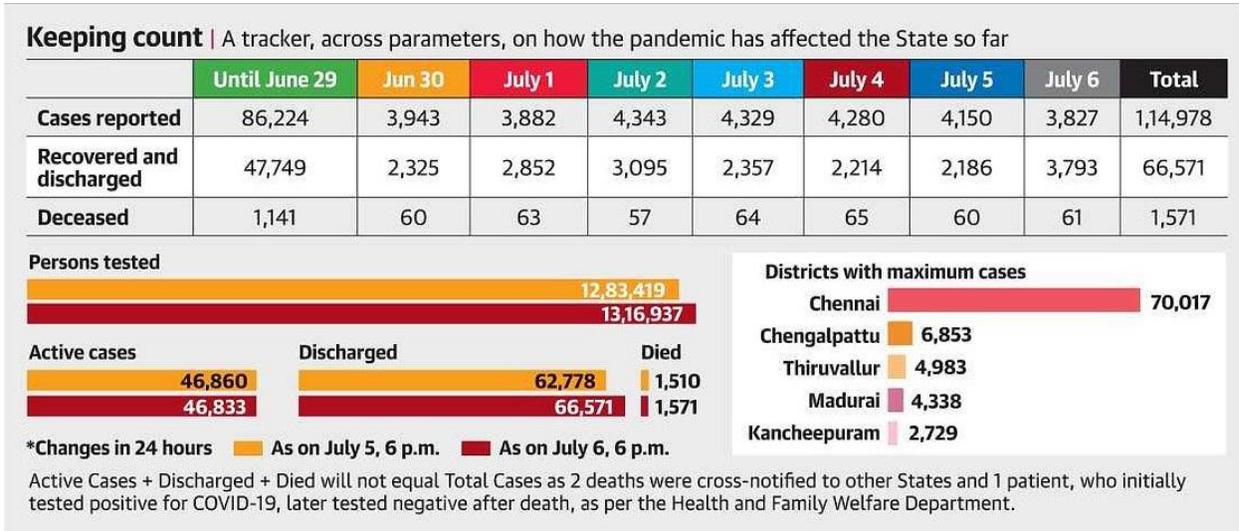


## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 7, 2020**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **On July 6, the Tamil Nadu government - cancelled its earlier order that introduced three subject groups for higher secondary classes.**
  - ✓ It means, going forward, all schools will offer only four subject groups in Class XI from 2020-21.
  - ✓ As per the earlier government order, students were given the option to choose between three-subject and four-subject groups, besides language and English, in Class XI from 2020-21
  - ✓ In this scenario, it was expected that most students would opt for three-subject group with a subject less, which would limit their higher education course choices and career options.
  - ✓ While students can pursue MBBS or BE/BTech courses with the reinstated physics, chemistry, maths and biology group, the three-subject groups would not have given them the option.
  - ✓ Also, in the three-subject group system, computer science as a subject was removed for vocational and commerce streams
  
- **On July 6, a total of 3,827 people - tested positive for the Covid-19 viral infection in the state, after recording 4,000-plus cases a day for four consecutive days**
  - ✓ With this, the cumulative caseload in the state reached 1,14,978, out of which 46,833 people are still under treatment.
  - ✓ Further, 61 people died on the day, pushing the Covid-19 toll to 1,571
  - ✓ The number of new infections stayed below 2,000 for the third consecutive day in Chennai.
  - ✓ The capital city continued to see a drop in cases by recording 1,747 fresh infections, taking its tally past 70,000.
  - ✓ The city's neighbours, Chengalpet (213), Kancheepuram (182) and Tiruvallur (175) together accounted for 570 cases.

- ✓ While Chennai has so far reported 1,082 Covid 19 deaths, Tiruvallur recorded 100 deaths, Chengalpet 128 and Kancheepuram 36.
- ✓ In the south, Madurai recorded 245 cases, Theni had 119, Thoothukudi 109, Tirunelveli 84, Ramanathapuram 69, Virudhunagar 86 cases and Sivagangai 51.



