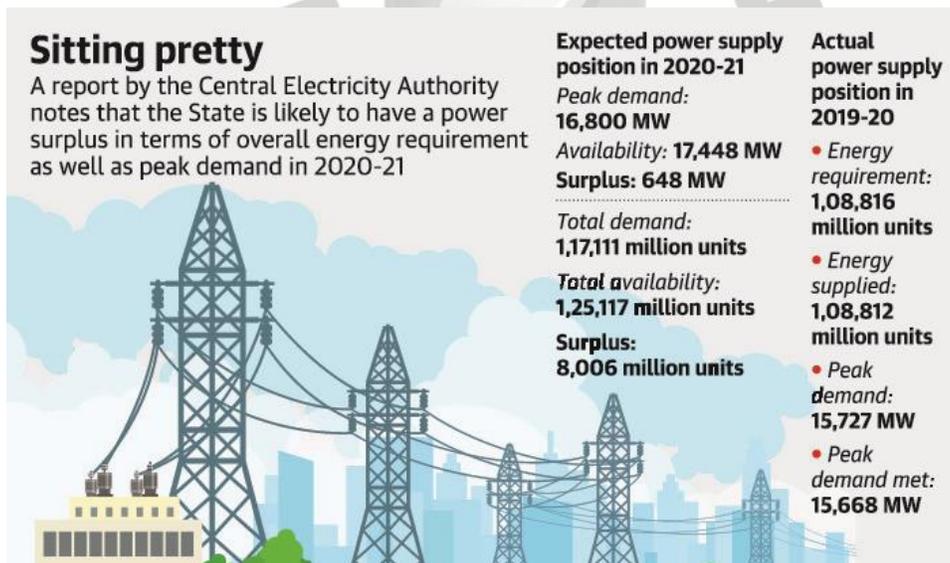


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 2, 2020

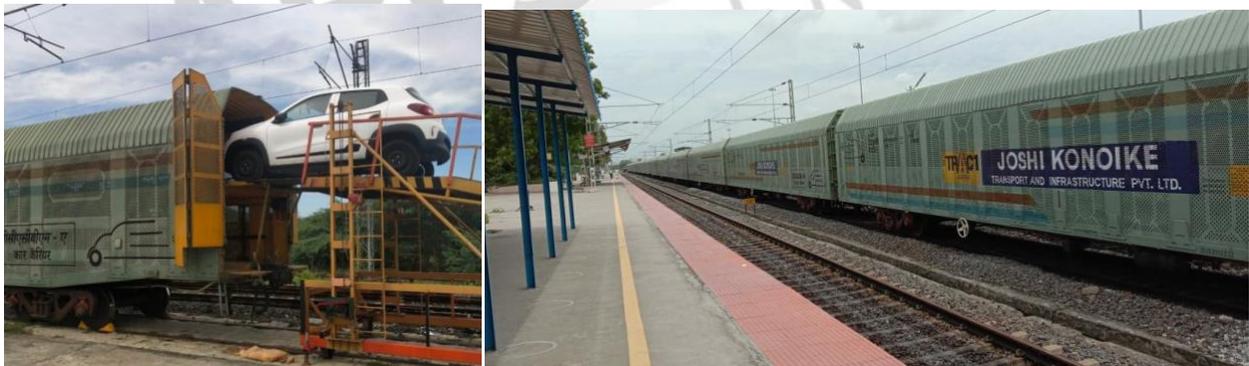
TAMIL NADU

- **Tamil Nadu - is likely to have a power surplus both in terms of overall energy requirement and peak demand for 2020-21**
- ✓ This was revealed by a load generation balance report released by the Central Electricity Authority, functioning under the Union Ministry of Power.



- ✓ According to the report, the State is expected to have an overall demand of 1,17,111 million units, while the availability will be 1,25,117 million units
 - ✓ This will result in a surplus of 8,006 million units of power in 2020-21.
- ✓ Further, the state is expected to see a peak demand of 16,800 MW for 2020-21, and the availability will be 17,448 MW, leading to a surplus of 648 MW
- ✓ Apart from Tamil Nadu, 15 other states are expected to see a power surplus, both in terms of peak and overall power situation
- ✓ This includes Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.

- ✓ During the months of April and May, the actual power demand in the state dropped sharply, compared to the forecast in the report
 - ✓ In April, an overall requirement of 10,600 million units was forecasted, but the actual requirement turned out to be 7,233 million units — nearly 32% below the forecast.
 - ✓ In the same month, the State saw a peak demand of 11,435 MW — again nearly 32% below the anticipated 16,800 MW.
 - ✓ For May, the State's actual power requirement was 2,188 million units, nearly 79% below the projected 10,650 million units.
 - ✓ Similarly, the actual peak demand was 3,821 MW, 77% below the forecast of 16,400 MW.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the report pointed out that Tamil Nadu was able to meet the energy requirement, with almost 'zero' difference in 2019-20.
 - ✓ The overall energy requirement in the State was 1,08,816 million units in 2019-20, while the energy available was 1,08,812 million units.
 - ✓ Further, in 2019-20, the peak demand was 15,727 MW and peak demand met was 15,668 MW.
- **The Chennai division of Southern Railway - has launched a new stream of traffic, BCACBM (bogie covered autorake double decker wagon)**
- ✓ The new system is expected to offer a dynamic logistic solution to the automobile industry.



