

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 16, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami – unfurled the national flag at the Fort St. George on the occasion of 74th Independence Day on August 15.
- ✓ In his Independence Day speech, the fourth in a row, the Chief Minister said the government was taking efforts on a war-footing by following proper procedures in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic
- ✓ He said the state had spent ₹6,650 crore from the state's own resources for Covid relief and preventive measures.
- ✓ The state does the highest number of RT-PCR tests in the country and maintains a high recovery rate.



- ✓ The CM announced a new veterinary college and research institute in Udumalpet in Tiruppur district this year
- ✓ He had also announced the enhancement of freedom fighters pension from ₹16,000 to ₹17,000 and pension for legal heirs from ₹8,000 to ₹8,500

- ✓ Listing out the achievements of his government in various sectors “overcoming several challenges,” the chief minister hoped that Tamil Nadu economy would soon get back to normalcy.
- ✓ The CM announced that his government has decided to provide 7.5% NEET quota for government school students through legislation.
- ✓ The state government has also laid the foundation stone for 11 medical colleges with the approval of the Union government to realize the dreams of rural and economically backward students, he said.
- ✓ Further, he said that the state has signed 41 MoUs for investments worth ₹30,664 crore to generate employment to 67,212 people.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu tops the list of states in terms of loan sanction (₹7,043 crore) under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee scheme of the Centre as part of the stimulus package for MSME sector.

CITIZEN LEADERS

Medals to Covid-19 warriors

Departments of health and family welfare, police, revenue and disaster management, cooperation, food and consumer protection and urban local bodies rendered outstanding service as frontline departments in tackling Covid-19 and helped the public by providing essential services. As a symbolic gesture, **27 frontline staff from the six departments were honoured** by the chief minister by presenting a gold plated medal and a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their excellent work



A P J Abdul Kalam Award | S Selva Kumar, founder, Anandham Youth Foundation.

The foundation identifies **economically backward rural students** unable to pursue higher education and **takes care of their educational needs**, including college fees, hostel, food, transport and training. Selvakumar has **supported 365 students** pursuing MBBS, engineering, arts and science and various other streams in the past 23 years



Chief minister's special award for Covid-19 | Dr Soumya Swaminathan, chief scientist, World Health Organisation, Geneva. Soumya has been advising the state government on various management aspects relating to the pandemic

Kalpana Chawala Award for Courage and Daring Enterprises | R Senthamil Selvi, S Muthammal and A Ananthavalli of Perambalur district

On August 6, the trio were washing clothes on the banks of Kottarai canal, when four youths went there for a dip. The women warned the youths since the canal was flooded but the youths ventured into the water body. All four started drowning and the women jumped into the canal, threw one end of the saree one of them was wearing to the youths and managed to pull two to safety, while the other two could not be saved. In appreciation of their brave and selfless act, the government conferred them with the award



R Senthamil Selvi



S Muthammal



A Ananthavalli

- ✓ The state government also enacted in February a legislation to protect Cauvery basin agricultural zone, to prevent hazardous industries setting up facilities there.
- ✓ The state realized 100 tonnes of food grain production for six years in a row.
- ✓ The state government has allotted ₹700 crore for Cauvery-Gundar river link scheme, and was implementing several water resources programmes, including Athikadavu-Avinashi scheme and Tamirabarani-Karumeniyar-Nambiyar interlink, the CM said

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Cyber Crime wing was presented the 'Best Practices' Award at the Independence Day celebrations in Chennai, in appreciation of the work done by its personnel in combating COVID-19.
 - ✓ Policemen from the wing were involved in contact tracing and identification of hotspots.
 - ✓ The Chief Minister also presented the 'Chief Minister's Best Practices' Award to the Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops and Agricultural Engineering for adopting innovative water conservation strategies, enabling the State to achieve the top position in the country in micro-irrigation.
 - ✓ He also gave away a certificate of appreciation to the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation for steps taken to ensure uninterrupted availability of drugs to combat COVID-19.
- **The Greater Chennai Corporation's fever clinics - have bagged the CM's award for the second best initiative this year.**
- ✓ The civic body had started the camps in May when the daily Covid-19 case numbers are high and to prevent the emergence of any new cluster after the Koyambedu market.
 - ✓ During his Independence Day speech, Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami said fever clinics had helped break the transmission chain.
 - ✓ Since May 8, 33,186 fever clinics have been held, with at least 500 being set up daily.
 - ✓ On August 15, 18,563 people visited 457 camps in 15 zones, with samples from 1,128 people being collected.
 - ✓ So far, about 18 lakh people have visited these camps where more than one lakh influenza-like flu (ILI) cases have been detected, with nearly 18,000 people testing positive.
 - ✓ The positivity rate at fever camps is about 17%.
 - ✓ The solid waste department ensures cleanliness and sanitation, while the engineering wing helps with logistics and creates awareness.
 - ✓ With new challenges every day, solutions such as auto ambulances, cabs to ferry patients to and from camps have come up.
 - ✓ All drugs and safety equipment are given in bulk to doctors at camps where portable tents are used