- ✓ In the last 24 hours, 3,793 patients were discharged, taking the total number of people recovered to 66,571.
- ✓ A total of 34,782 samples were tested during the last 24 hours, taking the total number of samples tested to 13,76,497.
- ✓ So far, a total of 13,16,937 individuals have been tested.
- ✓ On July 7, the 750-bed hospital on the King Institute campus will be inaugurated.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the containment zones in the state have reached 1,089 on July 3, including 158 in Chennai
- ✓ In the previous week, the state had 703 zones
- ✓ Other than Chennai, Salem (184), Tiruvannamalai (84), Tirupattur (84), Madurai (75) and Cuddalore (59) have seen a sharp rise.
- ✓ In another development, the State government has announced that it will continue to provide additional rice — 5 kg per person — to all rice cardholders until November 2020

## STATES

- **On July 6, the Haryana government under Chief Minister Manohar Khattar – gave its ‘in principle’ approval to draft an ordinance to reserve 75% jobs in Haryana’s industries for domiciles of the state**
- ✓ The ordinance to be drafted will be called the “Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Ordinance, 2020”
- ✓ It is expected to significantly address the unemployment of locals on a priority basis in the state.

- ✓ Once drafted, the ordinance will be brought before Haryana's council of ministers at the next meeting of the Assembly.
- ✓ Once the ordinance receives the assent of the governor, it will be sent to the President of India for approval.
- ✓ The new ordinance aims to provide 75% reservation for local candidates in jobs that has salaries lower than ₹50,000 per month
- ✓ It will be applicable in various privately managed companies, societies, trusts, limited liability partnership firms, partnership firms, etc., situated in the state of Haryana.
- ✓ The ordinance is expected to have few exemption clauses, as well
  - ✓ One among them is that the employers will have the option to recruit local candidates from one district.
  - ✓ Further, the employers are exempted from the ordinance, if suitable local candidates are not available for a particular category of industry.
- ✓ The proposed rule would be applicable only to new openings and would not affect those already employed.
- ✓ All private firms, units and employment providers that have more than 10 employees will fall under the Haryana State Employment to Local Candidates Act - 2020.

## NATIONAL

- **On July 6, the UGC – decided to give a window for the higher education institutes till September-end to hold the final semester exams**
  - ✓ This follows after the approval from the home ministry to hold final year exams
  - ✓ The exams will be conducted in either online, offline or blended mode
  - ✓ The UGC said there will be no changes to the guidelines issued on April 29.
  - ✓ But the guidelines issued now said that in case a student of terminal semester/ final year is unable to appear in the examination for whatsoever reasons, he or she may be given an opportunity to appear in a special examination to be conducted 'as and when' feasible
  - ✓ As per the home ministry, the final term examinations are to be compulsorily conducted as per the UGC guidelines on examinations and academic calendar for the universities and as per the standard operating procedure (SOP) approved by the ministry of health & family welfare
  - ✓ On June 25, following the surge in Covid-19 infections, UGC's panel of experts, headed by Haryana University vice-chancellor R C Kuhad, was asked to review the final year examination guidelines issued on April 29.
- **The General Insurance Council (GIC) - has announced rates for hospitals and insurers for Covid-19 treatment**
  - ✓ The GI Council is an association of insurers, which has the backing of the insurance regulator, IRDAI