- ✓ The first rake of BCACBM started from Walajabad to Farukh Nagar (Haryana).
 - ✓ It was also said to be the first rake of trac 1 logistics and flagged off on August 1 with 282 cars.
 - ✓ A wagon can carry 10-12 cars and 27 such wagons comprise one rake.
- **On August 1, Tamil Nadu's overall tally of Covid-19 cases - surpassed 2.5 lakh, after reporting 5,879 cases on the day.**
- ✓ With this, the state's cumulative tally has reached 2,51,738.
 - ✓ The state reported 99 deaths, taking the cumulative toll over the 4,000 mark to 4,034
 - ✓ The number of active cases remains at 56,738.

- ✓ The state has a recovery rate of 75.8%, fatality rate of 1.6% and a doubling time for deaths above 25 days, as against 14-16 days a month ago
- ✓ Hotspot Chennai's total tally crossed 1 lakh to reach 1,00,877 cases, after reporting 1,074 fresh cases.
 - ✓ Its three neighbours, Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu and Tiruvallur reported 368, 314 and 305 cases respectively
 - ✓ Other districts with more than 200 cases includes Theni (327), Virudhunagar (286), Thoothukudi (242), Tiruvannamalai (240) and Coimbatore (238)
- ✓ At the end of the day 7,010 were discharged, taking the total number of people recovered to 1,90,966.
- ✓ A total of 60,580 samples were tested in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of samples tested to 27,18,718
- ✓ Another private laboratory — Dharan Clinical Lab Services, Salem — was recently approved for testing.
 - ✓ With this, there are 59 testing facilities in the government sector and 62 in the private sector.
- ✓ In another release of health ministry, Tamil Nadu is ranked among the lowest places in terms of tests conducted per positive case.

IN NUMBERS

State	Tests/million	Cases/million	Tests per positive case
TN	33,377	3,080	10.8
AP	34,667	2,293	15.11
Karnataka	19,242	1,697	11.33
Kerala	20,718	616	33.63
Rajasthan	18,838	509	37
Goa	83,305	3,564	23.37
Tripura	38,805	1,117	34.74
Telangana	10,612	1,571	6.75

- ✓ As of July 29, the state had conducted 33,377 tests and had 3,080 positive cases per million population
 - ✓ This translates to a mere 10.8 tests for every positive case in the state, which was one of the lowest among southern states
 - ✓ Kerala tops with a maximum of 33.63 tests per positive case.
 - ✓ According to experts, 50 is the ideal number of tests per positive case
- ✓ With lockdown norms relaxed at the national level, Chennai airport will see resumption of direct flights to Mumbai from August 3.

STATES

- **For the first time since Independence, the Assam government – has proposed the setting up of high schools in tea gardens of the state.**
- ✓ At present, tea garden areas have only Lower Primary (LP) schools and a few Middle English (ME) schools
- ✓ However, no high schools were set up in the tea gardens till now.
- ✓ The government has proposed to set up 119 high schools in tea gardens and the foundation for all the schools will be laid on October 2
- ✓ A budget of ₹1.19 crore has been allocated for setting up each high school, which will cater to a cluster of five to six tea gardens
- ✓ The construction of the schools is expected to be completed in six to seven months
 - ✓ They will be made operational from the start of the next academic session in 2021.
- ✓ The LP schools in tea gardens are being primarily managed by the respective garden managements in almost all tea-producing districts.

NATIONAL

- **The Union Minister of Consumer Affairs Ram Vilas Paswan – announced the extension of the ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ scheme to four more states and UT’s - Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Nagaland and Uttarakhand.**
- ✓ With this, the scheme has now been extended to 24 states and UT’s across the country to benefit around 80% beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act (NFSA)
- ✓ By March 2021, all states shall be covered under ONORC scheme so that 81 crore NFSA beneficiaries can avail the benefit under this scheme
- ✓ **An online platform of “Integrated Management of Public Distribution System” has been created for nationwide portability of ration cards under NFSA.**
- ✓ The scheme is expected to be of huge help to poor migrant workers as it will ensure their access to subsidised food grain in their residing locality.
- ✓ Under the “One Nation One Ration Card” scheme, a beneficiary of a ration card can avail ration under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) through one of their ration cards, regardless of their location in the country.
- ✓ Apart from the above mentioned four states, 20 states have already joined the scheme.
 - ✓ The other states already integrated into the scheme are - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh.

