

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 27, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - constituted a seven-member technical committee for taking decision on the projects in the Cauvery delta region on August 26**
- ✓ The committee will be empowered to omit or add any project to its already banned list of seven hazardous industries, under the Second Schedule provided in the Act within the zone.
- ✓ It will report to chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami-led Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Authority
- ✓ The committee to assist the authority would be headed by the Agricultural Production Commissioner and the Secretary to the Government in the agriculture department, who would be the ex-officio chairperson.
- ✓ The directors of agriculture, horticulture and plantation crops, industries and commerce, animal husbandry, chairman of pollution control board and director (research) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University are the ex-officio members of the committee.
- ✓ The state government has notified the rules for the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020 on August 26.
  - ✓ The Act was enacted in February to protect the agricultural lands in the delta in the wake of protests against onshore oil and gas exploration projects
- ✓ The government also empowered the authority to suggest measures to safeguard the natural surface, soil and water, suggest preventive measures to safeguard the livelihood of farmers in the protected agricultural zone and recommend area for inclusion in the protected agricultural zone
- ✓ One of the newly-included functions of the Authority is to “suggest and recommend the agro-based and allied industries that may be established in the protected agricultural zone

- ✓ According to the notified rules, the department of agriculture is mandated to prepare a detailed plan for development of agriculture in the protected agricultural zone and submit to the authority before March 31 every year.
- ✓ The law bans the setting up of zinc, copper and aluminium smelters, iron ore process plant, integrated steel and sponge iron plants, bone meal, processing of animal horn, hoofs and other body parts, tannery, exploration, drilling and extraction of oil and natural gas including coalbed methane, shale gas and other similar hydrocarbons, besides ship breaking industry in the delta region.
- **Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited (NLCIL), the Navratna CPSE - has bagged the award for its extremely valuable contribution in the implementation of the “Swachhta Hi Seva Programme” from the Government of India.**
  - ✓ The announcement of the “Swachhta Hi Seva 2019” Award to NLCIL was made by the Ministry of Coal
  - ✓ NLCIL was awarded for transforming the entire Neyveli into a plastic-free, clean and green campus
  - ✓ The entire team of officials and employees of NLCIL had voluntarily involved themselves in the implementation of the programme on the theme ‘Plastic Waste Management.’
  - ✓ The Swachhta Hi Seva programme, an initiative of the Swachch Bharat Mission, was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2019.
- **Union culture minister Prahlaad Singh Patel - announced the creation of a new circle of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in Tamil Nadu**
  - ✓ The Chennai circle of ASI will be bifurcated to accommodate a new circle, which will be headquartered at Trichy

**WHAT'S IN STORE**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Chennai circle, maintaining 411 monuments and sites in TN, is ASI's largest circle</li> <li>➤ It is to be bifurcated into two with the new circle headquartered at Trichy</li> <li>➤ Over 60% of Chennai circle's monuments and heritage sites will come under</li> </ul>	<p>the purview of Trichy circle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Chennai circle will comprise Chennai, Mamallapuram, Kancheepuram, Gingee, Vellore and Puducherry sub-circles</li> <li>➤ Trichy circle will comprise Salem, Trichy, Thanjavur and Thirumayam (Pudukkottai dist) sub-circles</li> </ul>
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- ✓ The move is aimed at better maintenance of ASI monuments while allowing addition of more heritage sites for explorations and excavations since the new circle will get separate fund allocations.
- ✓ Several sites in the state are in a state of neglect since Chennai circle had to maintain 411 monuments and sites with a meager annual allocation of ₹5 crore

