

# EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS - AUGUST 25, 2020

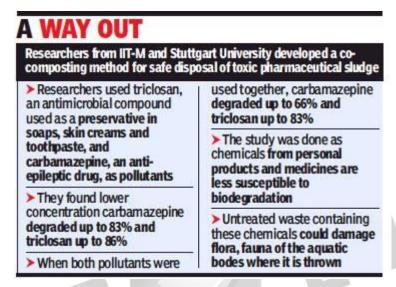
### **TAMIL NADU**

- ➤ Tamil language, culture and archaeology Minister K Pandiarajan released "Ongoing archaeological excavations in Tamil Nadu: A status report (July 2020)" on August 24 to the media.
- ✓ The report was earlier released on the day by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami.
- ✓ During the event, the Minister said that Madurai Kamaraj University has taken necessary steps to establish an 'ancient DNA lab' at a cost of ₹3 crore to supplement the ongoing archaeological excavations in Tamil Nadu
  - ✓ At present, the state is dependent on foreign laboratories for testing and it
    consumes a lot of time and energy, ultimately delaying the results in new
    initiatives
- ✓ Further, the Minister said that the antiquities unearthed during the ongoing archaeological excavations at places like Keeladi, Adichchanallur, Sivagalai and Kodumanal across the state will be analyzed using modern scientific methods in reputed laboratories and institutions



- ✓ The report, which includes graphs, fact-files and figures, shows the systematic archaeological explorations and excavations conducted across the state
  - ✓ It covers the sixth season of systematic archaeological excavation, which was inaugurated by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami on February 19.
  - ✓ The sixth phase of the excavations at the Keeladi cluster and the
    excavations at other sites to come to a close in September for the year
- ✓ The state department of archaeology is collaborating with experts from specialized disciplines such as archaeo-botany, molecular biology, population genetics, prehistoric archaeology, environmental archaeology and linguistic archaeology for a deeper analysis of archaeological findings
- ✓ Further, the department has taken up a major initiative in adopting various technologies like ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey, magnetometer survey, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) survey to identify the ideal spot for carrying out the explorations and excavations with the help of reputed institutions in India.
- ✓ As on date, 76 trenches and 168 quadrants had been opened till the end of July as part of the excavations at Keeladi, Adichchanallur, Sivagalai and Kodumanal
- ✓ The state has collected 128 carbon samples from these sites, the highest being 97 from Keeladi and its clusters
- ✓ A total of 3,959 artefacts have been found during the excavations at the Keeladi cluster and Erode till July across all seasons
- ✓ As per the Minister, excavations have been taken up in the clusters of Keeladi such as Kondagai, Manalur and Agaram to study the civilisation that flourished along the Vaigai river in detail
  - ✓ The available information provides a clear idea of a habitation-industrialburial site here
  - ✓ The finds range from semi precious stones like carnelian, agate, amethyst, to terracotta seals, skeletons, Microlithic tools such as blades and scrapers coins, iron objects and swords and roofing tiles.
  - ✓ Key among the finds are carbonised rice grains and the microlithic tools found at Agaram and in Sivagalai
- ➤ On August 24, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami presented the "Jeevan Raksha Padhak" to a youth, R. Sridhar of Thanjavur district
- ✓ He was conferred the award for saving six persons from drowning in the Vellaiyan Eri in Melaiyur village.
- ✓ The award, instituted by the Central government carries a medal, certificate and cash award of ₹1 lakh.
- ➤ A team of researchers from Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) and Stuttgart University, Germany have developed a co-composting method for safe disposal of toxic pharmaceutical wastewater sludge.
- ✓ As part of the new method, the researchers have mixed low concentrations of chemical compounds alongwith dry sewer waste like coir pith and organic waste

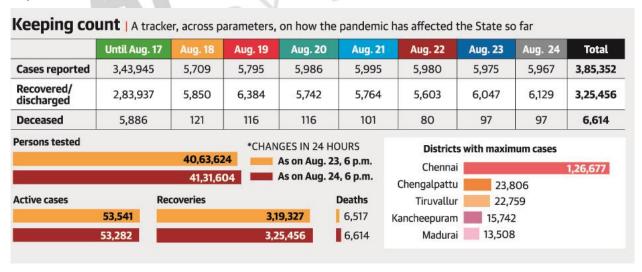
- to pharmaceutical and personal care product, which removes a key chemical, carbamazepine.
- ✓ They have established composting facilities in several villages across the country based on their studies.
- ✓ The compost thus obtained complies with the required international standards, according to the researchers.