- ✓ The government has also made provision to ensure that the beneficiary family can lift the quota of foodgrains from two different 'fair' price shops in two installments
- ✓ The National Food Security Act 2013 was made into law on 12th September 2013
 - ✓ It aims to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two-thirds of the population's of the country which is nearly 1.2 billion people
- **The group of ministers (GOM) on Covid-19 - has agreed to allow the export of made-in-India ventilators.**
 - ✓ The proposal in this regard was made by the ministry of health and family welfare
 - ✓ The reason behind the move is the progressively declining low rate of case fatality of Covid-19 patients, which currently stands at 2.15%, which means that fewer numbers of active cases are on ventilators.
 - ✓ As on July 31, only 0.22% of the active cases were on ventilators across the country.
 - ✓ The decision on export of made-in-India ventilators has been communicated to the Director General of foreign trade (DGFT) for further action to facilitate the export of indigenously manufactured ventilators.
 - ✓ There has been substantial growth in the domestic manufacturing capacity of ventilators
 - ✓ At present, there are presently more than 20 domestic manufacturers for ventilators when compared with the scenario in January 2020.
 - ✓ The export prohibition/restriction on ventilators was imposed in March 2020 to ensure domestic availability to effectively fight the pandemic.
 - ✓ All types of ventilators were prohibited for export from March 24
- **India - has created an air bubble with the United Kingdom for travel between both the countries**
 - ✓ This is similar to the already-established travel corridors with the US, Germany and France.
 - ✓ This was announced by the Union aviation minister H S Puri on August 1
 - ✓ Further, Switzerland and some central Asian countries have expressed a desire to have this travel bubble with India and others like Japan are also "willing" to establish the same.
- **Ninety-five cities and municipal corporations - have expressed interest to take up public cycling projects under Centre's Cycles4Change Challenge, which starts from this year.**
 - ✓ This includes almost all capital cities, barring Lucknow
 - ✓ The initiative was launched by the Union housing and urban affairs ministry on July 10
 - ✓ Besides state capitals, the cities and municipal bodies that have registered for this challenge include Agra, Gurugram, Faridabad, Ahmedabad, Ajmer, Tirupati, Tirupur, Udaipur, Kakinada, Varanasi and Muzaffarpur.

- ✓ The Centre's initiative to promote cycling comes at a time when more people opt for private modes of transport during the post-Covid period.



- ✓ The government has focused on decarbonising modes of transport to reduce the extent of air pollution.
- ✓ As per a recent survey by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, cycling would increase by 50-65% as cities come out of lockdown.
- ✓ The challenge aims to inspire cities to implement quick cycling-friendly systems following the outbreak of Covid-19, with the support of their citizens and assistance from experts
- ✓ The challenge is open for all cities with more than five lakh population.
- ✓ As per the schedule of the challenge, the registered applicants will focus on implementing quick systems to promote cycling and developing a scale-up strategy till October 2020.
- **On August 1, India – reported a record 848 deaths and nearly 56,000 fresh cases, the second-highest single-day count so far.**
 - ✓ This is the first time the country has crossed 800 deaths on a single day
 - ✓ Out of the reported deaths, 322 were accounted by Maharashtra alone
 - ✓ However, on a happier note, recoveries rose to a single-day high with 51,740 people being declared cured of the infection, with 12,750 of them in Andhra Pradesh and more than 10,000 in Maharashtra.
 - ✓ India's Covid-19 caseload crossed 17 lakh, with 55,919 fresh cases taking the total to 17,50,901, as per data collated from state governments.
 - ✓ In July, four states recorded more than 1lakh cases, led by Maharashtra, where 2,47,357 cases were reported during the month.

- ✓ Tamil Nadu had the next highest caseload in July at 1,55,692, followed by Andhra Pradesh (1,26,338), Karnataka (1,08,873) and Uttar Pradesh (62,953).
- ✓ However, Andhra Pradesh had by far the biggest growth rate of cases in July at 866%, which means infections grew nearly 10-fold.
- ✓ Karnataka's growth rate was 714%, Kerala's 431%, Bihar's 410% and Assam's 390%.

JULY: WORST STATES

Cases During Month (Growth %)	
Maharashtra	2,47,357 (142)
Tamil Nadu	1,55,692 (172)
Andhra Pradesh	1,26,338 (866)

ON SATURDAY

- Chennai becomes 3rd city after Mumbai and Delhi to record over 1 lakh cases
- India new cases | 55,919
- Deaths | 848
- Total cases | 17,50,901
- Deaths | 37,362

- ✓ Five states reported more than 1,000 Covid-19-related deaths in July.
- ✓ Maharashtra had by far the highest count of 7,139, followed by Tamil Nadu (2,734), Karnataka (2,068), Delhi (1,221) and Andhra Pradesh (1,173).
- ✓ The growth rate of fatalities during the month was the highest in Karnataka at 840%, followed by Andhra Pradesh (666%).
- ✓ On August 1, Maharashtra topped the list of new cases with 9,601, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 9,276 cases.
- **The government – has fast-tracked all procedures to help Israel conduct COVID-19 research on patients admitted to four Delhi hospitals, including transfer of saliva samples and patients' data to Israel**
- ✓ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is collaborating with Israel's Directorate of Defense Research and Development (DRDD) to conduct trials on Indian patients
 - ✓ The tests conducted include an audio test, a breath test, thermal testing and a polyamino test to isolate proteins related to COVID-19.
 - ✓ These technologies have the potential to detect coronavirus in as less as 30 seconds
- ✓ The Delhi government has also waived the mandatory seven-day quarantine for the 35-member Israeli team.

