

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 30, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- On August 29, Tamil Nadu - added the highest number of fresh Covid-19 cases, 6,352, and the lowest number of deaths, 87, in the last one month
- ✓ With this, the state's cumulative caseload stands at 4,15,590 and the death toll at 7,137
- ✓ The number of persons discharged in the state crossed 3.55 lakh, with the recovery of another 6,045 persons on the day.

NO RESPITE

New cases of Covid-19 and deaths in Tamil Nadu			
Zones	New Cases Today	Deaths	Active cases
Chennai	2,116	27	19,912
North	1,184	16	8,287
Central	672	8	5,447
South	1,044	19	8,867
West	1,324	17	10,117
Other	12	0	96
Total	6,352	87	52,726

- ✓ The number of active cases in the state remains at 52,726 on the day
- ✓ Chennai continue to remain hotspot with the reporting of maximum number of 1,285 cases and 17 deaths.
- ✓ Its neighbours, Chengalpet reported 306 cases, Kancheepuram 241 and Tiruvallur 284.
- ✓ Coimbatore, Salem and Cuddalore logged more than 400 cases with 491,432 and 420 fresh infections on the day.

- ✓ Further, Vellore (178), Villupuram (171) Kanyakumari (161), Erode (156), Tirunelveli (154), Tiruvannamalai (152), Ranipet (151), Thanjavur (134), Dindigul (129), Virudhunagar (126), Theni (125), Pudukottai (124), Madurai (115), Tiruvarur (102), Trichy (102) and Nagapattinam (101) reported more than 100 cases each.
 - ✓ A record 80,988 samples were tested in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of samples tested till date in the State to 46,54,797.
 - ✓ As of date, there are a total of 149 testing facilities in the state, of which 86 are in the private sector.
- **The Central Board of Secondary Education - has selected 39 teachers, including three from Tamil Nadu, for the CBSE Award to Teachers for 2019-20.**



- ✓ The teachers selected for the awards from the state are - Shoba Raman, principal, Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Chennai; Dr. S. Deepa, science teacher at G.K. Shetty Vivekananda Vidyalaya, Ambattur west; V. Bindhu, principal, Hosur Public School, Karapalli.
 - ✓ The chosen teachers all have more than 20 years of teaching experience
 - ✓ The selection process for the awards includes a tough process considering compilation of all the best practices implemented, the impact made on children, parents and all the stakeholders, including the community as a whole
- **Tamil Nadu - topped the list in availing Mudra loans to women, followed by West Bengal and Karnataka**
- ✓ This was informed in the data provided by Ministry of Finance to Rajya Sabha
 - ✓ Since the inception of Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, around 15 crore loans amounting to Rs 4.78 lakh crores were disbursed to women borrowers
 - ✓ As of March 31, 2020, Tamil Nadu had availed Rs 58,227 crores, followed by West Bengal (Rs 55,232 crores), Karnataka (Rs 47,714 crores), Bihar (Rs 44,879 crores) and Maharashtra (Rs 42,000 crores)
 - ✓ Of the total number of loans provided under MUDRA scheme, 70% borrowers were women

- ✓ Mudra Yojana was launched in 2015 to provide loans upto Rs. 10 lakhs to non-corporate, small and micro enterprises
- ✓ The loans are given by regional rural banks, commercial banks, small finance banks, non-banking financial corporations, micro-financial institutions.
- ✓ Under the scheme, special loans up to Rs 10,000 were provided recently to street vendors to restart their businesses that were badly hit by Covid-19 lock down.
- ✓ On the negative side, the non-performing assets of MUDRA loans have increased from 2.52% in 2017-18 to 2.68% in 2018-19.