- ✓ On the eve of Independence Day, the Greater Chennai Corporation honoured the officials and staff who tested positive for Covid-19, showed severe symptoms and recovered to return to duty
- ✓ They were felicitated by corporation commissioner G Prakash.
- **After a gap of four months, international flights - have resumed in a small way from Chennai airport with airlines flying services to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah.**
- ✓ The state government has also waived seven days institutional quarantine for those who arrive with Covid-19 negative certificate.
 - ✓ As per the new rule, passengers who arrive from abroad with an Covid-19 test certificate will have to undergo another test here and can go on home quarantine if the result is negative.
- ✓ This means those who do not have Covid-19 infection may stay in a hotel or a government facility for one or two days only.
- ✓ Indigo and GoAir have released schedules from Chennai and SpiceJet from Madurai for flights to the UAE till the end of the month.
- ✓ The move comes after the ministry of civil aviation approved flights between airports under the 'air bubble' scheme.
- ✓ However, the number of flights will be limited, as it's not daily service
- ✓ The state government hasn't permitted the regular flight services yet, considering the spread of Covid-19 in the State.
- **On August 15, Tamil Nadu – added 127 deaths – highest so far – taking the cumulative death toll in the state to 5,641.**
- ✓ The state also reported 5,860 fresh cases of Covid-19 pushing the case tally to 3,32,105.
- ✓ At the end of the day, 5,236 people were discharged from various hospitals, taking the total number of people cured to 2,72,251.
- ✓ With this, the number of active cases in the state stands at 54,213.

KEEPING COUNT

ZONE	Fresh cases	Deaths today	Active Cases
Chennai Region	2,161	38	21,086
North	1,088	16	9,330
South	1,211	35	12,700
Central	670	21	5,194
West	712	17	5,731
Other	18	0	172

- ✓ **For the first time, the state reported “incidental covid” – people with chronic ailments, organ failure or end stage diseases diagnosed with the viral infection on August 15**
- ✓ Hotspot Chennai reported 1,179 fresh cases and 26 deaths.
- ✓ The adjoining districts Tiruvallur (422), Chengalpet (376), Kancheepuram (184), together reported 982 cases and 12 deaths.
- ✓ Cuddalore (340), Coimbatore (290), Ranipet (260), Theni (213), Salem (200), Kanyakumari (182), Pudukkottai (170), Tirunelveli (169), Virudhunagar (167), Vellore (153), Dindigul (118), Trichy (117), Thanjavur (109) and Tiruvannamalai (100) reported a three digit increase
- ✓ A total of 36,40,796 samples have been tested in the State, after the testing of 71,343 samples in the last 24 hours.
- ✓ The state has 135 testing facilities as on date, with the approval of one more government laboratory — the Government Hospital in Attur, Salem district
- ✓ With this, there are currently 62 government testing facilities and 73 private ones in the State.
- ✓ From August 17, all banks in the state will work normal hours with 50% staff to provide usual banking services as against the current practice of the entire staff reporting for duty.

SCHEMES

- **On August 12, 2020, the Assam Government – announced that it will be launching a new scheme called “Arunodoi” from October 2, 2020**
- ✓ The scheme aims to empower women ‘financially’ while boosting economic development in the State.
- ✓ The Arunodoi or Orunodoi scheme will be the biggest scheme in Assam that will benefit more than 17 lakh families.
- ✓ The State Government of Assam has allocated a budget of Rs 280 crores for the new scheme.
- ✓ It will act as an umbrella scheme for all other government schemes for the next 5 years
- ✓ Under the scheme, Rs 830 per month is to be provided to poor households.
- ✓ This will help to meet their nutritional, medical and academic needs
- ✓ It will also help the under-privileged people to meet their additional spending during festivals.
- ✓ At the rate of Rs 830 per month, a total benefit of Rs 10,000 per year will be provided to beneficiaries through DBT for nutritional and medicinal support.
- ✓ The scheme will give priority to households that are run by divorced women, widows, separated women and unmarried women.
- ✓ The only condition for availing the benefit under the scheme is that the gross income of the beneficiaries should be less than Rs 2 lakhs per annum.

STATES

- **On August 15, Manoj Sinha, who took over as the lieutenant governor of J&K recently - announced a 5-point governance formula for the development and progress of the Union Territory**



- ✓ The LG unfurled the tricolour at Srinagar's cricket stadium on the occasion of the 74th Independence Day
- ✓ During his speech, the LG promised to connect Kashmir valley with Kanyakumari by 2022
- ✓ He also announced that the government is planning to modernize and expand the cities of Jammu and Srinagar with more housing colonies, fast internet facilities, and modern healthcare facilities, which would put them on a par with the most advanced cities of the world.
- ✓ The 5-point formula of governance that the LG announced includes transparency in governance, empowering grassroots democracy, people's welfare, accelerated development, and creation of employment opportunities.
- ✓ The LG said ₹6,000 crore has been earmarked for speedy completion of languishing projects.
- ✓ He further said that the stalled irrigation projects of Shahpur Kandi and Ujh will now be executed over the next few years and provide irrigation facilities to more than 1lakh hectares of un-irrigated land and transform the agrarian scenario of the region
- ✓ He said Article 370 and 35(A) were big obstacles to the overall development of J&K and that their annulment was instrumental in making J&K a developed Union territory.