- ✓ Management of waste containing chemicals from personal care products and medicines have been a challenge for long as they barely decompose and their remains affect both the environment and humans.
- ✓ The team studied the degradation pattern of two chemical compounds commonly found in water bodies in South India triclosan, an antibacterial agent also used as a preservative in soaps, skin screams, toothpaste and deodorants, and carbamazepine, an anti-epileptic drug.
- Two Chennai-based medical institutions have been named as part of the multi-centric clinic trial of the Oxford vaccine in India involving about 300 volunteers.
- ✓ The Oxford vaccine is considered as one of the most promising candidates against the novel coronavirus SARSCoV-2
- ✓ The two institutions are Directorate of Public Health and Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER) from Chennai
- ✓ In four to six weeks, the Directorate of public health (DPH) will administer the vaccine called Covishield to healthy volunteers in Tamil Nadu at the directorate office on Anna Salai
  - ✓ It will vaccinate at least 120 to 150 people as part of phase two and three clinical trials. Doctors at the department of community medicine at the Madras Medical College will be co-investigators for the trial
  - Director of public health Dr T S Selvavinayagam will be the principal investigator for the project.

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- ✓ The SRIHER will test both the vaccines one made by Bharat Biotech and the Oxford vaccine in their campus.
  - ✓ The Oxford vaccine will be given to at least 120 people by the Institute.
- ✓ The ChAdOx1nCoV-19 (AZD1222) vaccine developed by AstraZeneca Plc and Oxford University and manufactured by Serum Institute of India, will be tested across 17 cities in India with more than 1,600 volunteers.
- ✓ Of the several candidates, the Oxford one has shown an acceptable safety profile and strong immune response in early trials.
  - ✓ Studies have shown the vaccine triggered a T-cell response within 14 days, and an antibody response within 28 days.
  - ✓ T-cells are white blood cells that can attack infected cells, antibodies are
    protein molecules that neutralise the virus so it cannot infect cells when
    contracted.
- ✓ Besides the two city institutions, PGIMER Chandigarh, AIIMS Delhi, ABJ Medical College in Pune, Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences in Patna, Andhra Medical College in Visakhapatnam, and JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research in Mysore will also be part of the trial.
- ➤ On August 24, Tamil Nadu added 5,967 fresh cases of Covid-19 and 97 deaths, which pushed the case tally to 3,85,352 and cumulative death toll to 6,614.
- ✓ At the end of the day, there were 53,282 people still under treatment
- ✓ As many as 6,129 persons, including 1,234 in Chennai, were discharged from hospitals after treatment.



- ✓ Till date, a total of 3,25,456 persons have been cured and discharged in the State
- ✓ Chennal continued to be the hotspot with the reporting of 1,278 cases and 23 deaths.
- ✓ The three neighbouring districts Chengalpet (306), Tiruvallur (321) and Kancheepuram (226) together added 852 new cases and 12 deaths.