STATES

- **The Assam Government – has announced that Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 is to be extended for six more months in the state with effect from August 28.**
 - ✓ The main reason for the extension of the Act is attributed to the recent insurgent attacks and seizure of several illegal arms and ammunition from many places in the state
 - ✓ The act gives special powers to the armed forces to maintain public order in “disturbed areas” affected by racial violence, communal violence, clash between two groups, etc.
 - ✓ Under the Act, the armed forces shall arrest any suspect without warrant and can stop any vehicle for searching
 - ✓ An area can be declared disturbed by the Central Government, Governor of State, administrator of Union Territory.
 - ✓ The AFSPA act was enacted in 1958 and enforced in all the seven sister states of the North East one by one
 - ✓ It was also imposed in Punjab in 1983 and later withdrawn in 1997.
 - ✓ In 1990, the act was applied to Jammu and Kashmir and has been in force since then.
 - ✓ Justice Jeevan Reddy Committee has recommended scrapping of AFSPA
 - ✓ In March 2019, AFSPA was completely removed from Meghalaya.
- **The Government of Kerala - has launched Marine Ambulance services to provide first aid and rescue operations to fishermen stranded on sea**



- ✓ They are deployed as Pratheeksha in Thiruvananthapuram, Pratyasha in Ernakulam and Karunya in Kozhikode
 - ✓ The ambulance has been designed under the standards of Indian Registry of Shipping
 - ✓ Designed to attend upto five persons, the ambulances can run at maximum speed of 14 knots
 - ✓ The project has been allotted a budget of Rs 39 crore with Rs. 36 crore allocated from Chief Minister Disaster Relief Funds, while the balance has been contributed from Corporate Social Responsibility Fund
- **On August 28, the Arunachal Pradesh State Government - passed the resolution to bring the state under Schedule VI of Indian Constitution**
- ✓ The sixth schedule of the constitution provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram.
 - ✓ It safeguards the rights of tribal population in these states by focusing on their development and protection against exploitation
 - ✓ It was included based on the reports of Bardoloi Committee that was formed by the Constituent Assembly.
 - ✓ The sixth schedule gives tribal to exercise executive and legislative powers in their districts through these Autonomous district councils, without the interference of respective state governments
 - ✓ The Governor of the state is empowered to organize and re-organize autonomous districts
 - ✓ Every district operating under the council consists of 30 members.
 - ✓ Of these four are nominated by the governor and the rest 26 are elected based on adult franchise.
 - ✓ Further, Every foreigner, except for the citizen of Bhutan, is required to obtain special permit called 'Inner Line Permit' to stay in a protected area
 - ✓ The system of Inner Line permit was established by the British Government in 1873
 - ✓ The entire states of Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim and Parts of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan are classified as 'protected areas'
- **Kerala - is to set up its first International Women Trade Centre in terms of the United Nations Sustainable Development goals**
- ✓ The Centre will accelerate women entrepreneurship and provides an ecosystem to start a business, expand and get their products marketed globally.
 - ✓ The Women Trade Centre will enable women entrepreneurs to participate in international trade, enhance competitiveness, and derive greater economic benefits.
 - ✓ The Centre will also have space for women to promote arts and cultural forms such as music, dance and theatre for women.

- ✓ The building will also have a creche and a day care centre for children.
- ✓ The Centre has been established under the Green Park initiative of Kerala, launched in 2013 focusing on gender equality and empowerment in the state
- ✓ Kerala has already launched 'She Taxi', a women-centric programme in which women are the owners and drivers of their vehicles
- ✓ The Centre has also launched initiatives like 'Women Entrepreneurship Platform' in the year 2018 to boost the women entrepreneurship in the country

NATIONAL

- **The guidelines for the nationwide Unlock 4.0, which will come into effect from September 1 - were issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on August 29**
- ✓ The guidelines were issued under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, after it was invoked for the first time in March.
- ✓ As per the new guidelines, the states and UTs should consult the Centre 'mandatorily' before imposing any local lockdown in areas other than containment zones.
- ✓ The new unlock guidelines aim to allow opening up of more activities outside the containment zones
- ✓ However, schools and colleges will continue to remain shut.
- ✓ But, states may permit upto 50% of teaching and non-teaching staff to be called to the schools at a time for online teaching/ tele-counselling and related work.
- ✓ Students of classes 9 to 12 may be permitted to visit their schools, in areas outside the containment zones only, on voluntary basis, for taking guidance from their teachers with the written consent of their parents/ guardians.

