related information available with the Income Tax Department for fiscal year 2018-2019
- ✓ The campaign seeks to enable voluntary compliance to avoid notice and scrutiny process.
- ✓ Under the campaign, the IT Department will send emails and SMS to identify taxpayers to verify information related to their financial transactions that were received by the I-T Department from various sources such as Tax Deduction at Source (TDS), Statement of Financial Transactions (SFT), Tax Collection at Source (TCS) and Foreign Remittances (Form 15CC).
- ✓ The taxpayers would not be required to visit any Income Tax office, as the response will have to be submitted online.
- ✓ Under the e-campaign, the taxpayers will be able to access details regarding their high value transactions online on a designated portal.
- ✓ The last date for filing and revising the Income Tax Return for Assessment Year 2019-20 (relevant to FY 2018-19) is July 31, 2020.

## **SPORTS**

- **The T20 Men's World Cup - has formally been postponed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.**
- ✓ This was officially confirmed by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on July 20
- ✓ It was scheduled to be played in Australia in October-November this year
- ✓ The ICC announced the following dates after the meeting

- ✓ Men's T20 World Cup 2021 - will be held October-November, with the final on November 14;
- ✓ Men's T20 World Cup 2022 - will be held October-November with the final on November 13;
- ✓ Men's (50-over) World Cup - will be held in India in October-November 2023 with the final on November 26.(instead of the earlier February-March slot)
- ✓ However, the ICC statement didn't specify the venues for the T20 World Cups in 2021 and 2022.
- ✓ But it is expected that the 2021 edition of the T20 World Cup will be held in India as scheduled and Australia will host the tournament in 2022
- ✓ The ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2021 is currently scheduled to take place as planned in February 2021 in New Zealand.
- ✓ International Cricket resumed on July 8, 2020 with England vs West Indies Test series in July 2020, after nearly 116 days of suspension of play to contain COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ All international cricket matches were suspended in March 2020 to stop the coronavirus outbreak.
- **For the first time in history, football's prestigious Ballon d'Or - will not be awarded this year due to lack of sufficient fair conditions under exceptional circumstances amid Covid-19 pandemic**
- ✓ This was announced by France Football magazine, which awards the honour, on July 20, 2020.
- ✓ The prestigious football honour was established in 1956.
- ✓ It has been given out every year since Stanley Matthews won the first award.
- ✓ The award has become one of the most prestigious individual football trophies in the world.
- ✓ Some of the winners of the honour include football greats such as Zinedine Zidane, George Weah, Johan Cruyff, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.
- ✓ Since 2018, the award also honours best female football player.
- ✓ Ballon d'Or has been dominated by Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo since 2008 with either one of them winning the honour every year except for 2018 when it was won by Luka Modric.
  - ✓ While Ronaldo has won the award for a total of five times, Messi has won it six times including in 2019.
- ✓ All competitions and matches across the world were suspended for over 2-3 months
- **England's Dom Sibley - became the first cricketer to violate ICC's 'saliva ban' rule on Day 4 of England's second test against West Indies at Old Trafford in Manchester.**



- ✓ Dom Sibley accidentally applied saliva on the ball during the match.
- ✓ However, he immediately informed the umpires about it and they used disinfectant to disinfect the ball.
- ✓ This was the first instance of a player applying saliva on the ball since the new ICC rules came in.
- ✓ The ICC had banned the practice of applying saliva as a part of its safety measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19.
- ✓ A team will be issued two warnings per innings for using saliva to shine the ball
  - ✓ However, after two warnings there will be a 5-run penalty.
- ✓ The players apply saliva on the ball to shine it and smoothen one side, enabling the ball to swing more to favour the bowling side.
  - ✓ This is generally done in the middle overs when the ball gets old.
- ✓ The International Cricket Council (ICC) approved interim changes to its playing regulations in June 2020.
  - ✓ The changes include a ban on the use of saliva to shine the ball.
  - ✓ The decision was taken as the usage of saliva to shine the ball will elevate the risk of virus transmission.
  - ✓ The changes were recommended by a cricket committee led by veteran cricketer Anil Kumble.
  - ✓ The committee instructed that in a situation when a bowler accidentally applies saliva to the ball, the umpires will be required to clean the ball before the play commences again.