- ✓ Though the ICMR is the apex body for biomedical research and foreign-aided research in the country, the current trials will be controlled by the DRDO.
 - ✓ The DRDO proposes to transfer 5,000 saliva samples to the Israeli defence team, as part of the joint exercise.
 - ✓ The four hospitals where the trials are conducted include Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Sir Gangaram Hospital and Lok Nayak Jaiprakash Hospital (LNJP).
 - ✓ The trials are being conducted on a large sample of patients in India
 - ✓ In case the tests indicate effective response, the testing equipment would be mass manufactured in India and marketed to the world by Israel and India jointly.
 - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu have held three telephonic conversations since the outbreak of the pandemic to discuss mutual assistance in dealing with the virus.
- **The National Education Policy (NEP) - has dropped Mandarin (Chinese) from its list of foreign languages that can be taught in schools.**
- ✓ The language was included in the draft policy released in May 2019, but is missing from the final document approved by the Union Cabinet this week.
 - ✓ Mandarin is the language most commonly spoken in China.
 - ✓ Mandarin is not on the list of foreign languages offered at the Class X or Class XII level by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
 - ✓ The languages included in the list are Tibetan, Thai, and Japanese, along with European languages such as Russian, Spanish, French, Portuguese and German.
 - ✓ Other languages may be offered by schools as a third language option in Classes VI to VIII.
 - ✓ The plan for teaching Mandarin in Indian schools and Hindi language instruction in Chinese schools was part of an Education Exchange Programme signed by both countries in 2006, which was renewed by Prime Minister Modi during his visit to China in 2015.
 - ✓ The plan included a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012 by the then Indian Ambassador to Beijing (current External Affairs Minister) S. Jaishankar with Hanban, the official Chinese organisation that oversees Mandarin studies abroad.
 - ✓ In 2014, the CBSE then introduced Mandarin in some schools, but the plan didn't take off due to unavailability of Chinese language teachers.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Oil-rich Gulf state UAE - finally starts its first-ever nuclear reactor “Barakah” at Abu Dhabi on the Gulf coast.**
- ✓ It's the first nuclear power plant on the Arabian Peninsula.
 - ✓ The \$20 billion Barakah (meaning 'blessing') nuclear power plant is located in the Emirates' far western desert near the border with Saudi Arabia

- ✓ It was developed in a joint venture with the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) and Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO)
- ✓ The plant was expected to start its operation as early as in 2017.
- ✓ However, due to various safety issues, it kept on getting delayed.



- ✓ The nuclear reactor ultimately will generate electricity and be connected to the power grid.
- ✓ In association with KEPCO, the nuclear reactor power plant has started the process of nuclear fission in one of its four reactors
 - ✓ The energy in the reactor plant will be generated by 1,400-megawatt pressurised water reactors, designed in South Korea, called APR-1400
 - ✓ For now, only one of four reactors is working, however, the aim of the country is to have its all four reactors set to the operational mode by 2023
 - ✓ This will produce around 5.6 gigawatts of the energy which will serve 25% of the total electricity requirement of the country in a safe, reliable and emission-free way
- ✓ In mid-July, UAE has sent a Mars mission probe 'Hope', which is also one of its first kind in the Gulf region
- **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – has recently published the first-of-its-kind report regarding the impact of lead on children's health across the world**
 - ✓ As per the report, one in every three children is being poisoned by lead.
 - ✓ It means, one-third child population in the world, which is nearly around 800 million, are affected by lead poisoning
 - ✓ Among the total affected nearly half of them are from South Asia.
 - ✓ India accounts for nearly 27,55,61,163 of these cases.
 - ✓ Children, when exposed to lead, gets highly affected with severe problems like mental health and behavioural problems
 - ✓ Lead is a potent neurotoxin which harms the brains of small children irreparably even before they develop
 - ✓ This severe harm can lead to lifelong cognitive, neurological and physical impairment.

- ✓ When compared to other normal children, the affected children with blood levels of five µg/ dL, were found to score three to five points lower IQ points.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Satyendra Nath Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS), Kolkata -developed a device named “AJO-Neo” for “No-touch” and “Painless” non-invasive bilirubin level screening in new-borns.**
 - ✓ The institute is coming under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India
 - ✓ As per the study, the device is capable of measuring bilirubin levels in premature as well as natural birth babies.
 - ✓ It can deliver reports within 10 seconds to the doctor remotely.
 - ✓ The detection of neonatal blood bilirubin (Hyperbilirubinemia) is extremely important to avoid neuro-psychiatric problems in newborn babies
 - ✓ The method is faster compared to the time consuming conventional blood test methods
 - ✓ SNBNCBS institute had a scientific collaboration with Nil-Ratan Sircar (NRS) Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata.
 - ✓ The technology has been transferred to Zyna Medtech Private Limited (Vijayawada based company).
- **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in collaboration with AIIMS - is creating a new rigorous database of COVID-19 patients admitted across the country with the aim of improving treatment in hospitals**
 - ✓ The database is titled as ‘National clinical registry’ for COVID-19 patients
 - ✓ It will also act as a platform to conduct clinical trials and study its response against the novel coronavirus.
 - ✓ At present, a total of 15 institutions will create a network to implement the project.
 - ✓ In the next stage, other medical colleges or hospitals that are yet to receive clearance from ICMR will be included as part of the project.
 - ✓ The government is focusing on the collection of data in a more systematic, structured, and a scientific way which could later be used as a repository.
 - ✓ A team of health experts such as clinicians, scientists, analysts, and biostatistics will be in charge of the registry.
 - ✓ The main purpose of creating the registry is to understand the nature of the disease and to study how it is affecting different people in different conditions
 - ✓ It will also enable health officials to understand why therapies are not working with the same curability for all the infected persons.
- **The Haryana government – has started ‘aerial seeding’ technique to improve green cover in the Aravalli areas**
 - ✓ The technique was designed by an IIT-Kanpur backed startup