BARS, RESTAURANTS CAN SERVE BOOZE	
 <p>➤ Schools & colleges to stay shut till Sept 30 but teachers can be called to school and students from Class 9-12 can visit for guidance from Sept 21</p>	 <p>➤ Cap on weddings of 50 and funeral of 20 will continue till Sept 20 after which ceiling will be 100</p>
 <p>➤ Metro to be allowed from Sept 7 in graded manner. Home ministry to issue SOP</p>	 <p>➤ Cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres to remain closed. Open-air theatres can open from Sept 21</p>
<p>➤ Social, religious, political, sports functions of max 100 people allowed from Sept 21 with masks, thermal scanning</p>	<p>➤ Bars and restaurants can serve liquor from Sept 1</p>

- ✓ Post-graduate students, research scholars and those who need to conduct research and use labs will be allowed to attend higher education institutions
- ✓ Metro trains will resume services in a graded manner from September 7, while open air theatres are permitted to reopen starting September 21.

- ✓ However, movement of passenger trains will continue to be regulated as per existing standard operating procedure.
 - ✓ Bars and restaurants are also given permission to serve liquor to customers from September 1 itself.
 - ✓ Social, academic, sports, entertainment, cultural, religious, political functions and other congregations will be permitted with a ceiling of 100 persons, with effect from September 21, 2020.
 - ✓ Marriage functions and funerals, which at present can have maximum 50 and 20 attendees, respectively, will also have a raised ceiling of 100 attendees after September 20
 - ✓ However, such limited gatherings can be held with mandatory wearing of face masks, social distancing, provision for thermal scanning and hand wash or sanitizer.
 - ✓ Cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment marks and theatres will continue to stay shut
 - ✓ The lockdown measures will be implemented strictly in containment zones till September 30.
- **The health ministry - has decided to 'revive' two-year post-graduate (PG) diploma courses that applicants can pursue after completing their MBBS.**
- ✓ This will enable National Board of Examination to start eight post graduate speciality diploma courses in obstetrics and gynaecology, anaesthesiology, paediatrics, tuberculosis and chest disease, family medicine, ophthalmology, radio diagnosis, and ENT
 - ✓ Candidates can pursue these courses by clearing the NEET-PG exam after completing MBBS
 - ✓ Hospitals with a minimum of 100 operational beds are eligible to seek accreditation with NBE for the diploma courses.
 - ✓ The decision by the government is aimed in addressing the shortage of specialists in district hospitals and in rural India
 - ✓ In 2019, the Medical Council of India (MCI) had converted its diploma courses into degree courses to overcome the shortfall of teaching faculty in the country.
- **On August 29, India - added nearly 79,000 fresh cases to its Covid-19 tally, the highest single-day surge recorded in any country so far, taking the cumulative caseload past the 3.5 million (35 lakh) mark**
- ✓ At 78,903 fresh cases, the Covid-19 numbers in India on August 29 surpassed the previous highest single-day count of 78,427 infections reported in the US on July 25
 - ✓ Maharashtra continued to break records with the reporting of 16,867 fresh infections, much higher than the state's previous highest of 14,888 recorded on August 26.

- ✓ Other states which reported high numbers on the day were Andhra Pradesh (10,548, above 10,000 for the fourth day), Karnataka (8,324, above 8,000 for five days), Tamil Nadu (6,352) and Uttar Pradesh (5,684).

HIGHEST DAILY CASES RECORDED GLOBALLY		
78,903 India (Aug 29)	78,427 US (July 25)	BIGGEST 7-DAY SURGE ▶ 4,96,070 cases in India in past week, highest for any 7-day period in any country ▶ 70,867 avg cases per day during this period INDIA TALLY CROSSES 3.5M ▶ 35,36,667 cases so far
76,930 US (July 17)	76,489 India (Aug 27)	
DEATHS Saturday 945 Total 63,580	RECOVERIES Saturday 64,681 Total 27,06,861	ACTIVE CASES Sat Rise 13,321 Total 7,66,226