- ✓ Other districts with significant cases include Coimbatore (387), Cuddalore (370), Salem (273), Theni (193), Erode (189), Pudukottai (187), Kanyakumari (149), Tiruvannamalai (145), Vellore (159) and Villupuram (156), Dindigul (132), Ranipet (121), Thanjavur (119), Tiruvarur (111) and Trichy (104)
- ✓ The average recovery rate in the state went up to 85% and the case fatality rate stood at 1.7%
- ✓ The case fatality rate was above 2% in at least seven districts Chennai (2%);
  Coimbatore (2%), Madurai (2.5%), Ramanathapuram (2.2%), Sivagangai (2.7%),
  Thirupathur (2.1%), and Tiruppur (2.5%).
- Greater Corporation commissioner G Prakash inaugurated a Vitamin A administering camp at a primary health centre in Perungudi on August 23
- ✓ As part of the initiative, the civic body will start administering vitamin A drops to 5.72 lakh children between the ages of six months to five years at special camps.
- ✓ The first is from August 24 to August 28 (barring August 26) and the second phase from August 31 to September 3 (barring September 2).
- ✓ The vitamin A drops will be given at all the primary health centres of the corporation, integrated child development services (ICDS) centres and maternity hospitals.
- √ These centres will be open from 8am to 3pm.
- ✓ In case children miss getting the drops on these dates, they can get it on August 29 and September 5.
- A new agency, Urbaser-Sumeet will handle the collection and transport of household solid waste in 7 zones under Chennai corporation limits from September
- ✓ The seven zones include Teynampet, Kodambakkam, Valasaravakkam, Alandur, Adyar, Sholinganallur and Perungudi zones, covering 92 wards
- ✓ The new agency will collect waste in battery-operated vehicles, each having separate bins for segregated waste and able to cover 500 households in one shift.
- ✓ Totally, about 3,000 such battery operated vehicles will be deployed.
- ✓ The focus is to achieve 100% source segregation which is now at 90%.
- ✓ The initiative also aims to ensure that at least 50% of the waste does not enter landfills and is either composted or recycled at the zone level.
- ✓ Mechanical sweeping machines will be operated on every road that is more than six metres wide to maintain cleanliness, while inner streets will be manually swept.
- ✓ New colour-coded roadside bins will be placed for wet and dry waste in select locations based on a field study.
- ✓ Wet waste from households will be transported to micro composting centres, while
  dry waste will be transported to locations specified by the corporation.

- ✓ All PPE devices and other Covid waste will be collected in separate bins and transported to separate centres, which will store domestic hazardous waste that will be disposed by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board
- ✓ The company has begun advertising, seeking to employ about 10,000 workers to
  operate the BOV, mechanical sweepers to manage the entire information system.
- ✓ The company will be paid on the quality of service evaluated by an independent engineer and not the quantity of waste as done earlier.

### **NATIONAL**

- On August 24, the Prime Minister's Office said that the PM CARES Fund will finance two 500-bed Covid-19 makeshift hospitals in Bihar
- ✓ Announcing the decision, the PMO tweeted: "PMCARES Fund Trust has decided to allocate funds for fight against Covid-19 by way of establishment of 500-bed Covid-19 makeshift hospitals at Patna and Muzaffarpur, Bihar"
- ✓ These health facilities have been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)



- ✓ The 500-bed hospital at Bihta (Patna) was inaugurated on August 24, while the 500-bed hospital at Muzaffarpur will be inaugurated very soon.
- ✓ These hospitals have 125 ICU beds with ventilators and 375 normal beds each, while each bed also has oxygen supply.
- ✓ Doctors and paramedical staff for the hospitals will be provided by the Armed Forces Medical Services
- ✓ In a review meeting on August 11, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had noted that 10 states, including Bihar, account for over 80% of country's active Covid-19 cases, and asserted if the virus is defeated in these states, the country will emerge victorious in its fight against the pandemic.
- ✓ Bihar, which is headed for assembly polls in a few months, is among the states with large numbers of Covid cases.
- The Centre has extended the validity of motor vehicle and driving related documents till December 31
- ✓ On August 24, the road transport ministry issued an advisory to all states in its bid to bring relief to people and transporters.

- ✓ All motor vehicle and driving related documents such as driving licence, registration and fitness certificates and all types of permits which had expiry date between February 1 and September 30, will remain valid till December 31.
- ✓ This is the third such extension after the first advisory was issued on March 30.
- ✓ The ministry made these relaxations considering the pandemic situation in the country due to Covid-19 outbreak.
- ✓ The extension will be applicable to the documents mentioned in the list which have reached their date of expiration on or after February 1, 2020
- Doctors at Pune's Army Institute of Cardiothoracic Sciences (AICTS) have successfully repurposed a lung cancer drug, Nintedanib, to treat Covid patients suffering from severe lung fibrosis.
- ✓ So far, four critical patients have benefitted from it, while two more patients are currently being administered the same drug.
- ✓ This is the first time in India that Nintedanib has been deployed to treat SARSCoV-2-induced lung complications, the doctors said.
- ✓ A noticeable number of Covid-19 patients have been seen to develop lung fibrosis, a scarring of lung tissue that causes oxygen levels to drop in the body.
- ✓ The condition is usually seen in patients who have had delayed diagnosis and in those with extensive Covid-induced pneumonia.
- ✓ Patients with lung fibrosis often find it difficult to breathe without oxygen support.

