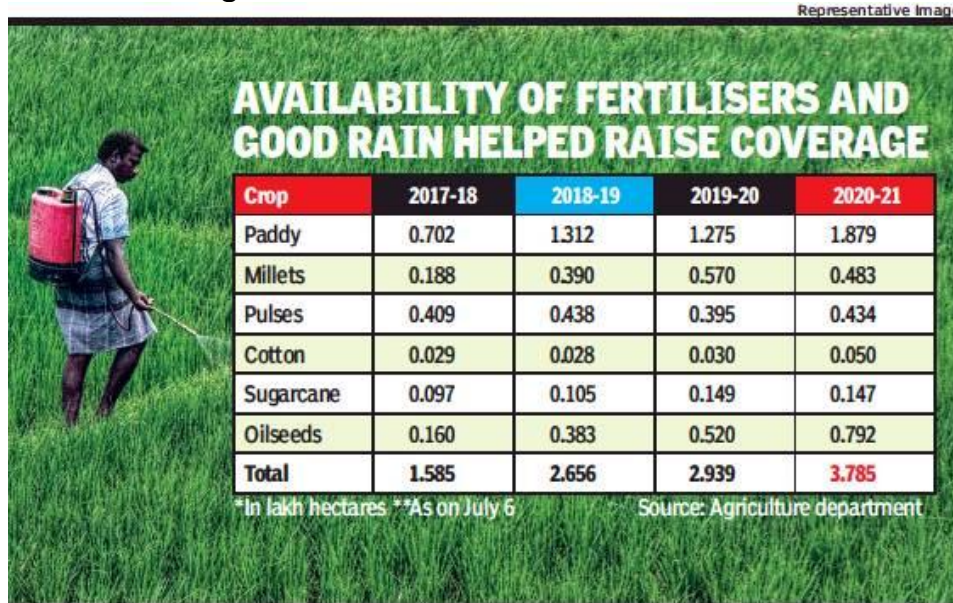


## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 9, 2020**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **On July 8, the Tamil Nadu government - issued an order revoking the Friends of Police (FoP) movement, following an adverse report from the State Director General of Police J.K. Tripathy.**
- ✓ The latest order from the home department 'withdraws' the 1994 GO granting certain amount of legitimacy to the Friends of Police movement and permitting it to work as a 'supporting unit' to police.
- ✓ It also prohibits the access given to FoP to their respective police stations in the state.
- ✓ The withdrawal order comes days after the suspected role of FoP 'volunteers' in the custodial deaths of Sathankulam traders P Jeyaraj and his son J Beniks.
- ✓ The movement was launched by Director General of Police (Crime Branch CID) Prateep V. Philip, when he was Superintendent of Police in Ramanathapuram district.
- ✓ After more youth showed interest in joining it, the State government issued an order recognising the movement.
- ✓ Its volunteers, enrolled as per a set procedure, were attached to police stations across Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Philip received the Queen's award for innovation in police training and development for his contribution to community policing.
  
- **In Tamil Nadu, the cumulative coverage of major crop, including paddy, millets, pulses, cotton, sugarcane and oilseeds - increased by a lakh hectare this season than the corresponding period last year**
- ✓ The coverage stood at 3.785 lakh hectares this season, while in the previous year it was 2.939 lakh hectares.
- ✓ Increase in groundwater table due to good rains last year and availability of fertilisers and seeds helped to increase the coverage area.

- ✓ Moreover, Cauvery water being released from Mettur on June 12, the customary date for irrigation, for the first time in the last nine years, has also contributed to the increase in coverage in the delta districts.




- ✓ The Stanley reservoir had a continuous storage of 100ft for three months this year.
- ✓ Earlier, water was released from the Mettur dam in October in 2017 and in July and August in 2018 and 2019, leading to the skipping of the short-term paddy crop.
- ✓ While the plan this year is to cover 1.4 lakh hectares in the delta districts during kuruvai season, 0.996 lakh hectares have been covered so far.
- ✓ The coverage of pulses has increased the cultivable acreage in the western region like Coimbatore, Erode, Namakkal and Krishnagiri districts.
- ✓ The farm operations were not severely affected during Covid, with attempts being made to offer fertilisers in mobile vehicles and opening of seed shops.
  - ✓ Further, the agriculture engineering department helped the farmers get the machineries in the needy districts for rent
  - ✓ Firms like TAFE, under its CSR initiative offered a free tractor rental scheme through Uzhavan App to support the small and marginal farmers during the Covid outbreak.
- ✓ With the meteorology department's forecast of normal rainfall this year, the state government is hopeful of realizing the programmed target of 125 lakh tonne of food grain production.
  - ✓ An internal estimate suggests production of 117 lakh tonne production last year.
- ✓ Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the government sponsored crop insurance scheme, ₹8,155crore has been disbursed as compensation to 40.84 lakh farmers since 2016-17.