- ✓ The country has 7,66,226 active cases, while there were 27,06,861 recoveries reported.
- ✓ A total of 945 deaths were reported on the day, with the toll dropping below 1,000 for the first time in five days.
- **The average income of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has doubled during COVID-19 lock down, as per the report of CRISIL**
- ✓ During the period of April-July, the states witnessed 46% growth in work execution under the scheme.
- ✓ The average day wage increased by 12%, during the same period
- ✓ The scheme generated more work in the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Odisha and Gujarat
- ✓ In 2020-21, the centre allocated the highest ever allocation of Rs 61,500 crores in Union Budget 2020-21 and later increased the allocation to Rs 40,000 crores under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan
- **The Department of Agriculture, operating under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare - has created an e-auction portal for GI-tagged Kashmir Saffron in collaboration with NSE-IT.**
- ✓ The portal has been developed under the aegis of India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre.
- ✓ The portal will help in hassle-free e-trading between the registered growers and buyers of quality Kashmir Saffron
- ✓ According to the Department of Agriculture, the Pulwama district of Kashmir grows 3,200 hectares of saffron.
- ✓ Of late, Indian market is flooded with far more inexpensive Iranian saffron

- ✓ Iran is the largest producer of saffron in the world cultivating 30,000 hectares of saffron every year
 - ✓ Kashmir was ranked second and grows only 3,715 hectares of Saffron
 - ✓ Kashmir Saffron is the only saffron in the world that is grown at an altitude of 1,600 metres to 1,800 metres without using any chemicals
 - ✓ There are three types of saffron namely Lachha Saffron, Guchhi Saffron, Mongra Saffron.
- **On August 27, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment – launched ‘Kiran’, a toll-free mental health rehabilitation healthline through video conference**
- ✓ The helpline number “1800-599-0019” will help in providing psychological support, psychological crisis management, early screening, mental wellbeing, first-aid, and will also help to prevent disturbed behaviour.
 - ✓ The number will connect 668 volunteer psychiatrists who can handle around 300 clients per hour.
 - ✓ The helpline is to offer support in 13 languages
 - ✓ The initiative will be helpful for patients with depression, anxiety, traumatic stress disorder, panic attack, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse and mental health emergency.
 - ✓ In 1992, Government of India launched the National Mental Health Programme to improve the mental health status of India
 - ✓ In 1987, the Mental Health Act was first enacted, which was repealed in 2017, giving rise to the Mental Health Care Act, 2017
 - ✓ WHO launched Mental Health Atlas in the year 2017.
- **India – recycles only 1% of its construction and demolition waste, as per the Centre for Science and Environment’s recently released report**
- ✓ The country recycles around 6,500 tonnes in a day, as against the generation of 150 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste every year
 - ✓ Only 13 cities have established recycling facilities in order to recover material from Construction and Demolition waste by 2017
 - ✓ However, around 53 cities were required to establish recycling facilities by 2017
 - ✓ As per the Sustainable Urbanisation Programme of the centre, bricks, concrete, metal wastes from construction bodies are choking water bodies, public places and green areas.
 - ✓ The Construction and Demolition Waste Rules and Regulations, 2016 mandated the reuse of recycled material
 - ✓ Accordingly, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) allowed the use of concrete from recycled material.
 - ✓ Construction and Demolition waste management is one of the major criteria to award points in Swachh Survekshan 2021.

- **On August 28, the Centre - launched “Chunauti”, the next generation start up challenge contest to address the issues faced during pandemic.**