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - delivered his seventh Independence Day address from Red Fort to mark the country's 74th Independence Day on August 15, 2020**



- ✓ The Prime Minister's address comes after he unfurled the National Flag at the ramparts of the Red Fort.
- ✓ The Prime Minister was assisted by Major Shweta Pandey in unfurling the National Flag.
- ✓ PM Narendra Modi inspected the Guard of Honour at the Red Fort, which is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Gaurav S Yewalkar.
- ✓ In his 90 minutes speech, the PM focused on the two big crises the country is facing this year — the novel coronavirus pandemic and the attack on the borders by China in eastern Ladakh
- ✓ During the address, the PM said that the country and Indian army have responded to belligerence on the borders in the same language of the aggressor and has given the world a demonstration of the capability of the Indian soldier
 - ✓ The remark was seen as a reference to the Galwan Valley clashes where, Indian jawans retaliated against PLA's aggression by inflicting many casualties on the Chinese side.
 - ✓ While he did not name either China or Pakistan, the Prime Minister referred to the threats of expansionism and terrorism, in that order, represented by the two hostile neighbours
- ✓ In the rest of his speech, Modi dealt in detail on the central theme of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in the context of decisions such as curbs on defence imports that are to be indigenised, national infrastructure projects, a new education policy, development of Tejas fighters, a plan to connect all villages by fibre optical networks, and reforms in taxation and the MSME sector
- ✓ He sought to pitch the country as a manufacturing hub through 'Vocal for Local' initiative, with "Make for World" as the mantra
- ✓ The PM also said the beginning of the construction of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya is a "peaceful culmination" of the age-old Ram Janmabhoomi issue.
- ✓ Further, the PM underlined the fast progress of the ongoing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), noting the country is now connecting one lakh rural households every day with fresh water taps, since the beginning of unlock period on June 1.

- ✓ Under the mission, launched in August last year, India has provided two crore new tap connections, especially to tribal households in remote areas, in the last one year.
- ✓ He also became the first Prime Minister to talk of menstrual health and said 5 crore sanitary pads priced at ₹1 had been distributed through 6,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras spread across the country.
- ✓ The PM also indicated that the government intends to integrate rural industry and the farm sector into the overall strategy, promising to set up special economic zones (SEZs) in rural areas also
- ✓ PM also set a 1,000-day deadline for connecting Lakshadweep through a submarine optical fibre cable network to provide highspeed internet connectivity on the lines of a recent initiative in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
 - ✓ The Department of Telecommunications is to implement the project.
 - ✓ The cable will boost internet speed up to 400 Giga Bytes per second
 - ✓ The first of its kind was established between Chennai and Port Blair.
 - ✓ The Chennai-Port Blair optic fibre link is to be implemented at a cost of Rs 1,224 crores in the Andaman Islands.
- ✓ The PM also announced that, within next 1000 days, India will take optical fibre to 6 lakh villages.
 - ✓ In the last 5 years, 1.5 Lakh village panchayats have been connected with optical fibre.
- ✓ The PM also announced one lakh new NCC cadets — one-third of them girls — from the 173 districts on the land borders as well as the coastline will be trained by the armed forces in the coming days.
 - ✓ This will make trained manpower available in these areas for disaster management
 - ✓ Further, the youth will also get skill training for making a career in the armed forces.
 - ✓ The NCC cadets at the border areas will be trained by the Army, while those in the coastal areas will be trained by the Navy.
- ✓ This was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's seventh consecutive Independence Day speech.
 - ✓ He is the only fourth Prime Minister and first non-Congress Prime Minister to deliver 7 consecutive speeches from the Red Fort.
 - ✓ India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had addressed the nation maximum 16 times on the occasion of Independence Day, followed by Indira Gandhi and Dr Manmohan Singh who had addressed the nation 11 times and 10 times respectively.
- **On August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - said that India will soon have a new cyber security policy as the country goes digital, and dependence on cyberspace increases manifold**
- ✓ The government had first prepared a National Cyber Security Policy in 2013

- ✓ Last year, the National Security Council Secretariat had sought inputs for a new five-year framework
 - ✓ India has the second-highest number of internet users and among the top spam senders
 - ✓ The announcement is significant considering several government establishments, such as NHAI, have faced attacks in recent weeks.
- **On August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – announced two new missions, Project Dolphin and Project Lion, on the lines of the successful conservation programmes Project Tiger and Project Elephant**
- ✓ The new missions aim to protect Asiatic lions and dolphins in their natural habitat in a holistic manner by engaging modern technologies