- **On July 8, Tamil Nadu school education minister K A Sengottaiyan – announced that television channels will telecast classes for government school students from July 13.**

Representative Image

## RETHINKING EDUCATION



**will broadcast lessons**

- Kalvi Tholaikkatchi will broadcast lessons for **Classes VI to X and the others for Classes for I to V**
- For Class XI and XII, the lessons will be uploaded on their laptop
- Video lessons will also be available on **YouTube and e-learning platforms**

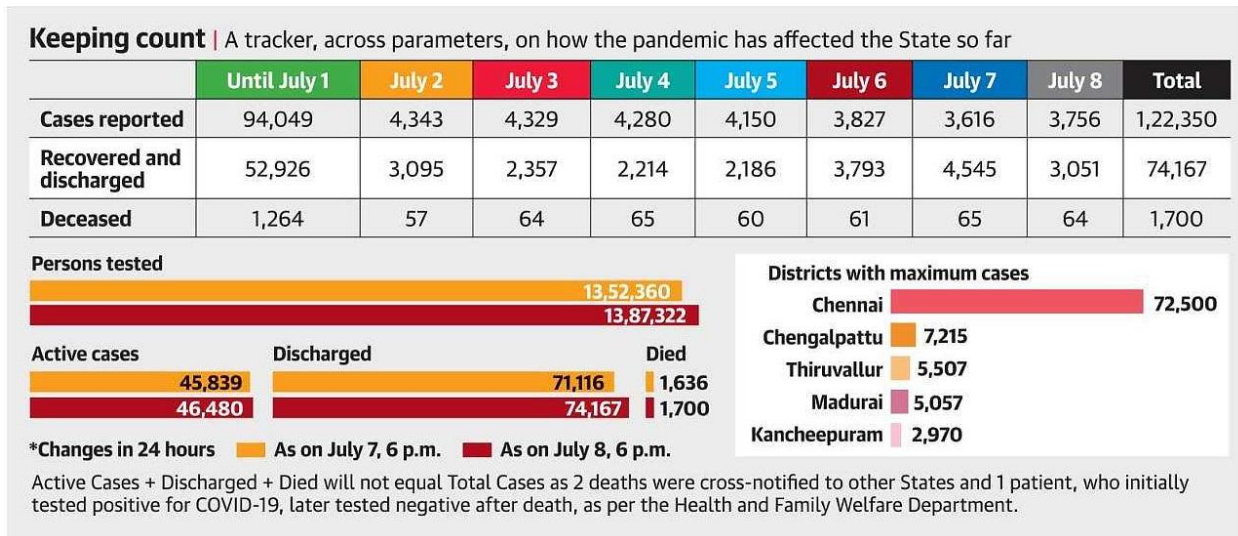
- Kalvi Tholaikkatchi, DD Podhigai, Polimer TV, Puthiya Thalamurai and Thanthi TV

- ✓ Five television channels, Kalvi Tholaikkatchi, DD Podhigai, Polimer TV, Puthiya Thalamurai and Thanthi TV will be used to broadcast the lessons for students from Classes I to XII.
- ✓ As per the plan, lessons for Classes VI to X will be broadcast from 8.30am to 5pm on Kalvi Tholaikkatchi.
- ✓ For Classes XI and XII, schools will make available the video lessons to students' laptops
- ✓ For Classes I to V, the lessons will be aired in both private channels and Kalvi Tholaikkatchi.
  - ✓ The duration of classes for primary students will be less compared to higher classes.
  - ✓ All lessons will be uploaded the same day on You-Tube and e-learning platforms.

- **On July 8, Tamil Nadu's Covid-19 tally - increased to 1,22,350, after reporting 3,756 fresh cases**

- ✓ The state toll rose to 1,700 with 64 new deaths being reported on the day
- ✓ On the positive side, 3,051 patients were discharged from hospitals.
  - ✓ With this, a total of 74,167 people have recovered, leaving the state with 46,480 active cases.
- ✓ For the fifth consecutive day, Chennai recorded fewer than 2,000 new infections.
  - ✓ The capital city reported a total of 1,261 cases on the day
- ✓ Also, cases continued to increase in neighbouring districts of Thiruvallur (300), Chengalpet (273) and Kancheepuram (133).
- ✓ Moreover, Chennai, Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur and Chengalpet districts contributed to 84% of Covid deaths in Tamil Nadu.
  - ✓ Of this, death rate of 2.01 at Thiruvallur is the highest recorded in state so far.

- ✓ On July 8, 36 of the total 64 deaths were recorded in these districts.