  Currently, there is still no approved line of treatment for this virus-induced complication in India.
- ➤ India's longest passenger ropeway built across a river- was inaugurated in Guwahati, Assam on August 24, almost a year after it was completed.



- ✓ The ropeway connects the northern and southern banks of the Brahmaputra river, connecting Guwahati with north Guwahati.
- ✓ Built at a cost of ₹56.08 crore, the ropeway system has two cabins each with a capacity of 30 passengers and one operator.
- ✓ It takes eight minutes to travel from one bank of the Brahmaputra to another by using the ropeway.

- ✓ The 1.82-km bi-cable jig-back ropeway connects a forest campus near the Kamrup (Metro) Deputy Commissioner's office in the city on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra and a hillock behind the Doul Govinda temple in north Guwahati on the other.
- ✓ The ropeway passes over the mid-river Peacock Island that houses Umananda, a medieval Shiva temple.
- ✓ The ₹56.08-crore ropeway project was assigned to the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) in 2006.
- ✓ The foundation stone was laid in December 2009, a year after a Kolkata-based firm was awarded the construction work, while a Swiss firm designed the cabins.
- ✓ The ropeway was scheduled to have been commissioned in May 2011 but an objection from the Archaeological Survey of India stopped the work in February that year.
- ✓ GMDA restarted the project in 2015 on the condition that a pillar on a heritage island be realigned.
- ✓ The longest ropeway on land is the one in Gulmarg, Kashmir
- ➤ India not just retained the top spot for cheapest mobile data services in the world, but also lowered the average cost of 1GB of data by 65% over the past year, as per a report.

#### **HOW INDIA FARES** Cost of 1GB mobile data (in US\$) > The five cheapest countries As of Nov As of Feb Country in terms of the 2020 2018 average cost of India 900 0.26 1GB of mobile data are India (\$0.09). US 12.37 Israel (\$0.11), Kyrgyzstan (\$0.21), UK 139 6.66 Italy (\$0.43) & 9.89 China 0.61 Ukraine (\$0.46). > The five most expensive countries in terms of the average cost of 1GB of mobile data are São Tomé and Príncipe (\$2826).

Bermuda (\$28.75), Nauru (\$30.47), Falkland Islands (\$40.41) and

- ✓ At ₹6.66 (\$0.09) per gigabyte (GB), the average cost of mobile data in India is cheapest in the world, as per the Worldwide Mobile Data Pricing report for 2020 by UK-based price comparison firm Cable.co.uk.
- ✓ This is also 65% cheaper compared to ₹18.50 (\$0.26) per GB, which was the cost
  of data in India, as per the same study last year.
- ✓ A gigabyte of data costs \$0.09 in India compared to an average \$8 in the US and \$1.39 in the UK.
- ✓ The global average cost of data stood around \$5.09 per GB

Saint Helena (\$52.50).

✓ Cable.co.uk analysed data from 5,554 mobile data plans in 228 countries between February 3 and February 25 (prior to the pandemic).

Source: Cable.co.uk

- ✓ The most expensive place in the world to buy mobile data is the island of Saint Helena, where the average cost of 1GB is \$52.5 583 times as much as in India.
- ✓ Asian nations make up a third of the top 20 cheapest countries for mobile data, with Sri Lanka (\$0.51) and Vietnam (\$0.57) also in the top ten.
- ➤ The new office of the Delimitation Commission was inaugurated at Ashoka Hotel in New Delhi