- ✓ The project is being carried on a pilot basis to rejuvenate the low vegetation density of Aravalli and Shivalik hills.

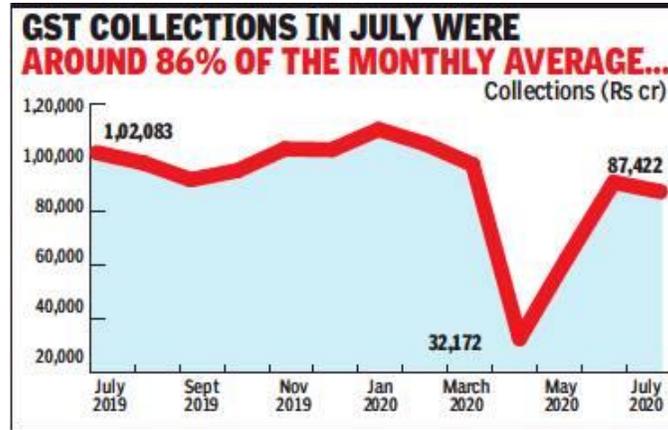


- ✓ Using this method, plantation on 100 acres is being planned as a pilot project.
- ✓ It is an innovative technique of plantation wherein seeds covered with a mixture of clay, compost, charcoal and other components in a definite ratio are sprayed on the ground using aerial devices, like planes, helicopters or drones
- ✓ The coating of various components over the seed is done to drop the seed on a 'selected' location rather than getting scattered in the air.
- ✓ These seed pellets will then germinate during the monsoon.
- ✓ The various nutrients present within the seed coating will help the seeds in the initial phase of its growth
- ✓ This technology is ideally suitable for areas which are inaccessible or disconnected with the rest of the civilization
- ✓ Moreover, this method of seed germination does not need any special attention after it is dispersed in the soil
 - ✓ Hence, this system of dropping the seed pellets is known as “Fire and Forget” way of the plantation.
- ✓ The method avoids the necessity of ploughing and digging holes in the soil which is a very labour-intensive job
- ✓ As the seeds are already surrounded by soil, minerals, nutrients and micro-organisms therefore, they do not need to be planted.

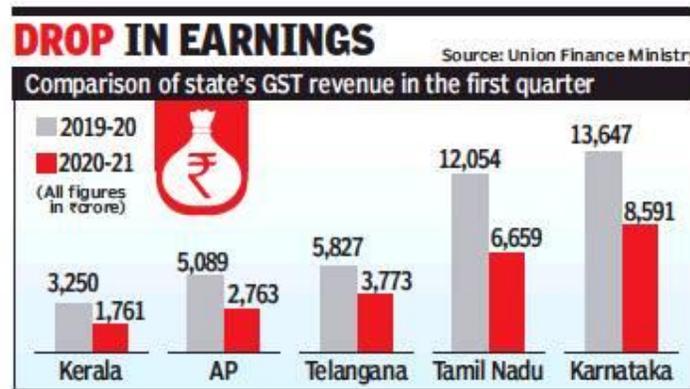
ECONOMY

- **The Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections for the month of July 2020 - were estimated at ₹87,422 crore, around 95% of the pre-Covid monthly average, indicating the resumption of economic activity in the country**
- ✓ At least three states – Rajasthan, Nagaland and Madhya Pradesh – reported higher collections in July (based on June sales) than a year ago, while Andhra Pradesh and Lakshadweep managed to achieve last year’s level.
- ✓ The average monthly collection between July 2017, when GST kicked in, and March 2020 works out to ₹92,199 crore.

- ✓ In July 2020, the overall collection declined 14.4% compared to last year.



- ✓ Collections during April-July added up to ₹2.7 lakh crore – 34.5% lower than the first four months of 2019-20, due to the Covid-19 induced lockdown in April and May.
- ✓ Among the southern states, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu faced maximum decline in GST revenue in the first quarter of the current financial year, compared to the same period last year.