- ✓ On the day, Madurai became the third district in the state to cross the 5,000-mark in terms of the infection level, after testing 379 people 'positive'
  - ✓ Other districts like Vellore (160) Tuticorin (141), Villupuram (106) and Theni (75) continued to report more fresh cases.
  - ✓ A total of 35,979 samples were tested on the day, as against 36,938 samples tested a day earlier.
  - ✓ This took the total number of samples tested to 14,49,414.
  - ✓ Two more government labs (Government Hospital, Harur & Government Headquarters Hospital, Erode) have been newly approved for Covid-19 testing, taking the total number of approved labs in the state to 98.
  - ✓ In another announcement, the State government said that the final Plus Two exam, which some students were unable to take up on March 24 due to restrictions in place for the national lockdown, will be held again for the absentees on July 27.
- **Tamil Nadu - has conducted the highest 4 lakh tests in just 14 days, between June 19 and July 2**
- ✓ The state stands first in terms of the highest number of samples tested during the mentioned period.
  - ✓ Andhra Pradesh takes second spot testing more than 3 lakh samples, while Maharashtra and UP follows with 2.85 lakh and 2.5 lakh tests respectively during the same period.
  - ✓ The top ten states that have been testing the highest samples — more than a lakh every fortnight are — Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Maharashtra, UP, Delhi, Rajasthan, Assam, Karnataka, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, in that order.
  - ✓ In terms of increase in percentage level, Delhi stands at the top with a 199% increase in testing — from 79,600 tests conducted during June 5-18 to 2.38 lakh from June 19-July 2 period.

## 199% INCREASE IN DELHI TESTING

States	June 5-18	June 19- July 2	Increase
Delhi	79,609	2,38,154	199%
Tamil Nadu	2,39,770	4,07,712	70%
Andhra	1,88,833	3,02,707	60%
Karnataka	1,12,787	1,69,567	50%
Assam	1,13,561	1,70,069	50%
Maharashtra	1,95,635	2,85,699	46%
UP	1,70,563	2,49,079	46%

Note: These seven states have conducted highest number of Covid tests during the 14-day period (June 19-July 2) as compared to a month ago period (June 5-18).  
Data sourced from covid19india.org

- ✓ It is followed by Tamil Nadu, which has increased by 70%, Andhra 60%, Karnataka and Assam 50% each, and 46% each recorded in Maharashtra and UP.
  - ✓ The lowest percentage-wise increase in testing Covid samples have been recorded by Rajasthan and West Bengal at 7% each for tests conducted during the two fortnights
- ✓ In terms of the highest positivity rates or confirmed cases per 100 tests, Telangana has emerged as the top state with highest positivity rate of 25% in the last fortnight
  - ✓ Maharashtra with 22% and Delhi 16% are among other states that are highly affected.
  - ✓ Delhi during June 5-18 period had climbed to a positivity rate of 30%.
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana and West Bengal are the other states with high positivity rates.
- ✓ With more than 7.5 lakh confirmed cases, India is at No. 3 in the world, just behind US and Brazil, in total number of coronavirus cases
- **Tamil Nadu - has so far raised ₹30,500 crore in fiscal 2020-21 and has topped market borrowings among all the States.**
  - ✓ It is followed by Maharashtra with borrowings of ₹25,500 crore
  - ✓ Maharashtra accounted for 14%, followed by Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh at 17% each, according to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu accounted for 17% of the borrowings done through the issue of bonds, known as state development loans, as per the data.
  - ✓ On July 7, Tamil Nadu borrowed an amount of ₹2500 crore, rather than the ₹2,000 crore originally planned.
  - ✓ The State had planned to raise ₹2,000 crore through the issue of bonds of ₹1,000 each with tenures of 35 years and 3 years respectively.

- ✓ However, the State raised ₹1,250 crore at the interest rate of 6.63% for the 35-year bonds and ₹1,250 crore at the rate of 4.54% for the three-year bonds in the auction conducted by RBI on July 7.
- ✓ On June 23, the State raised ₹1,250 crore through the issue of 30-year bonds at 6.7%.
- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami recently said that with industries and businesses remaining shut, the State would sustain a shortfall in revenue of about ₹12,000-₹13,000 crore a month, as per the Finance Secretary's projections.

## STATE

- **On July 5, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath - has inaugurated a programme under which the State Government has set a target to plant more than 25 crore sapling across the state.**
  - ✓ The mega plantation program is named as 'Mission Vriksharopan-2020'.
  - ✓ To inaugurate the mission, the CM planted 3 saplings at the Kukrail Reserve Forest's Harishankari Vatika in Lucknow
  - ✓ He planted saplings of a Banyan tree, Ficus virens and Ficus religiosa.
  - ✓ Under the Programme, geo-tagging will be done, in plantation sites
  - ✓ Apart from environmental plants that reduce environmental pollution, saplings of medicinal, shady, fodder and fruit yielding plants have been distributed across the 75 districts of the state.
  - ✓ A total species of 201 varieties of saplings will be planted under the programme.
- **In order to attract tourists in the state, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board – has recently started a social media campaign named 'Intzaar Aap Ka' meaning 'Waiting for You'.**
  - ✓ The campaign will be conducted by focusing the important tourist destinations in the state through photographs and videos.
  - ✓ Madhya Pradesh was the winner of the Best Tourism State National Award for three consecutive years from 2015 to 2017

## NATIONAL

- **On July 8, the home ministry - set up an inter-ministerial committee to coordinate investigations against three trusts linked to the Gandhi family, namely, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust and Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.**
  - ✓ The investigations would focus on alleged violation of various provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), Income-Tax Act, Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA) and other regulations by the three trusts
  - ✓ The committee will be headed by a special director of the Enforcement Directorate.