- ✓ The mission would also give a boost to biodiversity and create livelihood opportunities.
- ✓ Also, the project is to address Human-Wildlife conflict, by involving local communities living closer to lion landscapes.
- ✓ Asiatic Lions have been confined to Gir National Park and its surrounding environments in Gujarat's Saurashtra.
- ✓ Project Lion is to focus on health management of lions and provide world standard care to the lions.
- ✓ It is to be noted that around 92 lions died in Gir in January 2020.
- ✓ In 2018, around 59 lions died due to Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) outbreak in the sanctuary.
- ✓ As per the 2015 census, there were a total of 523 Asiatic Lions in Gir Protected Area Network
- ✓ Asiatic Lions are listed as 'Endangered' under the IUCN Red List.
- ✓ **In India, there are two other Lion-related Projects, namely Asiatic Lion Conservation Project and Asiatic Lion Reintroduction Project**
- ✓ The Asiatic Lion Conservation Project was launched on December 20, 2018 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
 - ✓ A budget of Rs 97.85 crores was allocated for the project, spanning a three year period of 2018-21.
 - ✓ The project will be funded under the 'Development of Wildlife Habitat (CSS-DWH)' scheme which is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

- ✓ The cost will be borne in the 60:40 ratio by the Central and State government.
 - ✓ The Asiatic Lion Reintroduction Project is an initiative of Indian Government to safeguard Asiatic Lions from extinction.
 - ✓ Under the project, the Asiatic Lions are to be introduced in Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.
 - ✓ This is because the last Asiatic Lion population found in Gir National Park of Gujarat are facing threats due to anthropogenic factors, epidemics and natural disasters
 - ✓ Project Dolphin was launched to conserve and protect the Dolphins in the rivers and oceans in the country.
 - ✓ The project will conserve dolphins in aquatic habitat using modern technology especially in anti-poaching activities.
 - ✓ The Project Dolphin, announced by the PM, will, however, cover both freshwater (river) and marine (oceanic) dolphins.
 - ✓ The Project is to primarily focus on Gangetic Dolphins.
 - ✓ The Gangetic Dolphins were declared as National Aquatic Animal in 2010.
 - ✓ They have been declared 'Endangered' under IUCN Red List of Endangered Species.
 - ✓ It has been listed under CITES Appendix-1.
 - ✓ The Gangetic Dolphins have been classified under Schedule-1 of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
 - ✓ The Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary is the only sanctuary for the Gangetic Dolphins in the country.
 - ✓ At present, there are about 3,700 Gangetic river dolphins in the Indian River systems.
 - ✓ These dolphins are sighted along deep river reaches in Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- **On August 15, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi - announced the launch of the National Digital Health Mission, which includes linking all health records of an individual with a unique health ID**
- ✓ In the first phase, the scheme has been rolled out in the Union territories of Puducherry, Chandigarh, Ladakh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep
 - ✓ National Digital Health Mission will be a "completely technology-based" initiative. According to the Prime Minister, the initiative will revolutionise the health sector.
 - ✓ Every Indian will get a Health ID card that will contain all relevant information about his/her past medical conditions, treatment and diagnosis.
 - ✓ Every time a person visits a doctor or a pharmacy, all the details about his doctor's appointment, ailment, treatment, medication etc., will be logged in the unique health card in the person's health profile on a national scale.

- ✓ National Digital Health Mission aims to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of health services in the country.
 - ✓ It comes under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
 - ✓ The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) aims at “liberating” citizens from the challenges of finding the right doctors, seeking appointment, paying consultation fee and making several rounds of hospitals for prescription sheets, according to the Health Ministry
 - ✓ The National Health Authority (NHA), the attached office of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare which runs the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, would “design, build, roll-out and implement the NDHM
 - ✓ During the launch, the PM further said a blueprint for production and distribution of Covid-19 vaccine is ready
 - ✓ The mass production of a vaccine will start as soon as the Centre gets the green signal from scientists for its production and use, according to the PM
 - ✓ He said three vaccine candidates are in different stages of clinical trials in India
- **An indigenous antidrone system - was deployed to guard against small aerial threats during the Independence Day function at Red Fort in the capital.**



- ✓ According to the DRDO, the new anti-drone system, which was deployed near the Red Fort, can attack “micro drones” by either jamming their command and control links or damaging their electronics through laser-based directed energy weapons.
- ✓ The system can detect and jam micro drones up to 3 km and release a target up to 1-2.5 km depending on the wattage of the laser weapon.
- ✓ It can be an effective counter to increased drone activity in the western and northern border sectors