- ✓ Justice (retired) Ranjana Desai, head of the Commission, inaugurated the office in the presence of Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra, who is also a member of the Delimitation Commission
- ✓ The Delimitation Commission has already started functioning since March 2020.
- ✓ All associate members have already been nominated for each State/Union Territory concerned, as per the EC
- ✓ The Delimitation Commission headed by Justice (retired) Ranjana Desai had already held four meetings
- ✓ The Commission is in the process of redrawing Assembly constituency boundaries in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, among others.
- ✓ The Commission has kept June 15, 2020 as the date for freezing of administrative districts in these States/UTs.
- ➤ On August 24, India reported a seven-day low of 59,041 fresh infections, taking the total caseload to 32 lakh mark.
- ✓ The less number of infections is attributed to a sharp decrease of nearly 40% in the number of tests since a record high of 10.3 lakh tests on August 21.
- ✓ Further, there were 848 deaths reported on the day, the lowest daily toll since August 4, when the number was 842, as per data collated from state governments
- ✓ The country's share in the week's fresh global cases rose to 26.2%, having crossed the quarter mark for the first time.
- ✓ This means, one out of every four people in the world who caught Covid-19 infection last week was from India.
- ✓ In deaths, India's share rose marginally to 16.9%.

RISING	SHARE
India's % sha global Covid	
CASES	
Aug 3-9	22.7
Aug 10-16	23.9
Aug 17-23	26.2
DEATHS	All de la constant de
Aug 3-9	15.2
Aug 10-16	16.8
Aug 17-23	16.9

- ✓ Overall, India has a 13% share in Covid-19 cases in the world so far.
- ✓ Maharashtra added 11,015 new cases on the day, taking the total Covid-19 cases to 6,93,398, very close to the 7 lakh-mark
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh reported 8,601 Covid-19 cases, taking the cumulative caseload to 3,61,712
- ✓ On the day, only 4,77,027 samples were tested, which was still lesser than 6,09,917 tests done on the previous day.
- ✓ Despite the overall drop in daily testing, Uttar Pradesh tested 1.30 lakh samples in the last 24 hours, the highest among all the high burden states
- ✓ On August 24, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar tested positive for Covid-19, becoming the third CM after his counterparts in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, Shivraj Singh Chouhan and BS Yediyurappa, to contract the virus.

### INTERNATIONAL

China - has launched first of the four advanced naval warships it is building for Pakistan, in the midst of deepening defence ties between the two allweather allies.



✓ The launching ceremony for the first warship was held at the Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai on August 23.

- ✓ The Type-054 class frigate, equipped with the latest anti-air weapons, combat management system and sensors will be one of the technologically advanced surface platforms of the navy.
- ✓ A Frigate is a warship that has mixed armament and is generally heavier than that of a destroyer.
- ✓ Pakistan signed a contract with the China Shipbuilding Trading Company Ltd. (CSTC) for the delivery of two Type-054 A/P frigates in 2017.
- ✓ Last year, the official Chinese media reported that under a major arms deal China would build four frigates for Pakistan.
- ✓ The terms of the deal and the price of the ships were not revealed.
- ✓ The launching of the ship coincided with the second strategic dialogue between Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Chinese holiday resort of Hainan on August 21.

# > Researchers in Hong Kong - are reporting the first confirmed case of reinfection with the coronavirus.

- ✓ The report is of concern because it suggests that immunity to the coronavirus may last only a few months in some people.
  - ✓ And it has implications for vaccines being developed for the virus.
  - ✓ The 33-year-old man was cleared of COVID-19 in April, but tested positive again after returning from Spain via Britain on August 15.
  - ✓ The preliminary number of patients in China who tested positive again once being discharged from hospital was 5%-15%
- ✓ In another development, on August 23, the US FDA gave emergency approval for expanded use of antibody-rich blood plasma to help hospitalised Covid patients
  - ✓ However, WHO was cautious about endorsing the use of recovered Covid patients' plasma to treat those who are ill, saying evidence remains "low quality" and plasma therapy as 'experimental'
- ✓ India is already using plasma therapy as a cure to COVID-19 and was the first country to open a plasma bank for the COVID-19 recovered patients to donate their blood plasma.
- Maharashtra has already started the world's largest Convalescent Plasma Therapy Trial project by name 'Project Platina'
- ✓ Apart from India, France had allowed the use of plasma therapy.
- ✓ Australia and UK have still kept plasma therapy under clinical trial
- ✓ In 2014, the World Health Organization recommended plasma therapy for Ebola virus. Also, plasma therapy was used during H1N1 outbreak in 2009 and also during SARS epidemic in 2003.
- ✓ Plasma is the left out blood fluid after the blood components such as WBC, RBC and platelets are removed but still holding antibodies in it
- ✓ By injecting plasma from a recovered Covid-19 patient to an infected Covid-19 patient, the therapy aims to increase the amount of antibodies to recover them permanently.