- ✓ The composition of the committee and its terms of reference are not known yet
- ✓ Apart from ED, income-tax department or finance ministry and home ministry, which regulates FCRA-run organisations, are expected to be represented in the committee.

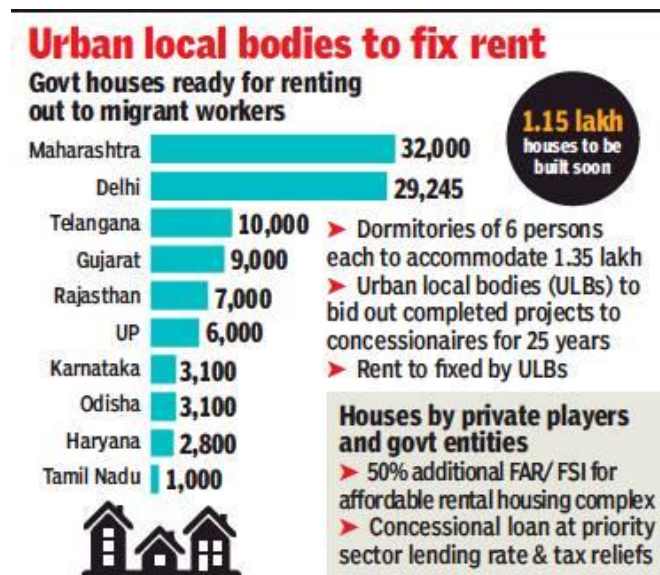
● **Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust (RGCT):** Congress president Sonia Gandhi is chairperson, and son Rahul is a board member. **In 2018-19, it had around ₹85 crore in foreign donations**

● **Rajiv Gandhi Foundation:** Sonia Gandhi is chairperson and board members include Dr. Manmohan Singh, P. Chidambaram, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Total foreign donations: **₹14 crore**

● **Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust:** It manages the museum set up in the former Prime Minister's memory. Not registered under FCRA, so not eligible to receive foreign donations

- ✓ Congress president Sonia Gandhi is chairperson of both Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) as well as Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust (RGCT).
  - ✓ Her son and former Congress president Rahul Gandhi is a trustee in both RGF and RGCT
  - ✓ Sonia's daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is a trustee on RGF board.
  - ✓ Sonia Gandhi is overseeing affairs of Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust as well.
  - ✓ Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is also on the RGF board of trustees.
- ✓ As per the MHA website, both the RGF and the RGCT are registered FCRA associations, a pre-requisite for NGOs and other associations to receive foreign donations.
- ✓ The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust is not a FCRA registered association.
- ✓ According to the latest annual returns filed by the RGF in December 2019, the NGO received 'zero' foreign donations in 2018-19 but the total foreign contribution in its account carried forward from previous years is ₹14,03,64,727.
- ✓ The annual returns filed by the RGCT show that it received ₹23,24,35,975 as foreign donations in 2018-19, and the total donations in its FCRA account stood at ₹85,13,65,166.
- ✓ The major chunk of the RGCT's foreign donation in 2018-19 — ₹23,06,03,400 — came from the U.S.-based Bill Melinda Gates Foundation.
- ✓ According to RGCT website, it is a "registered, not-for-profit organisation" and was established in 2002 to address the development needs of the underprivileged of the country, especially the rural poor.

- ✓ The move comes days after BJP president J P Nadda alleged that public donations made to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) were diverted to RGF during UPA tenure
- ✓ This is the second time that the contributions to RGCT have come under the net of probe agencies.
  - ✓ Earlier, RGCTs name had cropped up during an inquiry conducted by the home ministry into Islamic evangelist Zakir Naik's NGO, Islamic Research Foundation.
  - ✓ The probe discovered that Naik's IRF had donated ₹50 lakh to RGCT in 2011 by cheque.
  - ✓ However, RGCT returned the donation to IRF in July 2016 after Naik came under the investigation net for Islamic radicalisation.
- **On July 8, the Union Cabinet – approved an ambitious scheme for providing affordable rental housing to about 3 lakh urban migrants**
- ✓ At a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Cabinet approved the scheme, which will be a sub-scheme of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban
- ✓ The first phase of **Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (AHRCs) scheme** aims to provide rental houses and dormitories for migrant workers close to their workplace
- ✓ Under this phase, around 70,000 government-funded houses are ready to be rented out in Maharashtra, Delhi and Telangana
- ✓ The scheme will be implemented by the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry
- ✓ According to Information and broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar, 1.08 lakh completed houses across 107 cities and towns are lying unused and would be available in the first phase of the scheme
- ✓ Javadekar said urban local bodies (ULBs) will engage concessionaires for renting out, managing and maintaining these completed complexes for 25 years.