- ✓ While Andhra Pradesh and Kerala faced 46% decline, Tamil Nadu's fall was 45%, Karnataka's drop was 37%, as per the data released by the Union finance ministry.
 - ✓ Telangana (35%) reported the least fall among southern states.
 - ✓ Gujarat, however, suffered the maximum, 48%, among the industrialised states.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu's Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections declined 24% to ₹4,635 crore in July this year, compared to ₹6,084 crore in July 2019
 - ✓ In June this year, the collections declined 15% to ₹4,976 crore from ₹5,881 crore in June last year.
- ✓ Like the first quarter last year, Karnataka clocked maximum GST revenue among southern states this year too, thanks to its IT infrastructure
- ✓ As against Tamil Nadu's GST revenue of ₹6,659 crore, Karnataka collected ₹8,591 crore from April to June this year.

- **On August 1, the Centre - has expanded its credit guarantee scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to cover loans given to larger firms, as well as to self-employed people and professionals who have taken loans for business purposes**
 - ✓ The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme was rolled out in late May as part of the Centre's Atmanirbhar package in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - ✓ It has a corpus of ₹41,600 crore and provides additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore based on 100% guarantee for small businesses.
 - ✓ Eligible MSMEs had to have an annual turnover up to ₹100 crore, with outstanding loans of up to ₹25 crore as on February 29, 2020.
 - ✓ The scheme has been expanded further to provide 20% additional loan to enterprises with a turnover up to ₹250 crore, with outstanding loans up to ₹50 crore.
 - ✓ Individual beneficiaries include both professionals such as doctors, lawyers and chartered accountants, as well as self-employed people such as truck and cab owners, vendors or taxi drivers, who had availed of loans from banks
 - ✓ So far, sanctions are approved for ₹1.36 lakh crore to 40 lakh MSMEs, out of which over ₹87,000 crore disbursed already
 - ✓ With the expanded coverage, the overall loan flow could reach around ₹2.6 lakh crore

- **The central government – has announced a 'mandatory' centralized e-invoicing scheme for business having turnover more than 500 crores.**
 - ✓ As per the new scheme, these taxpayers have to generate all their B2B invoices on a centralized government portal which will go live from 1st October.
 - ✓ Till now, all the companies, like small-cap, mid-cap or large-cap, use their own mechanism for generating invoices.
 - ✓ These invoices vary company to company and can be forged easily to manipulate the buyer or for doing any other forgery.
 - ✓ To curb this, the government in association with the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has come up with the new initiative
 - ✓ The plans for the portal-based e-invoicing scheme were first initiated in November last year
 - ✓ Then a proposal was made to make this system mandatory for businesses with a turnover of over 100 crore
 - ✓ The new initiative was set to be implemented by 1st April itself.
 - ✓ However, due to some technical fault, the system couldn't take off.
 - ✓ The single centralized e-invoicing system provides various advantages to the companies and the government.
 - ✓ The return filing process will become much easier for the businesses as the invoice data would be captured easily without any delay
 - ✓ The fake invoice generation for forgery will reduce and eventually be removed.

- ✓ GST department will have access to real-time data as the business transactions move through the real world.

➤ **On July 31, Walmart-owned Flipkart - announced that 6 lakh artisans across the country will be joining their Samarth programme this year**



- ✓ Samarth is an initiative started by Flipkart in 2019
 - ✓ As per the initiative, the e-commerce company had collaborated with five non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help local artisans use the online e-commerce platform to sell their products.
 - ✓ The programme helps around six lakh artisans (weavers, craftsmen etc) earn their livelihood by selling their handmade art & craftwork across the country to a customer base of nearly 200 million
 - ✓ After the partnership with NGO's and Government, Flipkart has brought on-board the artisans from the various remotest parts of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Punjab and Karnataka
 - ✓ Further, it had collaborated with a lot of NGOs and governmental entities which includes, Gujarat State Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) and UP Khadi and Village Industries Board
 - ✓ In the last year, Flipkart has also supported MSME's through another special initiative called 'Walmart Vriddhi'
 - ✓ It is a Make-in-India Initiative which empowers nearly 50,000 MSMEs to manufacture indigenous products for local and global markets
- **A joint venture between Reliance Bangladesh LNG and Power and Japan's JERA - will develop a new gas-fired power generation project in Bangladesh through their project company**
- ✓ For implementing the project, a loan amount of \$642 million with a group of banks including the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) has been signed.
 - ✓ In this joint venture, the project company will be building and operating a 745 MW natural gas combined-cycle power project



INK LOAN AGREEMENT WITH BANKS FOR NEW POWER PLANT IN BANGLADESH

- ✓ The proposed power plant will be located in Meghnaghat, Naranganj, which is located approximately 40 km southeast of Dhaka the capital city of Bangladesh.
- ✓ After its construction, the electricity generated will be sold under a long-term power purchase agreement between the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and the project company
- ✓ The agreement has been made for a period of 22 years from the start of commercial operation.
- ✓ The proposed plant will be powered by two GE 9F gas turbines, one GE D11 steam turbine and three H53 generators
 - ✓ GE (General Electric), an American multinational conglomerate and a leading player in natural gas power technology, will be providing the advanced gas turbine technology to the plant.
 - ✓ Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) group Samsung C&T will build the power plant.
- ✓ The power plant will supply electricity to more than 8,50,000 homes in Bangladesh by utilising re-gasified liquified natural gas (LNG).