- ✓ Around 300 start ups working in select areas are to be identified and provided with seed fund up to Rs 25 lakhs.
- ✓ The Startups will work in software product development related domain to support industries, Government and public at large.
- ✓ Chunauti refers to ‘Challenge Hunt Under NGIS for Advanced Uninhibited Technology Intervention’
- ✓ It has been launched with special focus on tier-II cities
- ✓ Recently, the government has set up National Startup Advisory Council to boost Startups and Innovation, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- ✓ The council will suggest measures to spread culture of innovation among students and citizens.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The Bangladesh Government – is planning to relocate Rohingya refugees to the newly built facility at the Bashan Char Island.**
- ✓ The move is aimed at providing better living conditions for the refugee community from Myanmar.
- ✓ Currently, millions of Rohingyas were staying in cramped facilities at the Cox’s Bazar, a port town in the south east coast of Bangladesh.
- ✓ The Bashan Char Island is located in the Bay of Bengal at a distance of 37 miles from the Bangladesh coast.
- ✓ It is a new island, which was formed very recently by Himalayan silt in 2006.
- ✓ According to environmentalists, the Bashan Char Island is prone to floods, erosion, high tides and cyclones.
- ✓ According to Bangladesh government, the new houses for Rohingyas have been built four feet above the ground to protect the refugees from high tidal waves.
- ✓ Around 1 million Rohingyas fled from Rakhine State of Myanmar after a military crackdown in 2017

- ✓ There are more than 40,000 Rohingyas in India and Indian government is currently in the process of deporting them to Bangladesh
- **The UAE Government - launched AGRIOTA, a new technology driven agricultural commodity trading platform that will bridge the rural farmers from India and the gulf food industry**
- ✓ The initiative has been launched by Dubai's free-zone Dubai Multi Commodities Center (DMCC) and the Dubai government's authority on commodity trade and enterprise
- ✓ The E-Market place allows the farmers to connect with the UAE food industry directly bypassing intermediaries.
- ✓ This includes food processing companies, traders and wholesalers
- ✓ Initially, grains, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, vegetables and spices will be offered through this platform.
- ✓ The initiative is expected to improve the food security index of both the countries
- ✓ Through the platform, farmers will be able to make maximum use of the supply chain, ensuring complete transparency with secure money transaction, which will benefit all stakeholders
- ✓ In 2019, India exported more than \$38 billion of agricultural and processed food products to UAE.

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **India and Bangladesh - will open new inland waterway from September 3, 2020.**
- ✓ This is based on the agreement signed by the countries in May 2020 on Inland Water Transit and Trade.
- ✓ The number of IBP (Indo-Bangladesh Protocol) routes was increased from eight to ten.
- ✓ As part of the Act East policy, India is opening up new networks of transport, trade and other lifelines putting North East at the forefront
- ✓ By this, India intends to check insurgency and counter terrorism in the north east region with the help of the ASEAN countries.
- ✓ Already, the existing Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route connects National Waterway-I with NW-2 and NW-16 via Bangladesh

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital – will be conducting an International Conference on Climate Change and its Impact on Himalayan Region from September 14-16**
- ✓ The conference will discuss topics on rapid increase in air pollution due to urbanisation, industrialisation and its impact on global air quality, cloud formation,

visibility degradation, radiation budget, monsoon patterns, human health, water availability, glaciology and Himalayan climate.

- ✓ It will focus on different themes involving the impacts of climate change, growing pollution and climate interaction of aerosols in Himalayan Glaciers and Himalayan-Gangetic plains
 - ✓ The Himalayan Glaciers and Himalayan-Gangetic plains are the regions affected by pollution due to emissions from power plants and bio-fuel burning, resulting in black carbon deposition
 - ✓ In March 2020, the researchers at the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology found that the presence of black carbon has almost doubled in the last few years mainly due to forest fires and agricultural burning
- **The Industrial Ministers of BRICS countries - attended video meeting on 5G, industrial internet and Artificial Intelligence on August 24**
- ✓ During the meet, China urged the BRICS countries to strengthen cooperation on digital transformation.
 - ✓ The meeting has come ahead of the BRICS foreign ministers meet in September 2020.
 - ✓ Due to COVID-19 crisis, Russia has postponed the SCO and BRICS summit that is scheduled in July 2020
 - ✓ The BRICS grouping consists of five economies - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
 - ✓ During the 11th BRICS Summit that was held in 2019 in Brazil, PM Modi announced to host BRICS Digital Health Summit
 - ✓ India also proposed to hold the first BRICS Water Ministers Meet in India.
 - ✓ The bank of BRICS countries, New Development Bank, also called the BRICS Development Bank was established in 2014.
 - ✓ It is headquartered in Shanghai, China.
- **The 17th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held virtually on August 25**