- ✓ The ULBs will decide the monthly rent to be charged from tenants.
  - ✓ The housing ministry will send a model document for bidding to states detailing how the rent would be decided by ULBs
  - ✓ According to the Minister, another 1.15 lakh houses with one-bedroom format will be ready soon
  - ✓ Further, there will also be dormitories to accommodate six persons in each room.
  - ✓ This component will help accommodate nearly 1.35 lakh people.
  - ✓ In total, the government is looking at accommodation of nearly 3.5 lakh persons, according to the Minister
  - ✓ **On July 8, the Union Cabinet also approved extension of Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) support for small businesses and workers earning up to ₹15,000 till August.**
  - ✓ The decision has been taken to facilitate a higher take-home salary for employees and help employers make the statutory contribution
  - ✓ Union minister Prakash Javadekar told that extension of the benefit will provide relief to nearly 3.7 lakh establishments and 72.2 lakh employees.
- **Tagore Top in Nainital, Uttarakhand - will host the second Visva Bharati university campus in India**
- ✓ The hill has been named after Rabindranath Tagore, where he composed parts of 'Gitanjali' a hundred years before.
  - ✓ The Union HRD Ministry has cleared the proposal for the university campus at the Tagore Top, as announced by Union HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'
  - ✓ Visva Bharati university was set up by Tagore at Shantiniketan in Bengal in 1921
  - ✓ It was established by the nobel-laureate to create an open, non-structured approach to education in order to reject colonial trappings in education.
  - ✓ Uttarakhand has just one central university, the HNB Garhwal University in Srinagar town in the Pauri Garhwal district.
  - ✓ The proposed Visva Bharati university will be the second university in the state
  - ✓ While Uttarakhand was ranked a mid-range 10th in the Niti Aayog's ranking of school education, its higher education sector does not have reputed institutions.
  - ✓ In the National Institutional Ranking Framework rankings released last month, only one institution from the state had made it to the top 100, IIT-Roorkee.
  - ✓ The site of the new central university, now known as Tagore Top, is on the Bhowali-Ramgarh road.
  - ✓ It was where Tagore had spent time with his daughter Renuka after she had been diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1903, after losing his wife, Mrinalini Devi, a year before that.
  - ✓ During this period, he wrote a series of poems, 'Shishu' (The Child), some verses of 'Gitanjali' and the second and third poems of 'Balaka' in this place.
  - ✓ Renuka died two years later, at 13, but Tagore came back to the Kumaun Hills three more times — to Ramgarh in 1914 and 1927, and to Almora in 1937.

- **On July 8, the University Grants Commission - issued the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for universities and higher education institutions for conducting final year examinations in view of the Covid-19 outbreak.**
  - ✓ According to the regulatory authority, measures like sanitisation of the entire examination floors have to be ensured and admit/identity cards should be treated as pass for movement.
  - ✓ Earlier, on July 6, the UGC had given time to universities to conduct the final year exams by September-end in offline (pen and paper), online or blended mode and as per the prescribed guidelines related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - ✓ The SOPs issued by UGC list out 31 measures to be taken during the examination process, starting from movement of students and staff to the “the end of the day” protocols.
  - ✓ It has asked universities to follow the guidelines issued by the central and respective state governments while giving them a free hand to frame “stricter provisions and guidelines”, if they find necessary.
  - ✓ As per the SOPs, after every session, the examination floors and candidates’ seating areas including desks and chairs, door handles, staircases, railings and wheelchairs should be disinfected.
  - ✓ Also fresh masks and gloves are to be used by exam functionaries after staff verification is done.
  - ✓ There is a separate set of protocols for staff-verification which includes a self-declaration about health status, wearing of masks and gloves at all times.
  - ✓ Any staff member failing to meet the self-declaration norms or thermal temperature check will be asked to leave the exam centre
  
- **On July 8, India - recorded its biggest single-day spike with 25,530 fresh Covid-19 cases, breaching the 25,000-mark for the first time, after hitting fifth record single-peak in the last seven days**
  - ✓ The cumulative toll raced past the 21,000-mark with the country recording more than 400 deaths for the sixth consecutive day on the day.
  - ✓ The surge in cases is attributed to increased testing, which stood at 1.8 lakh samples on July 5, 2.41 lakh on the next day and 2.62 lakh on July 7.
  - ✓ India’s cumulative casualties reached 21,122, after reporting 493 deaths on the day, the second highest peak in the last five days after the record 608 casualties on July 4
  - ✓ The country’s total caseload reached 768,322, just two days after crossing the seven lakh-mark, as per the reports collated from the State governments
  - ✓ A total of 475,849 people have been discharged so far, translating into a recovery rate of 62%
  - ✓ Maharashtra reported the maximum cases on the day with 6,603 patients, taking the state’s caseload to 223,724
  - ✓ With 198 fresh deaths, the toll reached 9,448.