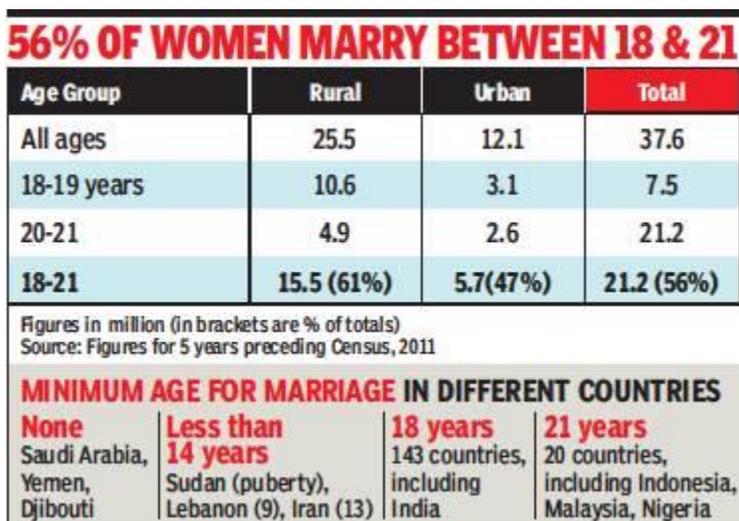
- **On August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - hoped for an early end to the delimitation exercise in Jammu & Kashmir, so that the normal elections can be conducted, that will result in the participation of elected MLAs and a chief minister in the Union Territory's development**
 - ✓ The Prime Minister described the year following the nullification of Article 370 as regards J&K as a “major milestone in the new development journey”
 - ✓ The delimitation exercise is going on in Jammu & Kashmir under the leadership of a retired chief justice of the Supreme Court, Ranjana Prakash Desai
 - ✓ Election commissioner Sushil Chandra and state election commissioner of the state concerned as ex-officio members has held several meetings since April 29.
 - ✓ Besides J&K, the panel has been set up to carry out delimitation exercise in four northeastern states - Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.
 - ✓ The assemblies of the states have already nominated the associate members who will aid the delimitation commission.

- **On August 15, the Prime Minister - announced a 7,500 mw solar park in Ladakh, aiming to set a carbon-neutral future to the newly developed UT in the country**
 - ✓ He further said that “As Sikkim has made its mark as an organic state in the northeast, Ladakh — Leh and Kargil — can also create their own niche as a carbon-neutral unit”
 - ✓ The project is being planned by state-run renewable energy agency, Solar Energy Corporation of India, at an estimated investment of ₹45,000 crore.
 - ✓ The project is to be completed by 2023 and estimated to save 12,750 tonne of carbon emission annually
 - ✓ It will also create livelihood for locals who remain cut off for 6-8 months.
 - ✓ The transmission project is being included in the Centre's Green Energy Corridor Phase-II for viability gap funding (VGF), making the line eligible for up to 40% VGF.
 - ✓ The project envisages a 5,000-mw unit at Morey plains, 215km east of Leh along the road to Manali.
 - ✓ Another 2,500-mw unit is to be built at Suru in Zaskar, 245km east of Kargil.
 - ✓ The Leh project will feed power into the national grid at Kaithal in Haryana through a 900-km transmission line across high mountain passes.
 - ✓ The Zaskar project will feed into the grid at New Wanpoah in Kashmir.
 - ✓ Some 25,000 acres in Leh and 12,500 acres of non-grazing land in Zaskar has been earmarked for the project.
 - ✓ The Leh and Kargil hill councils will earn ₹1,200 per hectare, with 3% annual escalation.

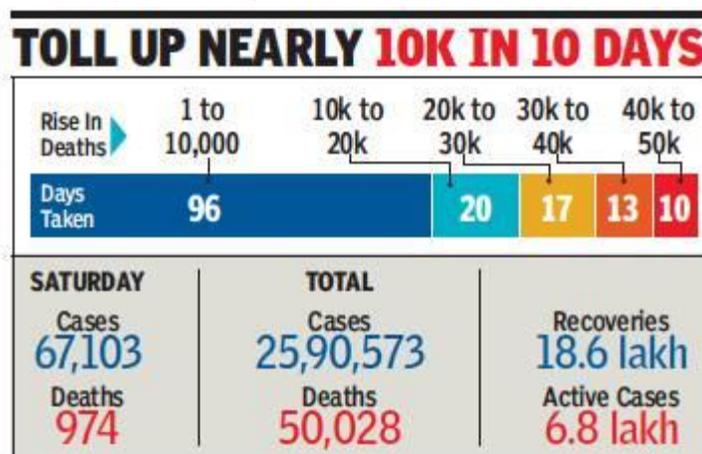
- **Siachen Base Camp, the gateway to the world's highest battlefield, and the Siachen Brigade headquarters at Partapur in the Nubra valley of Ladakh -**

are set to be powered by solar energy, according to renewable energy minister Raj Kumar Singh.