- ✓ All 32 general insurers will now coordinate with private hospitals for using the council's pricing for Covid-19 packages to end any disputes over charges, causing hardship to patients.
  - ✓ GI Council has published different rates for NABH-accredited and non-accredited hospitals, level of sickness and also based on hospital location, metros, non-metros and other areas.
  - ✓ As per the new rates, network partner hospitals cannot charge more than
    - 15,000 for ICU with ventilator care in metros and not more than □ 11,250 in non-metros.
    - ✓ Similarly, a maximum of □ 8,000 has been set for isolation beds, □ 5,000 for body storage, etc.
  - ✓ As per the new rates, hospitals cannot charge more than □ 10,000 a day for moderate sickness, more than □ 13,000 for severe sickness and □ 15,000 for acute cases.
  - ✓ Also in a major relief to the industry, PPE rates have been fixed — hospitals can only charge between □ 1,200- □ 2,000.
    - ✓ These rates are inclusive of consultation, nursing charges, room stay, meals, Covid testing, monitoring and investigation, PPE, drugs, and medical consumables.
  - ✓ Rates have also been fixed for investigations like blood sugar levels, X-ray, and ECG.
  - ✓ The council has published an exhaustive list on each investigation item, like a maximum charge of □ 500 on X rays, not more than □ 100 on blood sugar levels, not more than □ 400 on arterial blood gases etc.,
  - ✓ These new rates are to be reviewed every month
  - ✓ According to the GI Council, this will also help policyholders in non-network hospitals, where the cashless facility is not available and they have to go for reimbursement with the insurance company.
- **India - crossed two grim Covid-19 milestones of 20,000 deaths and seven lakh cases on July 6, a day after overtaking Russia to become the third country with the highest caseload after the US and Brazil.**

<b>7 LAKH CASES ACROSS INDIA</b>			
<b>10 days</b>		Time taken for cases to rise from 5 lakh to 7 lakh	<b>23,340</b> Average number of cases every day for past 5 days
Deaths	Days Taken	<b>TAMIL NADU NUMBERS</b>	
1 to 5k	<b>79</b>	New Cases <b>3,827</b>	Total Cases <b>1.14L</b>
5k to 10k	<b>17</b>	Total Deaths <b>1,571</b>	Mortality Rate <b>1.3%</b>
10k to 15k	<b>9*</b>	Active Cases <b>46,833</b>	New Chennai Cases <b>1,747</b>
15k to 20k	<b>11</b>		
*Higher rate as over 2k deaths, mostly backdated, reported on June 16			

- ✓ On the day, the country registered 21,892 fresh cases with the daily tally continued to breach the 20,000-mark for the fifth consecutive day
- ✓ However, it was the lowest in the last five days and much lower than the all-time high figure of 24,976 recorded on July 5.
- ✓ Further, the death toll of 470 on the day was the second highest in the last five days.
- ✓ India's cumulative caseload as on date is 7,19,809 while the number of deaths have reached 20,157.
- ✓ On the positive side, 4,39,422 patients have recovered from the virus
- ✓ Maharashtra and the four southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh continue to contribute a lion's share of the country's fresh Covid-19 cases for the last few days
- ✓ These five states accounted for 65% of the total cases on the day.
- ✓ The five states also contributed 67% of the casualties with Maharashtra leading with 204 deaths followed by Tamil Nadu (61), Karnataka (30), Telangana (11) and Andhra Pradesh (7)
- ✓ Maharashtra reported the maximum cases on the day with 5,368 fresh infections, while the total deaths in the state crossed the 9000-mark with cumulative casualties reaching 9,026.
- ✓ On July 6, the Covid-19 tests in India crossed the one-crore mark with 1,01,35,525 cumulative samples tested so far, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- ✓ In the past 24 hours, about 3,46,459 samples were tested across 1,105 labs (788 in the government sector and 317 in the private sector) across the country.