OBITUARY

- **Amar Singh (64 years) - Rajya Sabha MP and former Samajwadi party leader**



- ✓ Amar Singh, former Samajwadi Party leader and once a trusted confidante of Mulayam Singh Yadav, died in Singapore on August 1
- ✓ He had undergone kidney transplant in 2011 and was not keeping well for a long time.

- ✓ The Rajya Sabha MP had gone to a hospital in Singapore in March for surgery in a kidney-related illness.
- ✓ Amar Singh was born in Aligarh and educated in Kolkata, with an early political career in the West Bengal Youth Congress.
- ✓ He was a key leader in the Samajwadi Party at a time when the party moved to support the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in 2008, after the Communist Party of India withdrew from the government over a nuclear deal with the US.
- ✓ It was he who brought actor Jaya Prada, who was once a Telugu Desam Party MP, into the Samajwadi Party, and she was elected to Lok Sabha from Uttar Pradesh's Rampur twice.
 - ✓ Amar Singh and Jaya Prada, were expelled from the Samajwadi Party in February 2010 for "anti-party activities".
 - ✓ He later formed his own party with Jaya Prada, and then joined the Rashtriya Lok Dal and lost in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.
- ✓ Amar Singh was first elected to Rajya Sabha in 1996 and later in 2016 as an independent member, with the support of Samajwadi party after his reconciliation.

SPORTS

- **On July 31, the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports - announced a selection committee for selecting awardees for various sports awards for the year 2020**
- ✓ The winners will be selected for awards including Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, Dronacharya Awards, Arjuna Awards, Dhyan Chand Awards, Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar Award and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy
- ✓ Retired Justice of Supreme Court Justice, Mukundakam Sharma has been chosen as the Chairperson of the Committee



- ✓ The committee includes various others eminent personality from sports including Virendra Sehwag (Cricket), Sardar Singh (Hockey), Monalisa Baruah Mehta (Table Tennis), Deepa Malik (Para-athletics), Venkatesan Devarajan (Boxing) as well as well-known media persons including Sports Commentator Manish Batavia and Sports Journalists Alok Sinha and Neeru Bhatia

- ✓ The selection committee will also have representation from the Sports Ministry, including Sports Authority of India Director General Sandip Pradhan, Joint Secretary (Sports Development) L S Singh and Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) CEO Rajesh Rajagopalan.
- ✓ Further, two additional members who have been Dronacharya Awardees may be invited by the Chairperson while considering the nomination for Dronacharya Award

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ **International Friendship Day – August 2**

- ✓ In India, the day is celebrated on the first Sunday of August every year which is going to be 2nd August this year.
- ✓ However, the day is observed on 30th July every year in many parts of the world



- ✓ The concept of the celebration of friendship day was proposed in the year 1958 in Paraguay by the World Friendship Crusade.
- ✓ Finally, on 27th April 2011, the UN General Assembly declared 30th July as the International Friendship Day
- ✓ The day is celebrated every year to cherish friendship and value the people in our lives
- ✓ The name of the day was first coined by Joyce Hall, founder of Hallmark Greetings Cards in the year 1930.

➤ **Muslim Women's Rights Day – August 1**

- ✓ The day marks the first anniversary of the passage of 'Triple Talaq' law after getting the Presidential nod
- ✓ The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019 has criminalised triple talaq, providing for a jail term for Muslim men who practise triple talaq



- ✓ The bill was first passed in the Lok Sabha on 25 July 2019, with 303 MPs voting in its favour and 82 against it.
- ✓ It was later passed by the Rajya Sabha on 30 July, with 99 MPs voting in its favour and 84 opposing it.
- ✓ As per the numbers collated by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, there has been an 82% decline in instances of triple talaq after the passing of Act.
- ✓ Triple Talaq also known as “talaq-e-biddat” was a special provision bestowed upon Muslim man by the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937
 - ✓ This law allows a husband to cancel all marital relationships with his wife by simply uttering “talaq” word three times.
 - ✓ The Act makes any such forms of divorce a legal offence and makes it void and illegal.
 - ✓ It further states that any man whosoever practices the act of Triple Talaq shall be punished with an imprisonment of three years or fine or both.
 - ✓ The offence is non-bailable and also entitles the married woman to take custody of her minor children
- ✓ The country has seen a decline of 82% in the triple talaq case since the implementation of the act
- ✓ According to the government, at least 383,000 instances of triple talaq were reported in the country until the formation of Act
- ✓ However, only 1,039 cases of triple talaq were recorded after the passage of Act.
- ✓ Before August 2019, the states reporting maximum number of triple talaqs included Uttar Pradesh (63,400), West Bengal (51,800), undivided Andhra Pradesh (41,382), Maharashtra (39,200) and Bihar (38,617).