- ✓ It was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Binh Minh

- ✓ During the meeting, both sides reviewed the recent developments in India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed the future plans regarding their bilateral cooperation.
- ✓ Two MoUs were also signed on the margins of the Joint Commission Meeting
- ✓ Both sides agreed to coordinate closely at multilateral forums, including at the UN Security Council, where both India and Vietnam will serve concurrently as non-permanent members in 2021.
- ✓ India has been assisting development and capacity building to Vietnam through initiatives such as Quick Impact Projects, ITEC and e-ITEC initiatives, PhD fellowships, as well as projects in water resource management in Vietnam's Mekong Delta region, SDGs, digital connectivity and heritage conservation.
- ✓ The year 2017 marked the 10th anniversary of India-Vietnam strategic partnership
- ✓ Currently, the bilateral trade exchanges between India and Vietnam are \$13 billion
- ✓ Vietnam is one of the beneficiaries of the Earth Satellite Observation Tracking and Telemetry station that was set up as a part of India-ASEAN programme.
- ✓ India and Vietnam hold Naval Exercises called the MILAN and are part of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, called the ADMM+

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On August 28, Billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's neuroscience startup Neuralink - unveiled a pig named 'Gertrude' that has had a coin-sized computer chip in its brain for two months**



- ✓ The innovation is seen as a first step towards the goal of curing human diseases with the similar type of implants.
- ✓ San Francisco Bay Area-based Neuralink was co- founded by Tesla Inc and SpaceX CEO Musk in 2016
- ✓ The company aims to implant wireless brain-computer interfaces that include thousands of electrodes in the most complex human organ to help cure neurological conditions like Alzheimer's, dementia and spinal cord injuries and ultimately integrate people with artificial intelligence.
- ✓ According to Musk, the concept of 'implantable' devices can help treating ailments such as memory loss, hearing loss, depression and insomnia

- ✓ Musk did not provide a timeline for those treatments, even though he earlier said that human trials would begin by the end of this year.
- ✓ Neuralink's first clinical trials with a small number of human patients would be aimed at treating paralysis or paraplegia
- **India's ASTROSAT, the first multi wavelength satellite - has detected extreme UV light from galaxy at a distance of 9.3 billion light years away from the Earth.**
 - ✓ ASTROSAT, having five unique X-ray and UV telescopes, is an Indian Remote Sensing Satellite
 - ✓ It was launched on September 28, 2015.
 - ✓ The five major instruments on board covers soft X-ray, hard X-ray, far UV, near UV, and visible light.
 - ✓ Indian space Science Data Centre, Bengaluru is the primary data archive centre of Astrosat
 - ✓ ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network is the ground command and control centre for Astrosat.
 - ✓ With the success of the satellite, ISRO is planning to launch ASTROSAT-2 as its successor
- **A team of researchers from Andhra University - discovered a rare fish called "Mahseer" in the Sileru river at Andhra Pradesh**
 - ✓ The fish is listed as Endangered in IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) list.
 - ✓ Mahseer, a large fresh water fish, is commonly found in the cooler environment of fast-moving Himalayan hill streams
 - ✓ They are located in places such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bhutan, Nepal.
 - ✓ There are 47 species of Mahseer in the world, out of which 15 are found in India.
 - ✓ Recently, in 2019, the IUCN changed the conservation status of Hump Backed Mahseer to Critically Endangered.
 - ✓ They are found only in River Cauvery in India and are not found anywhere else in the world.
 - ✓ Project Mahseer is a conservation project launched by the SHOAL, an international organization that is engaged in conserving fresh water species.
 - ✓ The need for conservation of Mahseer was first reported by the National Commission on Agriculture, 1976.
 - ✓ The Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 does not give any protection to Mahseer
 - ✓ The World Wildlife Fund-India has commenced a conservation programme in 2017
 - ✓ It is planning to designate 30 km stretch of Kosi river as community reserve of Mahseers, which are identified there.