## **HIGH COURT VERDICT**

- **On July 6, the Madras high court - refused to stay online classes for school students till the centre frames guidelines for conduct of such classes.**
- ✓ A division bench of Justice M M Sundresh and Justice R Hemalatha passed directions to this effect while hearing the petition urging to grant stay to the conduct of online classes by the schools.
- ✓ During the hearing, additional solicitor-general of India R Sankaranarayanan informed the court that the Union government is in the process of framing the rules and is likely to publish them by July 15.
- ✓ The petitioner wanted the court to direct the government to restrain educational institutions from conducting classes 'online' for more than 2 hours a day, as continuous viewing of mobile phones is hazardous to eyes
- ✓ Further, such exposure is hazardous to the physical health and mental development of the students too, the petitioners said.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **In an open letter to the World Health Organization (WHO), 239 scientists in 32 countries – have confirmed that coronavirus is ‘airborne’ that lingers in the air indoors, infecting those nearby.**
- ✓ They have mentioned the evidence showing that smaller ‘airborne’ particles can infect people, and asked the WHO to revise its recommendations.
- ✓ If airborne transmission is a significant factor, mainly in crowded spaces with poor ventilation, the consequences for containment will be significant.
- ✓ Masks may be needed even for indoors, especially in socially distant settings.
- ✓ Health care workers may have to use N95 masks that filter out even the smallest respiratory droplets, while treating the coronavirus patients
- ✓ Ventilation systems in schools, nursing homes, residences and businesses may need to minimise recirculating air and add powerful new filters.
- ✓ Ultraviolet lights may be needed to kill viral particles floating in tiny droplets indoors.
- ✓ The WHO has long held that the coronavirus is spread primarily by large respiratory droplets that, once expelled by infected people in coughs and sneezes, fall quickly to the floor.

## INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **India and China - have started ‘gradual’ disengagement from the two-month-long confrontation in Galwan Valley and Gogra-Hot Springs areas of eastern Ladakh along the disputed Line of Actual Control (LAC) on July 6**
- ✓ The developments came after a two-hour discussion between national security advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese state councillor and foreign minister Wang Yi on July 5

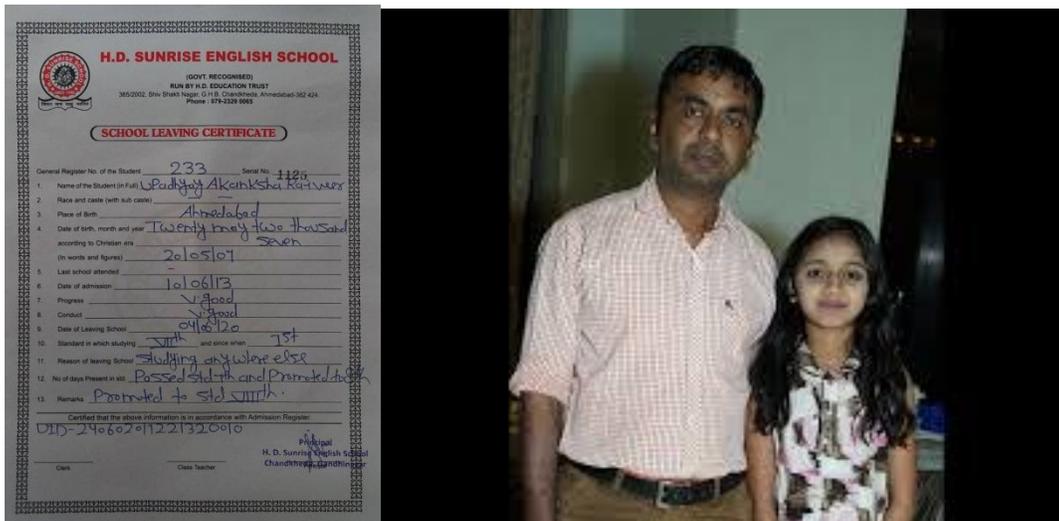
<b>1ST PHASE OF DE-ESCALATION STARTS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Buffer zone created at PP-14 in Galwan Valley, site of June 15 clash. PLA removes tents &amp; temporary structures, pulls back 300 troops &amp; vehicles by 1.5 km to its side of LAC, a source says. Similar steps taken at PP-15 &amp; 17A in Gogra-Hot Springs</li><li>➤ PLA also folds up some tents and seems to be pulling back towards Finger-5 from Finger-4 on Pangong Lake’s north bank, a stubborn face-off site</li><li>➤ Setting up of buffer zones at all the flashpoints will mark completion of Phase-I</li></ul>	 <p><b>A Ladakh-bound Army convoy</b></p> <p>of proposed de-escalation, followed by a 3-4 week ‘stabilisation period’ to monitor progress &amp; resolve any issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ India extremely cautious this time, will verify each step with physical monitoring on ground &amp; through drones and satellites</li></ul>