- ✓ A team of ASI officials headed by a superintendent archaeologist would oversee monuments based out of Trichy.
  - ✓ Further, monuments in Kanyakumari, Tenkasi and Tirunelveli districts that are currently part of Thrissur circle in Kerala will be merged with Trichy circle
  - ✓ The move would also pave the way for creation of new sub-circles at Madurai and Tuticorin districts.
  - ✓ **On all-India level, the Union Ministry of Culture announced the setting up of seven new administrative circles of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in order to improve the management of monuments.**
  - ✓ Apart from Trichy, new circles in Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh), Jhansi and Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Raiganj (West Bengal) and Rajkot (Gujarat) have been created.
  - ✓ The Hampi mini circle has been upgraded to a circle, and the Delhi mini circle has been merged with the Delhi circle.
  - ✓ Earlier, there were 29 ASI circles across India.
- **On August 26, the Tamil Nadu government – announced the cancellation of the arrear exams for all college students except final year.**
- ✓ Accordingly, all students except final year students who have paid fees for arrears papers are exempted from writing the exams.
  - ✓ The marks for these exams will be awarded based on the guidelines given by University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)
  - ✓ This was announced by the state chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswamy in a statement.
  - ✓ Except those appearing for the final year exams, the state government has already promoted all students pursuing BA, BSc, MA, MSc, BE/B Tech/B Arch, ME/M Tech, MCA and diploma courses to the next academic year.
  - ✓ These students were awarded marks with a break up of 70% and 30% for internal marks and previous semester exams respectively
  - ✓ The state higher education department will soon issue a separate order on criteria for awarding marks for those with arrears.
- **Clinical trials of Covishield, the COVID-19 vaccine developed by the University of Oxford - will be launched at two medical institutes in Chennai**
- ✓ The two medical facilities chosen for the trials are the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital and the Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research, Porur.
  - ✓ Three hundred persons will be recruited for the trials
  - ✓ This was announced by the Health Minister C. Vijayabaskar on August 26.
  - ✓ The Indian Council of Medical Research and the Drugs Controller General of India had selected Chennai for conducting trials.

- ✓ Tamil Nadu's Director of Public Health and Preventive Medicine was appointed the principal investigator.
  - ✓ The initiative will be jointly carried out by the National Institute of Research in Tuberculosis, Chennai, and the ICMR.
  - ✓ The trials would engage healthy individuals above 18 years of age
  - ✓ The vaccine's safety would be tested at RGGGH, while its immunogenicity would be evaluated at SRIHER.
  - ✓ The institutes would have 150 participants each.
  - ✓ The vaccine stimulated a T-cell response in the body in 14 days and an antibody response in 28 days
  - ✓ **Meanwhile, the second phase of the clinical trial of the eagerly anticipated Oxford COVID-19 vaccine, being manufactured by the city-based Serum Institute of India (SII), commenced at Bharati Vidyapeeth Medical College and Hospital in Pune on August 26.**
  - ✓ Two male volunteers, ages 32 and 48, were administered the first shots of the 'Covishield' vaccine.
- **On August 26, Tamil Nadu – reported 5,958 fresh cases and 118 deaths**
- ✓ This takes the total caseload in the state close to four lakh mark at 3,97,261, while the cumulative toll stands at 6,839
  - ✓ After the discharge of 5,606 patients on the day, the state has 52,362 people still under treatment.
  - ✓ With this, the state has a recovery rate of 82%

## NO RESPITE

Region	New Cases Today	Deaths Today	Discharged Today	Total deaths
Chennai Region	2,193	34	1,979	3632
North	946	13	982	696
Central	632	15	608	437
South	906	29	1052	1,511
West	1,277	27	971	562
Others	4	0	14	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,958</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>5,606</b>	<b>6,839</b>

- ✓ Tamil Nadu reported its first case of Covid-19 on March 7 when a passenger from Muscat tested positive for the viral infection.
- ✓ Chennai, the worst hit district, reported 1,290 fresh cases and 20 deaths on the day.
- ✓ Its three neighbours, Chengalpet (294), Kancheepuram (329) and Tiruvallur (280) together added 903 cases and 14 deaths
- ✓ Further, Coimbatore reported a drastic increase with 484 cases, followed by Salem with 451 cases, while Cuddalore had 286 cases, Villupuram 189, Theni



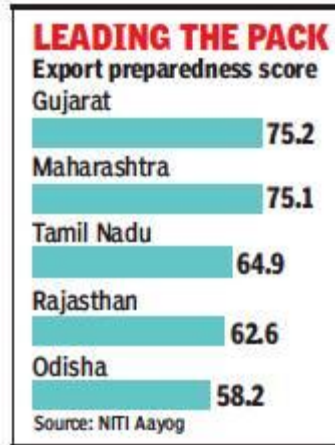
184, Kanyakumari 159, Vellore 158, Tirunelveli 156, Pudukottai 143, Thanjavur 123, Ranipet 121, Tuticorin 105 and Tiruvarur 105 cases