- ✓ According to United Nations report on Global Biodiversity crisis, the fresh water species population has declined by 83%.
- ✓ The first International Conference to save Mahseer was held in Bhutan in 2018.
- ✓ Earlier, in 2014, WWF-India convened a forum in Delhi.

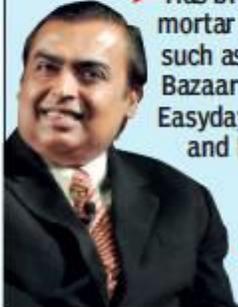
DEFENCE

- **India - has pulled out of the multi-nation exercise in Russia next month because Chinese as well as Pakistani troops are also slated to take part in the combat drills.**
- ✓ The defence ministry, however, attributed the pullout from the exercise to the raging Covid-19 pandemic
- ✓ The decision by the government is taken in view of the brutal attack of Indian soldiers by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) in a premeditated attack in Galwan Valley on June 15
- ✓ Twenty Indian soldiers were killed in the attack.

ECONOMY

- **On August 29, Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd – announced the acquisition of retail business of the financially-stressed Future Group for ₹24,713 crore.**
- ✓ As per the deal, RIL will take ownership of 'Future first', combining its various entities across grocery retail, apparel retail, supply chain, logistics infrastructure and consumer products manufacturing with 'Future Enterprises', which is into manufacturing of fashion products.

BAGS BIG BAZAAR, FBB, EASYDAY

<p>₹30,000cr annual turnover of Future Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Future Group runs several businesses, mainly across retail, fashion & logistics 	<p>manufactures private label brands through Future Consumer and sources fashion through Future Enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Operates 1,800 stores across 400 cities
<p>➤ Has brick-and-mortar chains such as Big Bazaar, FBB, Easyday, Central and Nilgiris,</p>	<p>➤ Has consolidated debt of around ₹12,900 crore and over 50,000 employees</p>
 <p>◀ Mukesh Ambani</p>	 <p>Kishore Biyani ▶</p>

- ✓ The brands which will come to Reliance include Big Bazaar, fbb, Foodhall, Easyday, Nilgiris, Central and Brand Factory.
 - ✓ Future Enterprises will also transfer the logistics and warehouse businesses to RIL.
 - ✓ The businesses will be transferred on a slump sale basis.
 - ✓ Slump sale means transfer of a division of a company for a lump sum without assigning any values to individual assets and liabilities of the entity.
 - ✓ RIL has routed the proposed deal through its subsidiary Reliance Retail Ventures, which reported a consolidated turnover of ₹1.6 lakh crore and profit of ₹5,448 crore in 2020.
 - ✓ RIL will take over certain debt and liabilities related to the retail business and will invest another ₹1,600 crore for a minority stake of 13% in Future Enterprises.
 - ✓ In May, the company launched JioMart, an online grocery service, which competes with Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart.
- **On August 25, the Reserve Bank of India - released its annual report 2019-20, which highlights its highest levels of financial resilience in the global market**
- ✓ According to the report, the total income in 2019-20 has increased by 28.97% when compared with 2018-19
 - ✓ During this period, the balance sheet of the banking regulator has shown an increase of 13.42%, while its expenditure decreased by 39.72%.
 - ✓ The RBI holdings of Government Securities and its interest income have also increased by 57.19% and 44.62% respectively
 - ✓ The value of bank fraud cases has increased 74%, while the Gross Non-Performing Ratio of banking system have declined to 9.1%
 - ✓ Till June 2019, the RBI held 618.16 metric tonnes of gold as compared to 566,23 tonnes held in June 2018.
 - ✓ The currency in circulation has also increased by 17%.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, the Contingency Funds of RBI reduced to Rs 1.96 lakh crore as against Rs 2.32 lakh crores in 2018-19.
 - ✓ This was mainly because RBI has changed the way of calculating its reserves based on the recommendations made by Bimal Jalan Committee
 - ✓ One of the major recommendations made by the committee is that the bank should align its accounting year to April-March (fiscal year).
 - ✓ Generally, the annual report of the RBI analyses its working and operations and suggests measures to improve economic performance.