- ✓ In a significant breakthrough after several rounds of military and diplomatic talks, People's Liberation Army soldiers started moving back slightly from the stubborn face-off site at Pangong Tso.
- ✓ India has said China violated the agreements intended to ensure peace on the borders.
- ✓ Chinese soldiers "have removed some tents and seem to be pulling back" towards 'Finger-5' (fingers are mountainous spurs) from 'Finger-4' on the north bank of Pangong lake
- ✓ This is in accordance with Phase-I of the de-escalation plan agreed between the rival corps commanders on June 30
- ✓ Pangong Tso is one of the most contentious areas of the current stand-offs, with the PLA moving about 8 km inside up to Finger 4.
- ✓ It has to be recalled that, during the similar "de-escalation" process on June 15, the violent clash occurred in the Galwan Valley leading to casualties on both sides.
- ✓ Importantly, the Chinese troops have moved back from their current positions which India has held to be violative of agreements between the two countries.
- ✓ A 'buffer zone' has already been created at 'Patrolling Point-14 (PP-14) in the Galwan Valley region
- ✓ Similarly, 'buffer zones' will be created at the other 'friction points' of PP-15 and 17A in the general Gogra-Hot Springs area.
- ✓ But India is being extremely cautious this time, and started the physical monitoring of every step on the ground through drones and satellites
- ✓ The ultimate goal now is to set up the no-military presence buffer zones at all flashpoints in the high-altitude region, depending on the terrain and mountain features in each area
- ✓ This will mark the completion of Phase-I of the proposed de-escalation.
- ✓ Further, there will be a 'stabilisation period' of three to four weeks for each side to monitor the progress and resolve any issues through more meetings to bridge the huge trust deficit between the two armies.
- ✓ This is the second time after the 73-day-long face-off at Doklam in 2017 that China had to relent after negotiations in which India was represented by the NSA.
  - ✓ Unlike Doklam, the latest conflict saw fatalities on both sides.
  - ✓ This was the first time since 1979, after the Vietnam crisis, that PLA had suffered casualties

## **PERSONALITIES**

- **On July 6, Rajveer Upadhyay, an auto driver from Ahmedabad - has accomplished a rare feat for his daughter Akanksha in getting a "secular" school-leaving certificate for her.**
- ✓ Rajveer ensured that his daughter Akanksha's School leaving certificate does not mention her caste, religion, or community.

- ✓ This is perhaps the first-of-its-kind school-leaving certificate which does not identify a person based on their caste or creed.



- ✓ On July 6, Akanksha, 13, received the certificate from her school which has left the religion and caste columns blank.
- ✓ Upadhyay said he had cited the case of a lawyer from Vellore, in Tamil Nadu, identified as Sneha.
- ✓ Upadhyay emphasized in his representations that in 2019, Sneha had appealed the authorities in Vellore to remove her caste and religious denominations from all her government documents.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Global Pharma company Mylan N.V – will soon introduce a generic injectable version of Gilead Sciences Inc.’s Remdesivir Covid-19 drug, after it received approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).**
- ✓ The drugmaker will sell a 100 mg vial of the antiviral in the country for ₹4,800 each
- ✓ The approval is for restricted emergency use on Covid-19 patients
- ✓ The injection will be available this month under the brand name ‘Desrem’
- ✓ The drug will be available for hospitals and government healthcare agencies only.
- ✓ Earlier, in the month of June 2020, generic versions of Indian pharmaceutical companies – Cipla’s CIPREMI and Hetero’s COVIFOR’ has got DCGI approval.
- ✓ Mylan N.V is currently the second-largest company in the world for the manufacturing of generic and specialty pharmaceuticals.
- ✓ During the trials held in May, a total of 1063 patients were given Remdesivir, during which the mortality rate of 7.1 % was reported across 60 centers in the United States, Asia, and Europe
- ✓ Japan was the first country to approve Remdesivir drug as a treatment for Covid-19