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY**

- **Space Exploration Day – July 20**
- ✓ The day marks the anniversary of man's first historic landing on the moon.
- ✓ On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and Edwin Buzz became the first humans to land on moon's surface under Project Apollo
- ✓ The Armstrong-Aldrin duo spent 21.5 hours on the surface of the moon and spent 2.5 hours outside of their capsules
- ✓ As per the vision of US President John F Kennedy, NASA first launched Project Gemini



- ✓ Later, it had launched Project Apollo that took astronauts in an orbit around the moon between 1968 to 1972
  - ✓ Between these years, USA launched 6 Apollo missions
  - ✓ In 1975, NASA teamed up with Soviet Union to launch the Apollo-Soyuz Project.
  - ✓ It is the first international human space flight programme
  - ✓ After carrying out Moon missions successfully, NASA launched the Skylab program and carried out three human missions where astronauts stayed aboard a small workshop orbiting the Earth
- ✓ NASA launched the first space shuttle, Columbia, on 12 April 1981
- ✓ The Science Exploration Day sometimes also called Moon Day was declared a holiday in 1984 by the then President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT, 2019 – A REPORT

- **The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 - has come into force from July 20, 2020**



### Salient Features of the Act

- ✓ The new law aims to protect the rights of the consumers through its notified rules and provisions
- ✓ It also aims to set up two new entities - consumer disputes redressal commissions and consumer protection councils
- ✓ It advocates a simplified dispute resolution process.
- ✓ It strives to ensure product liability, mediation, and punishment for the manufacture or sale of products that contain adulterant or spurious goods.

- ✓ According to Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan, the new law will empower the consumers.

### E-commerce protection rules - Highlights

- ✓ The Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 fall under the Consumer Protection Act
- ✓ This is the first time that such detailed rules have been published by the Government of India for e-commerce entities.
- ✓ The rules for the prevention of unfair trade practices by the e-commerce platforms will be covered under the Act.
- ✓ Every e-commerce entity will be required to provide information regarding the country of origin, refund, return, warranty and guarantee, exchange, delivery and shipment, grievance redressal mechanism, payment methods, modes of payment, the security of payment methods and chargeback options
- ✓ The act makes it mandatory for the e-commerce entities to acknowledge the receipt of consumer complaints within 48 hours
- ✓ Also, they have to redress the complaint within one month from the date of receipt.

### Disputes, Adjudication and Mediation

- ✓ An alternate dispute mechanism of mediation has also been provided in the new Act in order to simplify the adjudication process.
- ✓ A consumer commission will refer a complaint for mediation, wherever the scope for early settlement exists and parties agree for it.
- ✓ There will also be no fee for filing cases up to Rs. 5 lakhs as per the Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission Rules.

### Advertisement regulation

- ✓ Advertisement Regulation is one of the important features of Consumer Protection Act, 2019
- ✓ Several countries such as UK, Belgium and Ireland have already banned celebrity endorsement for unhealthy foods.
- ✓ Under the Act, the celebrities can be fined up to Rs 10 lakhs for promoting misleading products.
- ✓ Strict Actions shall also be taken against advertisers for generating misleading content
- ✓ However, no action can be taken against the media through which the advertisement is being published

### CCPA

- ✓ The act includes the establishment of the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) in order to protect, promote, and enforce the rights of the consumers.
- ✓ The CCPA was constituted under Section 10(1) of Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

- ✓ It will be empowered to conduct investigations into consumer rights violations and institute prosecutions for complaints.
- ✓ It can also –
  - ✓ order the discontinuance of misleading advertisements and unfair trade practices,
  - ✓ order recalls of unsafe goods and services and
  - ✓ impose penalties on the manufacturers or publishers or endorsers of misleading advertisements.

#### Six major Consumer rights as defined in the Act

- ✓ Right to be protected against marketing goods and services that are hazardous to life and property
- ✓ Right to be informed about the quantity, quality, standard, purity and price of goods and services
- ✓ Right to be assured to access variety of goods at competitive prices
- ✓ Right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices
- ✓ Right to sue the celebrity for misleading endorsements
- ✓ Right to claim product liability action under the act on account of harm caused to consumers due to defective products

#### Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (CDRC)

- ✓ A consumer can file a complaint in the CDRC in the following cases -
  - ✓ Unfair or restrictive trade practices
  - ✓ Overcharging or deceptive charging defective goods or services
  - ✓ Offering of goods and services for sale that may be hazardous to life and safety.

#### Timeline of the Act

- ✓ Consumer Protection Act, 2019 repeals and replaces the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
- ✓ The Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan first introduced the Consumer Protection Bill, 2019 in Lok Sabha on July 8, 2019.
- ✓ The Bill was passed in Lok Sabha on July 30, 2019, and then in Rajya Sabha on August 6, 2019.
- ✓ The bill received President Ram Nath Kovind's assent on August 9, 2019, and was also notified in the Gazette of India on the same date.