25 YEARS OF MOBILE PHONES – A REPORT

- **India - celebrated 25 years of mobility on July 31, 2020**
- ✓ July 31 marks the day the first mobile call was made in India.
- ✓ As on date, India is also the second largest country for mobile users after China
- ✓ Further, India is now the highest data-consuming country in the world

FROM LUXURY TO ESSENTIAL

THE 25-YEAR JOURNEY OF MOBILE PHONES



From ₹24 for a call to the lowest rates in the world

At one time, users had to pay for incoming calls on their cellphones. But price wars have meant among the cheapest calls and data globally

1994 Private sector allowed in cellular and radio paging services. Spectrum auctioned in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai



1995 Modi Telstra sets up first mobile network in Kolkata. West Bengal CM Jyoti Basu makes first call to Union telecom minister Sukh Ram on July 31

1997 Trai set up as independent regulator

1999 Operators allowed to share revenue with government, instead of paying licence fee. This helps lower call rates

2001 Fixed line service providers allowed to start limited mobile networks

2002 Reliance Infocomm starts CDMA mobile service, offers phone for ₹500. Internet telephony allowed. National roaming rates regulated

2003 Incoming calls on cellphones made free. Companies allowed to offer cellular and landline services on same licence

2004 More mobile phones than landlines

2005 FDI limit in telecom raised from 49% to 74%

2006 Number portability proposed

2008 MTNL brings 3G to Delhi, Mumbai. CDMA players allowed to start GSM service

2009 2G spectrum scam alleged. First Android phone launched in India for around ₹30,000



2010 3G and Broadband Wireless Access (BWA) spectrum auctions end

2011 Mobile number portability goes national

2012 2G scam fallout – SC cancels all 122 spectrum licences issued from 2007 to 2009

● Kolkata first Indian city to get 4G

2013 100% FDI allowed in telecom. Operators allowed to provide all telecom services under one licence

2014 Homegrown Micromax becomes largest mobile phone supplier in India

2016 Reliance Jio launches with VoLTE, price war erupts

2017 Roaming charges go

2020 Jio says its 'indigenously developed' 5G network is ready for rollout



POCKET ROCKET

The little computer you call 'phone' is many thousands of times more powerful than the ones that powered Nasa's moon missions in the 1960s. Last year's iPhones, for example, had 100,000 times more powerful processors and a million times more RAM than Apollo 11's Guidance Computer

GETTING IT RIGHT, AND WRONG

iPhone is a revolutionary and magical product that is literally five years ahead of any other mobile phone

—STEVE JOBS AT THE LAUNCH OF IPHONE IN 2007

There is no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share. No chance

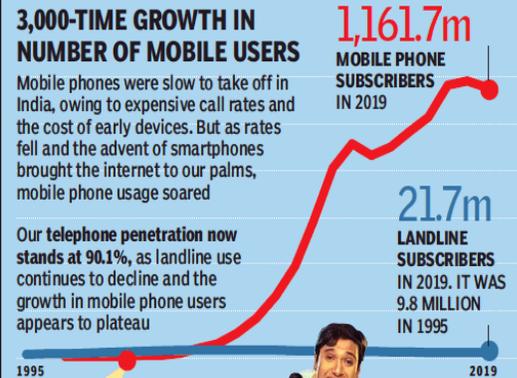
—STEVE BALLMER, MICROSOFT CEO, ABOUT IPHONE IN 2007

iPhone became Apple's best-selling product, with 2 billion units sold so far. Microsoft had to get out of mobile phone business

3,000-TIME GROWTH IN NUMBER OF MOBILE USERS

Mobile phones were slow to take off in India, owing to expensive call rates and the cost of early devices. But as rates fell and the advent of smartphones brought the internet to our palms, mobile phone usage soared

Our telephone penetration now stands at 90.1%, as landline use continues to decline and the growth in mobile phone users appears to plateau



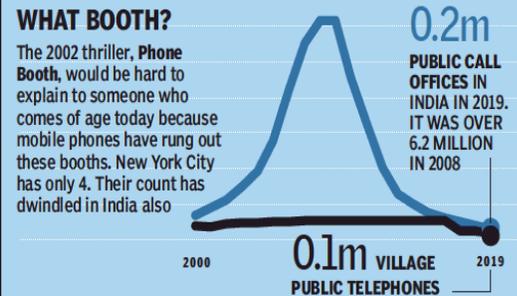
WHAT IS MOBILE NUMBER?

When this Karisma-Govinda song became a smash hit in 1999, India had only 1.2 million cellphone users

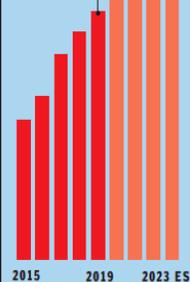


WHAT BOOTH?

The 2002 thriller, *Phone Booth*, would be hard to explain to someone who comes of age today because mobile phones have rung out these booths. New York City has only 4. Their count has dwindled in India also



420m



MOBILE INTERNET USERS DOUBLED IN LAST 5 YEARS

From mobile internet being primarily used for email in the Blackberry years, the advent of smartphones brought easy access to many more internet services. Now, a standard smartphone has effectively replaced computers for many households

From ₹152 per GB in 2016, data prices have fallen to ₹10 per GB

Monthly data use per subscriber has risen from 2.7GB in 2016 to 10.4GB in 2019

Research by Rajesh Sharma



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