- ✓ United Kingdom, Singapore, and Japan are the other countries where the drug has been approved for the treatment of Covid-19 cases.
- ✓ This antiviral medication 'Remdesivir' was developed by the United States biopharmaceutical company 'Gilead Sciences' for treatment of Hepatitis C.
- **Thiruvananthapuram-based 'The Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology' (SCTIMST) - has developed an Emergency Breathing Assist System (EBAS), to meet the huge demand for ventilators in the fight against Covid-19.**



- ✓ The device is not meant to be a replacement for a mechanical ventilator
- ✓ However, it can work as a substitute for a few hours to a few days before conventional mechanical ventilation can be provided.
- ✓ The device is fully compliant with national and international standards and guidelines
- ✓ A team of engineers Sarath S Nair, Vinod Kumar V and Nagesh D S from the Department of medical device engineering and Professors Thomas Koshy and Manikantan from the Department of anaesthesia developed the specifications and technology.
- ✓ The technology and design of EBAS were transferred to Wipro 3D in April 2020 for further joint development.
- ✓ **The product is now ready for commercial production under the brand name 'Air Bridge' and will be jointly launched by SCTIMST and Wipro 3D Bengaluru on July 7.**
- ✓ SCTIMST president Dr V K Saraswat will launch the product.
- ✓ The Air Bridge provides positive pressure and volume-controlled ventilation through automatic, cyclical, inflation and deflation of a bag valve mask (BVM) system.
- ✓ For clinical application, the device will have to be used along with standard consumables like breathing tubes, PEEP valve and bacterial-viral filters before connecting to the patient.

- ✓ The device is portable, battery-operated and user-friendly and does not need an intensive care specialist to operate it.
  - ✓ Air Bridge can be used for ventilator support in Covid-19 related or non-Covid related emergency situations in hospital wards
  - ✓ It can also be ideally used during the transportation of patients in ambulances till conventional mechanical ventilation can be provided in an ICU.
- **A team of researchers from IIT Madras - have developed a nano-coated filter media to produce face mask for healthcare workers treating Covid-19 patients**
- ✓ The newly developed filter media was found to effectively filter particles as small as 0.25microns.
  - ✓ The project was funded by DRDO
  - ✓ It also has a defence application, where it can be used as a filter for armoured vehicle engines.



- ✓ According to the researchers, the nano-coated filter has been fabricated with a nylon-based polymer coating on a cellulose paper through electrospinning fibre production method.
- ✓ Some of the applications for the filter include face mask, respiratory devices, air purification systems in operation theatres, cabin air filter in aircraft, air filters for armoured vehicle engines and computer hard disk drive filters.
- ✓ The nano-coating has fibre diameter less than 1micron and can be positioned as per the need to enhance surface/ depth filtration for healthcare workers or public responders.
- ✓ The nano-coated filter media have much better reverse cleanability behaviour, resulting in an extended durability of air filters.
- ✓ This will save a huge cost for defence applications, where the filters are currently imported from developed countries
- ✓ The project was a collaborative effort with faculty from various departments of IIT-M.
- ✓ Currently, researchers are working to optimize the coating parameters of nanomaterials for bulk manufacturing at an affordable cost and testing the antiviral properties.