#### **DEFENCE**

On August 24, Army Chief General Manoj Naravane - conferred the COAS (Chief of Army Staff) Unit Appreciation to 51 Special Action Group (SAG) of the National Security Guard (NSG)



- ✓ The honour was bestowed in recognition of the Group's outstanding achievements in combating terrorism, as per the Army release.
- ✓ The NSG was raised in 1984 and functions under the Union Home Ministry.
- ✓ The group's most noteworthy operation is the Operation Black Tornado, during which it eliminated eight terrorists during the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, freeing over 600 hostages.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

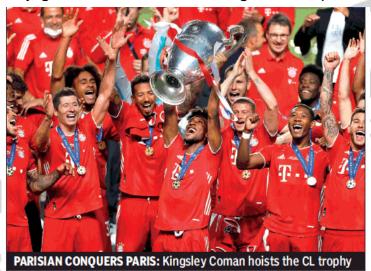
> Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has been given a two-year extension as the Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman of DRDO



- ✓ His current tenure completes on August 26, 2020.
- ✓ This was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on August 24.
- ✓ Dr. Reddy took over the post in August 2018.

### **SPORTS**

- Bayern Munich secured a 1-0 victory over Paris St.-Germain to clinch a sixth Champions League European crown.
- ✓ Kingsley Coman's precise header turned the evenly contested game in favour of Bayern Munich
- ✓ This is the first Champions League final that was played without fans.
- ✓ Bayern also became a treble winner, as in 2013, by adding this crown to the Bundesliga trophy — won for an eighth successive season — and the German Cup.
- ✓ Bayern joined Liverpool as six-time champion of Europe, only behind AC Milan (seven) and Real Madrid (13).
- ✓ Bayern Munich also became the first team in European Cup/Champions League history to win every game en route to winning the competition



- ➤ Bayern Munich beat Neymar & Mbappe's PSG 1-0 in Champions League final, has now won it 6 times (level with Liverpool). Only Real Madrid (13) and AC Milan (7) are ahead
- ➤ Born in Paris to parents from Guadeloupe, Kingsley Coman (24) scored against the Paris powerhouse he joined as a 8-yr-old before becoming its
- youngest-ever first team player (at 16 yrs, 8 mths). Ironically, **PSG** didn't renew his contract in 2014
- The Bavarian giants are the 1st team in European Cup/
  CL history to win every game
  (11) en route to winning the competition & just the 3rd side to hit the 500-goal mark in CL after Barcelona (517) and Real Madrid (567)

  stats: Opta

#### **ON TARGET**

The truncated nature of the 2019/20 season means that Bayern amassed their total in 11 matches rather than the usual 13, making theirs the best goals per game ratio in a single Champions League season.

#### BEST GOALS PER GAME RATIO IN A SINGLE SEASON

3.01 Rayorn 2019/20

2:31	Dayer 11, 2019/20
3.38	Paris, 2017/18
3.15	Real Madrid, 2013/14
3.15	Liverpool, 2017/18
2.92	Barcelona, 2011/12
2.92	Real Madrid, 2011/12

#### MOST GOALS IN A

45
43
41
41
36

#### MOST SUCCESSIVE WINS

Bayern (2019/20) 11

Real Madrid (2014–15) 10

Bayern (2013) 10

Barcelona (2014–15) 9

Barcelona (2002/03) 9

Dortmund (1996–97) 8

Highlights: Barcelona 2-8 Bayern

# MOST SUCCESSIVE WINS FROM START OF GROUP STAGE

Bayern (2019/20) 11

Barcelona (2002/03) 9

Real Madrid (2014/15) 6

Real Madrid (2011/12) 6

Spartak (1995/96) 6

PSG (1994/95) 6

AC Milan (1992/93) 6

STATS:
UEFA.COM

#### GOALS RECORD

ROBERT LEWANDOWSKI FINISHED HEAD OF THE CLASS WITH 15 GOALS, TWO OFF CRISTIANO RONALDO'S RECORD

17	Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid) 2013/14
16	Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid) 2015/16
15	Robert Lewandowski (Bayern) 2019/20
15	Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid) 2017/18
14	Lionel Messi (Barcelona) 2011/12