- ✓ Delhi reported 2,033 fresh cases, taking the tally to 104,864, while with 48 deaths, the state's cumulative toll reached 3,213.
- ✓ Karnataka recorded its highest single day spike with 2,062 fresh cases, as did Gujarat (783 new cases), Bihar (749), Kerala (301) and Goa (136).
- **Operation Samudra Setu - has ended after successfully bringing back 3,992 individuals over a period of 55 days, as per the Indian Navy.**
  - ✓ It was launched by the Navy on May 5 as part of the efforts to repatriate Indian citizens stranded abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic,
  - ✓ Landing Platform Dock INS Jalashwa and Landing Ship Tanks INS Airavat, Shardul and Magar participated in this operation, which involved traversing more than 23,000 km by sea
  - ✓ The evacuated Indians disembarked at Kochi, Thoothukudi and Porbandhar.
  - ✓ The evacuation under Operation Samudra Setu began on 8th May with INS Jalashwa evacuating 698 Indian Citizens from the capital city of Maldives- Male
  - ✓ While on 25th June, INS Jalashwa made the last evacuation drive under the operation by bringing 687 Indian Citizens back to India from Iran's Bandar Abbas port
  - ✓ Operation Samudra Setu was undertaken utilising naval ships by following all the relevant Covid-19 related guidelines including social distancing norms, medical arrangements and carrying capacity.
  - ✓ Ships used for the operation were specially equipped with the sick bay or the clinic on board, which was provisioned with Covid-19 related equipment and facilities
  - ✓ The Navy has previously undertaken similar evacuation operations as part of Operation Sukoon in 2006 (Beirut) and Operation Rahat in 2015 (Yemen).
- **On July 4, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) - was signed virtually between the non-profit organization, UK India Business Council (UKIBC) and the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC).**
  - ✓ MIDC is the Maharashtra Government's premier agency for industrial infrastructure development in the state
  - ✓ The MoU will help in strengthening the collaboration of Maharashtra State Government with the businesses in the United Kingdom (UK)
  - ✓ Maharashtra was rated as a top destination for Improved Business Environment in its annual 'Doing Business in India' report by the UKIBC.
  - ✓ UKIBC is headquartered in London
    - ✓ It was established in 1993 to foster, promote and increase the business relations and the bilateral trade between India and UK
- **A Navratna Company of Government of India, NLC India Limited - has signed an agreement with a Maharatna Company- Coal India Limited to form**

**a Joint Venture Company (JVC) for developing Solar and Thermal power assets.**

- ✓ In the Joint Venture Company, both NLC and Coal India will have equal 50:50 equity.
- ✓ The proposed Joint venture company will develop Solar and Thermal power assets of 5000 megawatts (5 GW)
  - ✓ It will be set up under the Ministry of Coal.
- ✓ Annually, the total power requirement of Coal India Limited including its subsidiaries is around 4.5 billion Units
  - ✓ Citing this large power requirement, the Ministry of Coal has asked Coal India Limited to form a Net Zero Energy company - an entity that generates its own green power
  - ✓ In November 2019 it was reported that under the Net Zero Company, a 3000 MW of Solar Power generation for Coal India Limited will be set up
  - ✓ Further, for its subsidiaries, the setting up of an additional 2000 MW of Thermal Power generation was also planned.
- ✓ Coal India Limited, headquartered in Kolkata, was founded on 1st November 1975 and is the largest coal-producing country in the world
- ✓ Incorporated in the year 1956, Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited is headquartered in Tamil Nadu's Neyveli.
- **Mumbai based Quidich Innovation Labs Private Limited - has announced that it has successfully completed the first 'No-Permission No-Takeoff' (NPNT) compliant drone flight of India.**
- ✓ According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the first NPNT compliant drone flight of India was carried out in the green field near Karnataka's Tumkur.
- ✓ The 'A200 micro' drone used for the flight is manufactured by a Bengaluru-based company, Asteria Aerospace.
  - ✓ Back in October 2019, this A200 micro-drone was the first drone in India to be issued the Unique Identification Number (UIN) by the DGCA.
  - ✓ U0000001 is the UIN of the A200 micro drone that has completed the first NPNT compliant drone flight of India
  - ✓ The UIN- U0000001 A200 micro drone is owned by Quidich Innovation Labs Private Limited.
- ✓ For certified and compliant drone operations in India, the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation launched the Digital Sky Platform on 1st December 2018
  - ✓ Under the Digital Sky platform, regulations and policies for flying Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS- means drones) were announced
  - ✓ According to the regulations, Nano drones can fly in India without any registration in the Digital Sky Portal or UIN.
  - ✓ For Micro and above category drones, obtaining UIN was made compulsory for the operators and pilots of the drone