- ✓ SECI (Central renewable energy agency) has awarded contracts for setting up two solar-storage power plants of 1mega watt each at Siachen (Base Camp) and Partapur.
 - ✓ Both will have 2 mega watt of battery storage for round-the-clock supply
 - ✓ The Siachen project will meet the lighting and heating needs at Base Camp I, II and III.
 - ✓ The Partapur project will meet similar needs of the Army’s 102 Brigade tasked with defending the strategically vital glacier.
 - ✓ According to the Minister, the projects will reduce the Army’s dependence on diesel for running generators and more than halve the cost of power.
 - ✓ The tariffs are for 25 years.
 - ✓ Chennai-based Broil Solar Energy Pvt Ltd won the tariff-based bidding for the projects.
 - ✓ The power purchase agreement was signed on March 19.
- **On August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – suggested the upward revision of the legal age of marriage for girls.**
- ✓ The PM said a decision on the right age of marriage for girls would be taken as soon as a committee set up to study the issue submits its report.
 - ✓ The committee has been set up to assess the right age of marriage to end malnutrition among the girls
 - ✓ This follows Nirmala Sitharaman’s Budget Speech on February 1, 2020, when a task force was proposed to look into the “age of a girl entering motherhood” in order to lower maternal mortality rates and improve nutrition levels.
 - ✓ It has to also suggest suitable legislations or amendments in existing laws and a detailed rollout plan with timelines to implement these recommendations



- ✓ In June, the government announced a 10-member panel headed by Jaya Jaitly and comprising Secretaries from the Ministries of Human Resource Development, Women and Child Development, and Health and Family Welfare, among others.
- ✓ The committee has missed its July 31 deadline to finalise its report and give recommendations.
- ✓ As of now, while the legal age of marriage in India is 18 for girls, it is 21 for boys.
- ✓ Women's age of marriage was increased from 15 to 18 years in 1978, by amending the erstwhile Sharda Act of 1929.
- ✓ Anaemia and malnutrition are common issues in underage mothers and relate to marriages taking place in the 16-18 age group.
- ✓ According to the 2001 census, in the age group of 15-49 years — the prime child bearing age group — 81.4% of women are married.
- ✓ The age of marriage has been a point of debate for long.
 - ✓ The National Human Rights Commission too has raised the need for uniform age for marriage for both men and women from time to time.
 - ✓ In 140 countries the age of marriage is 18 for both men and women.
 - ✓ Even the Law Commission in a consultative paper on family laws in 2018 suggested that the legal age for marriage for both men and women across religions should be recognized at 18 years, the universal age for majority
 - ✓ The overall prevalence of child marriage among 15-19 year-old girls declined significantly from 26.5% in 2005-06 to 11.9% in 2015-16
 - ✓ This was revealed by an analysis of child marriage and teenage pregnancies shared by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and voluntary organisation Young Lives in 2018
 - ✓ However, poverty and status of education are key factors in the circumstances that lead to child marriage
- **On August 15, Covid-19 pandemic - crossed another grim milestone when the death toll from the virus crossed 50,000 in the country.**
- ✓ Out of these fatalities — over 13,500 deaths or 27% of the total — has been reported in the first 15 days of August alone.



- ✓ By contrast, the whole of July saw a total of 19,122 fatalities.

- ✓ The country also reported the highest single-day rise in cases so far, with 67,103 fresh infections, as per data collated from state governments.
- ✓ India's total caseload has now risen to 25,90,572.
- ✓ On the day, a total of more than 55,000 Covid-19 patients being declared cured, taking the total recoveries to over 18.5 lakh.
- ✓ India's pool of active cases now stands at over 6.8 lakh.
- ✓ Maharashtra topped the infections list with 12,614 fresh cases, followed by Karnataka reporting its highest-ever 8,818 new cases
- ✓ Maharashtra reported 322 fatalities, followed by Tamil Nadu (127, the state's highest so far), Karnataka (114), Andhra Pradesh (87), Uttar Pradesh and Bengal (both 58).
- ✓ As on date, Maharashtra leads the country with 5,84,754 cases and 19,749 deaths

INTERNATIONAL

- **Scientists – have announced the likely order in which Covid-19 symptoms first appear**
 - ✓ This will help clinicians rule out other diseases, and help patients seek care promptly or decide sooner to self-isolate.
 - ✓ According to the study, published in the journal Frontiers in Public Health, the likely order of symptoms in patients with Covid-19 is fever, followed by cough, muscle pain, and then nausea, and/ or vomiting, and diarrhea
 - ✓ With this new information, doctors can determine what steps to take to care for patients, and prevent their condition from worsening.
 - ✓ The researchers believe identifying patients earlier may reduce hospitalisation time since there are better approaches to treatments now for Covid-19.
 - ✓ Meanwhile, Russia has produced the first batch of its new vaccine for Covid-19
 - ✓ Earlier Russia has said the vaccine, the first for Covid-19 to go into production, will be rolled out by the end of this month.
- **On August 14, the United States - suffered an embarrassing diplomatic defeat when the UN Security Council rejected a proposal to indefinitely extend an arms embargo on Iran**
 - ✓ During the discussion on the proposal, the Trump administration received support from only the Dominican Republic.
 - ✓ The defeat underscored America's deepening global isolation on the issue of Iran. Russia and China voted against the proposal in the 15-member council, while 11 members abstained, including France, Germany and UK
- **Taiwan - formally signed an agreement to buy 66 of the latest model F-16 jets built by Lockheed Martin Corp of United States on August 14**
 - ✓ The move is likely to further inflame tensions between the US and China.