- ✓ **The facility to communicate Covid-19 test results through SMS within 24 to 36 hours was launched at the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital (RGGGH), Chennai**
- ✓ It was launched by the Health Minister, C. Vijayabaskar
- ✓ Earlier, the facility was launched in the government hospitals in Madurai and Salem
- ✓ **The Greater Chennai Corporation has tied up with Vidmed to bring out a free telemedicine application that residents can access free of cost for video-based medical consultation.**
- ✓ The app, GCC Vidmed, can be downloaded from Google Playstore.
- ✓ Patients will be connected to experts based on their health issues

## STATES

- **The Uttar Pradesh government – has proposed a new project to improve the reading comprehension skills of students at state-run English medium schools**
- ✓ On August 27, Minister of state (independent charge) for basic education, Satish Kumar Dwivedi, will inaugurate a graded reading programme for schoolchildren.
- ✓ Under the project, at least 1.25 lakh children at 820 primary schools in 12 districts will be trained into English reading.
- ✓ To improve the reading skills of children in these schools, the state government will be using an education tool by name Scholastic Short Read Card
- ✓ The Scholastic Cards are widely used in urban elite schools across the world to encourage and improve reading skills in children
  - ✓ Scholastic is a US company which has been into publications for children for almost 50 years.
- ✓ The cards contain pictures and stories in fiction and non-fiction genres along with instructions for teachers and activities to make reading a high-retention activity.
- ✓ Scholastic cards for all 820 schools were being sponsored by HCL Foundation's Samuday Project.
  
- **Gujarat - has emerged on top of the index of export preparedness, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu**
- ✓ The other States that have made it to the top 10 include Rajasthan, Odisha, Telangana, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Kerala.
- ✓ The newly created Union territory Jammu & Kashmir is at the bottom of the list.
- ✓ Among the landlocked states, Rajasthan has emerged as a top performer, followed by Telangana and Haryana
- ✓ Tamil Nadu emerged at the top after performing tremendously well across all pillars and subpillars of the index, except for export growth and orientation

- ✓ Bihar and Jammu & Kashmir are some of the weaker states in this category.
- ✓ Among the states that initiated steps to promote exports, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand topped the list.
- ✓ Delhi performed the best across the Union Territories, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.
- ✓ Uttarakhand and Delhi are the top-performing states within the category of Himalayan states and city states.



- ✓ Government think-tank NITI Aayog, in collaboration with the IFC's Institute of Competitiveness, released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020.
  - ✓ EPI 2020 is the first report to examine export preparedness and performance of Indian states
  - ✓ It aims to identify challenges and opportunities, enhance the effectiveness of government policies, and encourage a supportive regulatory framework.
  - ✓ The index ranked States on four key parameters - policy, business ecosystem, export ecosystem and export performance.
- ✓ Overall, coastal States emerged as the best performers, with six out of eight coastal States featuring in the top 10 rankings.
- ✓ As per the report, around 70% of exports of India are dominated by five states namely Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- ✓ The report said Maharashtra's success can be used as a best practice measure for other states.
- ✓ Based on policy parameters, Maharashtra topped the list followed by Gujarat and Jharkhand
- ✓ Based on export ecosystem, Maharashtra topped the index followed by Odisha and Rajasthan.
- ✓ Based on export performance, Mizoram led the index followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra

## NATIONAL

- **The standing committee on commerce - has proposed foreign direct investment (FDI) in tobacco cultivation and cigarette manufacturing for exports in a regulated manner**