- ✓ The UIN can be obtained after proper registration of the drone (details of manufacturer and operator) from the Digital Sky web portal of the DGCA.
- **From 4th July 2020, All India Radio (AIR) FM news channel - will be broadcasting its first-ever news programme in Sanskrit language for 20 minutes duration**
- ✓ The news programme is named as 'Sanskrit Saptahiki' by the AIR.
- ✓ It will be broadcasted every Saturday, while the repeat broadcast will be available on Sundays.
- ✓ The news program will have the following seven components -
  - ✓ Sukti - This will be the opening segment, which will be in the form of a shloka or a quote from Sanskrit literature
  - ✓ Prasang – depicts a story from Indian epics, history or from the art and culture field of India
  - ✓ Saptahiki – includes the top news of the week
  - ✓ Sanskrit Darshan – provides news from the world of Sanskrit
  - ✓ Gyan Vigyan – portrays an interview with a prominent Sanskrit language literate
  - ✓ Ek Bharat- Shreshtha Bharat – deals with the Sanskrit to Hindi translation of five commonly used words
  - ✓ Anvikshiki - This will be the closing segment in which with focus on India's culture and tradition apart from major historical events of the week
- ✓ On 4th July 2020, DD News has completed the 5 years of the continuous broadcast of Sanskrit News Magazine 'Vaartavali'.
- ✓ The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi congratulated DD News for the completion of the successful 5 years
- **On July 5, Five Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) - were signed under the High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) programme in Afghanistan's capital city, Kabul**
- ✓ The 5 MoUs consisted of Tripartite Agreements that were signed between the Government of India, Afghanistan's Ministry of Economy and Afghanistan's Ministry of Education.
- ✓ The MoUs are signed as per the commitments of the Indian government in taking forward the bilateral relationship with Afghanistan.
- ✓ The 5 MoUs signed on 5th July 2020 is worth \$2.6 million.
- ✓ In the last 2 decades, development projects worth \$3 billion have been undertaken by India at Afghanistan.
- ✓ The HICDP programme was signed in the year 2005, under which the Indian government has committed to providing financial support to more than 550 HICDP across Afghanistan to the tune of \$200 million.
- ✓ To date, under the support of the programme, 587 HICDP have been completed across various provinces of Afghanistan.

- ✓ These funds will be used towards the development of educational infrastructure in 5 provinces of Afghanistan.
- ✓ The provinces are Kapisa, Farah, Nuristan, Parwan and Badakhshan.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **On July 6, the United States - formally notified the United Nations of its withdrawal from Geneva-based WHO, which will take effect on July 6, 2021.**
  - ✓ The United States government had earlier accused WHO of protecting China on the virus outbreak, which had originated in the Chinese city Wuhan in late 2019.
  - ✓ The U.S. is WHO's largest donor and provides it with more than \$450 million per year, but owes about \$200 million in current and past dues.
  - ✓ Over the current two years budget period- 15% of the WHO's total funding was made by the United States
  - ✓ China's contribution to the global health body is about one-tenth to that of the US
  - ✓ United States has been part of the World Health Organisation (WHO) constitution since June 21, 1948
  - ✓ Meanwhile, the US reported more than 60,000 Covid-19 cases on July 7, setting a fresh record for new cases in a single day as the total infections across the country crossed 3 million, according to the Johns Hopkins tally.
  - ✓ The US reported 60,021 new cases with Arizona, California, Florida and Texas accounting for nearly half of all new cases.
  - ✓ The US toll stands at 131,594.
- **On July 8, World Health Organisation – announced that Measles and rubella have been eradicated from Sri Lanka and the Maldives, after decades of immunisation programmes**
  - ✓ With this, Sri Lanka and the Maldives became the first two countries from the South East Asia Region of WHO to have successfully eliminated both the Viruses.
  - ✓ In 2017-18, Four countries, Bhutan, Timor-Leste, North Korea and the Maldives from the South-East Asia Region of the WHO have successfully eliminated Measles virus
  - ✓ In July 2019, Sri Lanka became the third nation from the South-East Asia Region of WHO to eliminate Measles
  - ✓ The target year set by the WHO for eliminating Measles and Rubella virus from the South-East Asia Region is 2023 (earlier was 2020, revised in September 2019 to 2023).
  - ✓ There are a total of 11 countries in the WHO's South-East Asia Region.
  - ✓ They are India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Maldives, Myanmar, North Korea, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and Nepal.
- **As per the 2020-21 World Bank's Country Classification based on Income level, Nepal's economy - has moved to a higher category to become a**