- ✓ Taiwan's purchase of the F-16s marks the first sale of advanced fighter jets to the island since President George HW Bush announced approval for 150 F-16s in 1992.
- ✓ A \$62 billion figure announced by the Pentagon is the upper limit of numerous contracts if all potential foreign customers placed their maximum desired number over the decade
- ✓ The sale of jets to Taiwan is to be completed by the end of 2026.
- ✓ Recently, the United States wrote to 60 nations to gather their support to include Taiwan in World Health Organization.
 - ✓ This includes Britain, Canada, Germany, Thailand, Australia and Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ With India taking over the chairmanship of WHO in 2020, US is trying to bring in Taiwan.
- ✓ China claims Taiwan under its "One China" policy.
 - ✓ Taiwan has a large trade surplus with China and is the top trading partner of China.
 - ✓ Taiwan is self-governed and never formally declared independence from the Chinese mainland.
 - ✓ However, under the one country two system formula, just like Hong Kong, Taiwan would have the right to run its own affairs.
- ✓ Taiwan is a member of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, World Trade Organization and Asian Development Bank.

DEFENCE

- **On August 14, 2020, the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh - launched "SRIJAN", an online portal to promote indigenization of Defence production, as part of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat saptah'**



- ✓ The portal will display the list of items that are currently being imported by Indian Defence Industry.
- ✓ The Defence Public Sector Units and the Ordnance Factory Board shall display items on the portal

- ✓ This will help domestic industries of the country to identify specific items and focus more on the manufacturing of them.
- ✓ The Centre is also providing high incentives and flagship programmes to boost the design, development and manufacturing of these items.
- ✓ Hence, the portal will ultimately help the Indian Defence Industries benefit extensively by the local manufacturing of the specific items that are currently imported.
- ✓ This will in turn reduce India's Defence imports and will boost indigenization of Defence production.
- ✓ During the event, the Defence Ministry also signed two Memorandum of Understandings with IITs and Defence Public Sector Undertakings
 - ✓ The plan is to equip India using its own technologies rather than importing or relying from other countries by means of more joint ventures
 - ✓ The Goa Shipyard Limited during the launch of the portal, signed an MoU with Indian Institute of Technology, Goa to cooperate on areas such as Artificial Intelligence, computational field dynamics and Internet of Things.
 - ✓ The BEML and IIT Kanpur signed an MoU to develop Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
 - ✓ The Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited signed MoU with the Medha Servo Drives Private Limited for "Indigenous Overhauling of SSK Class Submarines"
- ✓ Atmanirbhar Bharat saptah is the week long Atma Nirbhar Bharat celebrations.
 - ✓ During the celebrations, several new facilities were launched, MoUs were signed and Expression of Interests (EOI) were issued.
- ✓ They include the following -
 - ✓ The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited issued an EOI to manufacture 46 items that are worth of Rs 100 crores.
 - ✓ The Bharat Electronics issued EOI for indigenization of five items that are worth of Rs 31 crores.
 - ✓ The Bharat Dynamics Limited issued EOI for 11 items that are worth of Rs 15 crores.

ECONOMY

- **Singapore's central bank, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) - has emerged as the largest investor in ICICI Bank's qualified institutional placement of shares**
- ✓ The MAS has picked up 4.6 crore shares for ₹1,662 crore, which is over 11% of the issue size.
- ✓ The second-largest investor is Morgan Stanley Investment Management with a ₹1,086 crore investment
- ✓ It was followed by French bank Societe Generale which has purchased 2.3 crore shares for ₹832 crore.

- ✓ On August 15, ICICI Bank announced that it has successfully raised ₹15,000 crore by issuing equity at the rate of ₹358 per share under a qualified institutional placement. The Issue opened on August 10, 2020, and closed on August 14, 2020
- ✓ The Government of Singapore through GIC and the Monetary Authority of Singapore have been big investors in the Indian capital markets.
- ✓ In November, the Singapore government and its monetary authority had invested over ₹900 crore in Zee Entertainment Limited.