- ✓ The parliamentary panel had also asked the government to push agricultural commodities exports, which are low, compared to their total production.
  - ✓ The committee, headed by Rajya Sabha MP V Vijaysai Reddy, has recommended allow 100% FDI in tobacco cultivation on the lines of tea, coffee and rubber
  - ✓ However, it proposed the safeguard that tobacco produced with the help of foreign capital should be “marketed” through auction platforms
  - ✓ Similarly, in case of cigarette manufacturing, the panel has backed overseas investment with the condition that “the value addition” is done only in SEZs, for export purpose and domestic sale is not permitted.
  - ✓ Besides, there are suggestions to set up “export only” tobacco farms to generate surplus tobacco, along with a proposal to provide export incentives to tobacco and tobacco products.
  - ✓ The committee also noted that the export of the agricultural commodities, with an exception to rice, is less than 2 % of their total production with no significant increase for the last three years
  - ✓ It had also appreciated the government’s efforts to put in place an agriculture export policy.
- **The government - has amended the corporate social responsibility (CSR) rules to help boost research, innovation and funding for developing new vaccines, drugs and medical devices related to Covid-19.**
- ✓ The Companies Act has included Covid-19 related research and development expenditure on new vaccines, drugs and devices to be considered as corporate social responsibility (CSR) spends, subject to certain conditions.
  - ✓ The notification says companies can claim them as CSR spend, if the research is in collaboration with a publicly-funded institution.
  - ✓ According to the CSR law, companies of a net worth of ₹500 crore above, or revenue of ₹1,000 crore and above, to spend 2% of average net profits of the previous three years on CSR projects.
  - ✓ Under the rules amended last year, expenditure incurred by companies on activities undertaken in pursuance of ‘normal course’ of their business is not considered as eligible CSR expenditure.
  - ✓ The move is expected to give a big boost to companies, institutions and research labs to set up collaborative programs for Covid-19 R&D and promote innovation
- **On August 26, the Centre - released the draft health data management policy for the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM), which aims to create a digital health ecosystem with a unique health ID for every citizen.**
- ✓ The draft policy aims to define a framework for the secure processing of personal and sensitive personal data of individuals who are part of the digital health ecosystem
  - ✓ Further, it defines key elements such as “sensitive personal information” , “personal health records” and “health locker” associated with NDHM.

- ✓ The draft has been released on the website of the NDHM and will be available for public comments and feedback till September 3.
- ✓ The policy will be finalised after receiving suggestions from the public.
- ✓ “Sensitive personal information” that can be collected from citizens includes one’s sex life, sexual orientation, caste, religious or political affiliation, as well as genetic and biometric data.
- ✓ It also includes financial information such as bank account or credit card or debit card or other payment instrument details; physical, physiological and mental health data; medical records and history; transgender status, intersex status; and data relating to various health conditions and treatments, such as medical and health records.
- ✓ The National Digital Health Mission was announced by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his address at the 74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day celebrations.

➤ **On August 26, India – breached several grim milestones in Covid-19 progress**

- ✓ The country registered the highest-ever record of 76,014 fresh infections in the last 24 hours, crossing the 76,000-mark in a day for the first time since the onset of the pandemic
- ✓ With this, the total caseload went past the 33-lakh mark to 33,04,598
- ✓ With 1,009 fatalities reported on the day – which is the third highest in a day – India’s cumulative toll has crossed the 60,000 mark to reach 60,543.
- ✓ India’s record surge in fresh cases on August 26 is the third highest daily count recorded in any country in the world, after 78,427 cases on July 25 and 76,930 infections on July 17, both recorded in the US, according to data compiled by ourworldindata.org.

**10K DEATHS IN 11 DAYS**

No. Of Deaths	Days Taken	CFR*
1 to 10,000	96	3.4
10K to 20K	20	2.8
20K to 30K	17	2.4
30K to 40K	13	2.1
40K to 50K	10	1.9
50K to 60K	11	1.8

\*Case fatality rate on the day deaths reached the landmark

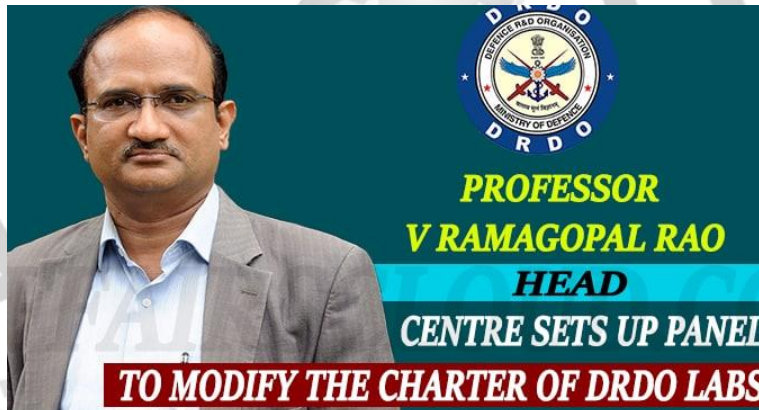
- ✓ Maharashtra recorded its highest ever daily count of 14,888 on the day along with 295 casualties, taking the total deaths over 23,000-mark to 23,089
- ✓ Karnataka crossed two grim milestones of three lakh-plus cases after reporting 8,580 new infections and over 5,000 deaths after reporting 133 deaths on the day.
- ✓ Uttar Pradesh crossed the two-lakh mark in total cases on the back of a record single-day surge by adding 5,898 fresh cases to its tally.