## **Lower-middle Income economy while Sri Lanka's economy has moved to a lower category to become a Lower-middle Income economy.**

- ✓ Every year, the World Bank classifies countries into four income groups- (i) Low (ii) Lower-Middle (iii) Upper-Middle (iv) High Income.
- ✓ This classification of the economies of countries across the world is updated on the 1st of July every year by the World Bank.
- ✓ The classification of a country is done by using the Atlas Method by the World Bank.
  - ✓ World Bank is using the Atlas Method to estimate the size of an economy since 1993.
  - ✓ Under the Atlas Method, Gross National Income (GNI) of a country is converted into the U.S. Dollars at the current prevailing rate.
- ✓ As per the 2020 Classification, India remains in the bracket of Lower-Middle Income country.
- ✓ For becoming a Lower Middle-Income country, the World Bank has set the GNI per capita amount to be from \$1036 to \$4045
- ✓ For becoming an Upper-Middle Income country, GNI per capita will have to be between \$4046 to \$12,535

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **On July 8, Telangana-based Laxai Life Sciences Private Limited, in association with the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) - sought regulatory approval to undertake a four-arm randomised controlled Phase III clinical trial for treatment of Covid-19 patients.**
  - ✓ The clinical trial was named 'MUCOVIN'
  - ✓ It will be carried out in partnership with Medanta Medicity in Delhi.
  - ✓ The trial will include a total of 300 patients in four groups of 75 patients each
  - ✓ It will be carried out for 17 to 21 days, including screening and treatment.
  - ✓ The design principle of the study is to combine and repurpose antivirals addressing the disease-spread and pathology simultaneously and to determine safety and efficacy of the three combination drugs like Favipiravir+Colchicine, Umifenovir+Colchicine and Nafamostat+5-aminolevulinic acid, and a control arm with the standard of care in Covid-19 patients.
  - ✓ The partner institutes in the trial are the CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad and CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu.

## **ECONOMY**

- **The government - has announced the suspension of the merger of the three public sector non-life insurers — Kolkata based National Insurance**

## **Company Ltd, New delhi based Oriental Insurance Company Ltd and Chennai based United India Insurance Company Ltd**

- ✓ Further, it has announced an additional capital infusion of ₹9,950 crore into these three non-life companies
- ✓ Of the ₹9,950-crore infusion, ₹3,475 crore will be released immediately, while the balance ₹6,475 crore will be released later in one or more tranches.
- ✓ On July 8, the Union Cabinet also approved a ₹12,450-crore equity infusion into these public sector non-life insurers, which includes the ₹2,500 crore invested in FY20.
- ✓ To enable the capital infusion, the Cabinet approved an increase in the authorized share capital of National Insurance to ₹7,500 crore and that of United India and OICL to ₹5,000 crore respectively to give effect to the capital infusion.
- ✓ The proposal for a merger of the three state-owned insurers was announced by former finance minister Arun Jaitley in his Budget speech in February 2018 and confirmed by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman as recently as July 2019.
- ✓ The Union Budget in 2019 also had provisions for the merger and, prior to that in January, the boards of the non-life companies had approved the merger proposal.
- ✓ The merger was dropped as it is expected to be very disruptive, given that each of the public sector insurers was on a different information technology platform.

## **SPORTS**

- **Thirteen-year-old M. Pranesh, who hails from the Sekkalai Kottai village of Sivaganga district - became the country's latest International Master (IM)**



- ✓ The IM title was conferred at the second council meet of FIDE on July 3.
- ✓ Pranesh got his third and final norm at the Aeroflot Open A in Moscow in March.
- ✓ He already has one GM-norm, which he attained in the Delhi Open in January this year.
- **The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) - has adopted a new branding and visual identity on 6th July 2020.**



- ✓ This marks the occasion of completion of 100 years of participation of Indian athletes at the Olympic Games
- ✓ The new branding and visual identity also include an institutional and commercial logo of the IOA, which has been approved by the International Olympic Committee
- ✓ The new logos will mark the contributions and passionate work of Indian in building a Team India under the Indian Olympic Association.
- ✓ In the 1920 Summer Olympics at Belgium's Antwerp, India sent its first Olympic team with 3 Athletes and 2 Wrestlers.
- ✓ India's Randhir Shindes came close to winning the first medal in the Olympic Games for the country as he lost the bronze medal match in Men's Freestyle Featherweight event
- ✓ The new logos were unveiled on 6th July 2020 but the Indian Olympic Association has planned to conduct a special event for the launch of the new logos on the Independence Day on 15th August 2020.