SPORTS

- **Former Indian skipper, MS Dhoni - announcement his retirement from international cricket on August 15, 2020**



- ✓ The 39-year old Mahendra Singh Dhoni announced his retirement through his official Instagram handle, which read as “Thanks. Thanks a lot for ur love and support throughout. From 19.29 hrs consider me as Retired.”
- ✓ Dhoni made his international debut against Bangladesh in Chattogram in December 2004
- ✓ He made his Test debut against Sri Lanka in Chennai in 2005 and got the captaincy baton from Rahul Dravid in September 2007
- ✓ Dhoni announced his retirement from Tests in Melbourne, Australia in December 2014.
- ✓ He continued to play ODIs and Twenty20s, and that journey extended till last year.
- ✓ His final appearance for Virat Kohli’s men ended in defeat against New Zealand in the ICC World Cup semifinal at Manchester’s Old Trafford on July 10.
 - ✓ He scored a 72-ball 50 and walked back to the Pavilion for one last time.
- ✓ Dhoni has led India to title victory in the 2007 ICC World T20, 2011 World Cup and 2013 ICC Champions Trophy



Tests:		ODIs	
Matches:	90	Matches:	350
Innings:	144	Innings:	297
Runs:	4876	Runs:	10773
HS:	224	HS:	183*
Average:	38.09	Average:	50.57
50s:	33	50s:	73
100s:	6	100s:	10
Catches:	256	Catches:	321
Stumpings:	38	Stumpings:	123

MS DHONI IN NUMBERS

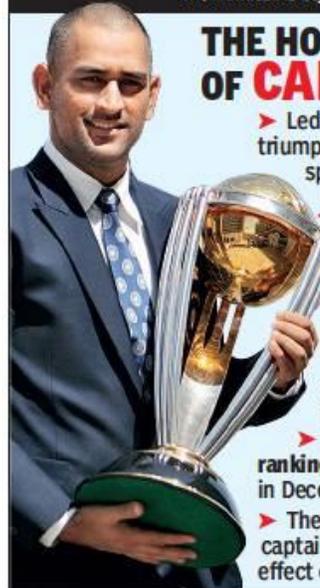
T20Is			
Matches	98	50s	2
Innings	85	100s	0
Runs	1617	Catches	57
HS	56	Stumpings	34
Average	37.60		

- ✓ He scored a phenomenal 10773 ODI runs, 1617 runs in T20 format and has a combined tally of 378 catches and 157 stumpings in both the formats
- ✓ MSD was awarded with Padma Bhushan in 2018, Padma Shri in 2009 and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 2007-08.

“ Thanks a lot for ur love and support throughout. From 1929 hrs consider me as Retired
 —MS Dhoni announces his retirement in his inimitable style, with a cryptic social media post

THE HOTTEST MOMENTS OF CAPTAIN COOL

- Led India to an unexpected triumph in the 2007 T20 World Cup, sparking national hysteria that led to the IPL revolution
- Hit the winning six as India won the ODI World Cup under his leadership in 2011
- Won the 2013 Champions Trophy, making him the only captain in the world to have claimed all 3 ICC tournaments
- Led India to world No. 1 ranking in Tests for the first time in December 2009
- The only wicketkeeper-cum-captain to score over 6,000 runs and effect over 200 dismissals in ODIs



- ✓ M S Dhoni was the first player to win ODI Player of the year award twice once in 2008 and 2009.
 - ✓ Indian Army conferred with honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 2011, becoming only the second Indian cricketer to receive the honour after Kapil Dev.
 - ✓ M S Dhoni was also awarded with the ICC ODI Player of the year in 2008 and 2009, becoming the first player to win this trophy twice.
 - ✓ In 2011, he received the Honorary doctorate degree by De Montfort University
 - ✓ Under Dhoni's leadership, Chennai Super Kings won their first IPL trophy in May 2010
 - ✓ Under his captaincy, India reached number one in the ICC Test cricket rankings.
 - ✓ Dhoni was awarded the man of the match in the 2011 World Cup final, leading India to a win after 28 years
 - ✓ He is the first captain to win three ICC trophies.
- **Moments after MS Dhoni announced his retirement from international cricket, his close friend and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) teammate Suresh Raina – had also announced his exit from the international game.**



- ✓ Both Dhoni and Raina are currently in Chennai and are gearing up for the IPL that will commence from September 19 in the UAE.
- ✓ The 33-year old left-hander, with his amazing bat-speed and footwork, made 5615 runs in 226 ODIs at a stunning strike-rate of 93.50.
- ✓ In 78 T20Is, Raina notched up 1605 runs at a sizzling strike-rate of 134.87.
- ✓ Raina began his Test career with a fighting 120 against Sri Lanka in 2010 in Colombo.
- ✓ However, a technical flaw against short-pitched bowling saw his Test career being limited to 768 runs from 18 Tests at 26.48.
- ✓ He was the first batsman in the world and the first Indian to hit T20 century.
- ✓ Raina was the part of the Indian team winning 2011 world cup.
- ✓ He was the first Indian player and second in the world after Chris Gayle to hit 100 sixes in IPL.
- ✓ Raina is also the only Indian to score centuries in both T20I and ODI World Cup.
- ✓ In the history of IPL, Suresh Raina is also the second-highest run-getter, only behind Indian Cricket team captain Virat Kohli.

- ✓ Raina is also the first Indian batsman to register centuries in all the three formats of the game
- **India's tennis ace Leander Paes - launched his website www.leanderpaes.in on August 15.**
- ✓ It will be an interactive web platform, containing all the details about the 47-year-old.



- ✓ The website has portrayed the last 30 years of the life of Paes through pictures, anecdotes, memories and history