- ✓ With this, UP has become the fifth state in the country – after Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka – to register more than two lakh positive cases.
- ✓ Besides Maharashtra, UP and Telangana, the other states which registered a record daily peak were Andhra Pradesh (10,830 fresh cases), Kerala (2,476), Odisha (3,371), Haryana (1,397) and Uttarakhand (530).

## COMMITTEES

- **A five-member expert committee - has been constituted to review the charter of duties for all laboratories of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).**
- ✓ The committee was constituted by G. Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D), who is also the Chairman, DRDO.
- ✓ The five-member committee is headed by Professor V. Ramagopal Rao, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.



- ✓ The other members include include S. Somnath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre; Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, Deputy Chief of Air Staff; Dr. Samir V. Kamat, Director General-Naval Systems and Materials; and Benjamin Lionel, Director, Instruments Research and Development Establishment.
- ✓ The terms of reference of the committee are - to study and review the charter of duties of all the labs of the DRDO, to redefine the charter of duties of the labs on the current and futuristic defence and battlefield scenario, and to minimise the overlap of technologies amongst the labs.
- ✓ The committee is mandated to submit its report within 45 days
- ✓ Earlier, similar committee headed by P Rama Rao suggested several recommendations, which included the setting up of commercial arm of the organization with a capital of Rs 2 crores to develop products and technologies that are meant for civilian use.
- ✓ In 2015, the DRDO applied several recommendations made by the committee.
- ✓ A new Defence Technology Commission was set up under Defence Minister.

- ✓ DRDO was decentralized and seven clusters were formed based on technology and functionalities.
- ✓ Also, complete autonomy was granted to all laboratories operating under DRDO.
- ✓ One of the major recommendations of Rama Rao committee was to make DRDO leaner by merging some of the laboratories of DRDO with the public funded institutions.

## PERSONALITIES

- On August 15, Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash - became the first Indian in the last 23 years to win a gold medal at the “Mental Calculation World Championship” in the Mind Sports Olympiad 2020 in London.

Mental Calculations (WC)		
Gold	Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash Jonnalagadda	
Silver, Gold JNR	Mohammad El Mir	
Bronze, Silver JNR	Asmita Pal Ashish Pal	
Bronze JNR	Yosra Soleimani	

- ✓ The Mind Sport Olympiad was held virtually with 30 participants from the UK, Germany, UAE, France, Greece and Lebanon.
- ✓ The math event was first held in 1998.
- ✓ Prakash is a mathematics graduate of Delhi’s St Stephen’s College and a resident of Hyderabad
- ✓ At the age of 20, he is hailed as the “world’s fastest human calculator”.
- ✓ He holds four world records and 50 Limca records for his mental ability
- ✓ Prakash was announced as the proud winner of the crown with 167 points.

## DEFENCE

- India - is all set to seal the long-pending around \$1billion deal to acquire two more “Phalcon” airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft from Israel, following cost-related issues over many years.

- ✓ The acquisition of the two AWACS is all set to get the final nod from the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) after extensive inter-ministerial consultations
- ✓ The AWACS will be purchased along with the Israeli Phalcon early-warning radar system mounted on Russian Ilyushin-76 heavy-lift aircraft