## SPORTS

- **Reigning Asian Games champion and World Championships silver-medallist, India's Amit Panghal - was named as the world No.1 pugilist in the 52 kg weight division.**
- ✓ The latest rankings chart for the men and women boxers was released after a gap of more than 18 months by the Amateur International Boxing Association (AIBA), the sport's global governing body



- ✓ This is the first time AIBA has ranked the country's biggest Olympics medal hope in boxing as the new World No.1.
- ✓ AIBA had last released the rankings in early January 2019, that too, for only the women pugilists.
- ✓ At that time, six-time world champion M C Mary Kom had become the only Indian boxer to attain the No. 1 spot in her 48kg weight category.
- ✓ Earlier, Panghal was announced world's top boxer in his weight category in February earlier this year ahead of the Asian Olympic qualifiers in Jordan
  - ✓ But, the announcement was made by the International Olympic Committee (IOC)-appointed Boxing Task Force.
- ✓ Rohtak-boy Panghal, 24, who holds the distinction of being the most successful Indian boxer in the world championship's history following his silver finish in Russia, is placed on top of the rankings chart with 1300 points
- ✓ Apart from Panghal, Kavinder Bisht is ranked as World No.4 in the 56kg division with 750 points, while both Deepak (49kg) and Manish Kaushik (64kg) are placed sixth in their respective weight categories.
- ✓ **In the women's section, Mary Kom is World No.3 in the 51kg weight category with 1550 points**

### LATEST STANDINGS

- ✓ **MEN'S** - Deepak (49kg, 6th); Amit Panghal (52kg, 1st); Kavinder Bisht (56kg, 4th); Shiva Thapa (60kg, 16th); Manish Kaushik (64kg, 6th); Ashish (69kg, 19th); Ashish Kumar (75kg, 13th); Sanjeet (91kg, 12th) and Satish Kumar (+91kg, 23rd).
- ✓ **WOMEN'S** - Manju Rani (48kg, 2nd); M C Mary Kom (51kg, 3rd), Pinki Rani (51kg, 13th) and Nikhat Zareen (51kg, 21st); Jamuna Boro (54kg, 5th) and

Manisha (54kg, 13th); Sonia Lather (57kg, 4th); Sarita Devi (60kg, 25th); Simranjit Kaur (64kg, 6th); Lovlina Borgohain (69kg, 3rd); Pooja Rani (81kg, 8th).

## RANKINGS

- **The fourth highest seizure of opium in 2018 - was reported from India, after Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, according to the latest World Drug Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).**
- ✓ The maximum of 644 tonnes of opium was seized in Iran, followed by 27 tonnes in Afghanistan, 19 tonnes in Pakistan and four tonnes in India in 2018
- ✓ In terms of heroin seizure (1.3 tonnes), India was at the 12th position in the world.
  - ✓ Again, Iran reported the highest seizure of heroin (25 tonnes), followed by Turkey, United States, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan.
  - ✓ Heroin is manufactured from the morphine extracted from the seed pod of opium poppy plants.
- ✓ Opium is illicitly produced in about 50 countries.
  - ✓ However, close to 97% of the total global production of opium in the past five years came from only three countries – Afghanistan (84%), Myanmar (7%) and Mexico (6%)
  - ✓ The remaining 3% comes from Laos, Colombia and Guatemala
- ✓ As per the report, the global area under opium poppy cultivation declined for the second year in a row in 2019.
  - ✓ It went down by 17% in 2018 and by 30% in 2019
- ✓ The opiates seized in the largest quantity in 2018 continued to be opium (704 tonnes), followed by heroin (97 tonnes) and morphine (43 tonnes)
- ✓ The major quantities of seized opiates occurred in Asia, notably in south-west Asia (70%)
  - ✓ Asia, which is host to more than 90% of global illicit opium production and the world's largest consumption market for opiates, accounted for almost 80% of all opiates seized worldwide in 2018.
  - ✓ Outside Asia, the largest total quantity of heroin and morphine was seized in Europe (22% of the global total in 2018).