### Airborne Early Warning and Control System ( AEW&C)



- ✓ The two new Phalcon AWACS will be delivered within the next three to four years.
- ✓ Already, India has three “Phalcon” aircrafts inducted by the IAF in 2009-2011 under a \$1.1 billion contract
- ✓ The new Phalcon AWACS will be more advanced than the first three Phalcon AWACS with the latest upgrades.
- ✓ AWACS or AEW&C (airborne early-warning and control) aircraft are critical in modern warfare
  - ✓ They are capable of detecting and tracking incoming fighters, cruise missiles and drones much before ground-based radars
  - ✓ Also, they are employed as direct friendly fighters during air combat with enemy jets, and can check enemy troop build-ups and movement of warships.
- ✓ When compared with India, Pakistan and China has much more aircrafts of similar nature.
- ✓ Pakistan has 8-10 Chinese Karakoram Eagle ZDK-03 AWACS and Swedish Saab-2000 AEW&C.
- ✓ China, in turn, has well over 30, including Kong Jing-2000 “Mainring”, KJ-200 “Moth” and KJ-500 aircraft.
- ✓ India currently has just three Phalcon AWACS, with a 400-km range and 360-degree coverage along with two indigenous “Netra” AEW&C aircraft, with indigenous 240-degree coverage radars with a 250-km range fitted on smaller Brazilian Embraer-145 jets.
- ✓ A much more ambitious indigenous AWACS-India project worth ₹5,113 crore was approved by the defence ministry in March 2015
  - ✓ It aims to obtain 360-degree coverage with indigenous AESA (active electronically scanned array) radars that are to be mounted on two Airbus A-330 wide-body jets.
  - ✓ This project is sent to the CCS for clearance now.



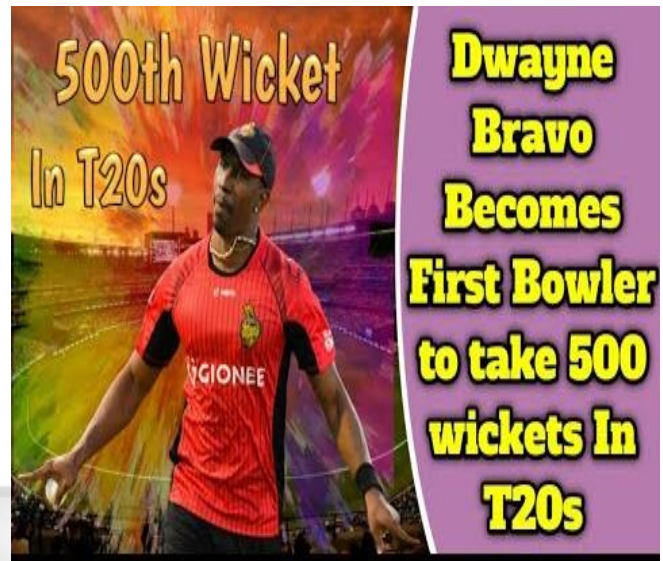
# SPORTS

- On August 26, Dwayne Bravo - became the first bowler to pick 500 wickets in T20s in his 459<sup>th</sup> match

## MAJOR BOWLING MILESTONES IN TWENTY20 CRICKET

Milestone	Player	Achievement Date
100 wickets	Dirk Nannes	June 6, 2010
200 wickets	Dirk Nannes	December 30, 2012
300 wickets	Dwayne Bravo	April 11, 2016
400 wickets	Dwayne Bravo	December 21, 2017
500 wickets	Dwayne Bravo	August 26, 2020

www.crictracker.com



- ✓ He achieved the feat, playing for Trinbago Knight Riders, after picking up the wicket of St Lucia Zouks opener Rahkeem Cornwall
- ✓ The wicket also happened to be his 100th in the Caribbean Premier League, making him the first man to reach the mark.
- ✓ Bravo, who made his T20 debut in 2006, had also been the first to 300 and 400 T20 wickets as well.

	MTS	WKTS	AVG	ECON
DWAYNE BRAVO	459	501	24.58	8.24
LASITH MALINGA	294	389	19.67	7.08
SUNIL NARINE	339	383	20.30	6.01
IMRAN TAHIR	295	374	19.70	6.99
SOHAIL TANVIR	341	356	24.52	7.31
SHAKIB AL HASAN	308	354	21.07	6.90
SHAHID AFRIDI	317	339	22.26	6.71
RASHID KHAN	215	301	17.28	6.32
WAHAB RIAZ	252	296	21.54	7.15
ANDRE RUSSELL	325	294	25.90	8.27

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- ✓ Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga is second on the list of T20 wicket-takers, with 390 wickets from 295 matches.
- ✓ In the IPL alone, the 36-year old Bravo has taken 147 wickets, finishing as the top wicket-taker in the 2013 and 2015 seasons turning up for Chennai Super Kings.

## COVID RESTRICTIONS ACROSS INDIAN CITIES – A REPORT

