

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Andhra Pradesh government - has agreed to release Krishna water to Chennai between September 10 and 14.**
- ✓ According to the AP government, water from the Kandaleru reservoir would be released to Tamil Nadu once the storage level reached 30tmcft (thousand million cubic feet).
- ✓ Currently, the storage level in the reservoir was 23tmcft and it was getting an inflow from the Somasila reservoir
- ✓ Further, the AP government also wanted the state authorities to pay the canal maintenance charges without any dues.
- ✓ Initially the AP government had agreed to release 4tmcft and depending on the rainfall after September, another 4tmcft could be released
- ✓ Since signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the release of Krishna water, Andhra Pradesh released 8tmcft during the previous water year, from June 2019 to July 2020
- ✓ This was the highest quantum water received in a water year by Tamil Nadu

- **Metrowater – received the Award of Excellence at the ‘virtual’ National Water Innovation Summit held recently.**
- ✓ Its project to store water in abandoned quarries for supply to Chennai recently bagged the award in the ‘Innovation in Rainwater Harvesting’ category.
- ✓ The Summit was organised by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti along with Elets Technomedia Limited.
- ✓ The quarries in Sikkarayapuram and Erumaiyur were significant sources of water during the 2019 drought.
- ✓ These storage structures are now being used as buffer sources for supply of water to the Capital city.

- ✓ Earlier, Metrowater's Koyambedu tertiary treatment plant bagged the Global Water Award '20 in the category of 'Waste Water Project of the Year' at the Global Water Summit.
- ✓ Similarly, Dial for water 2.0, the online booking service for water tankers, won the Skoch Award-Gold in the 'Digital India' category
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - flagged off 118 ambulances from the Secretariat on August 31**
 - ✓ These included 90 ambulances for the '108' fleet, 10 for blood banks and another 18 donated by Zee Entertainment Enterprises to assist the state in the fight against Covid-19 epidemic.
 - ✓ Various Ministers, Chief Secretary K. Shanmugam and senior officials were present on the occasion.
 - ✓ On the day, 30-year-old Veeralakshmi Muthukumar became the first woman pilot in the 108 ambulance fleet in the State.
 - ✓ She was driving a taxi in the Chennai for the last three years.
 - ✓ According to GVK-EMRI, which operates the 108 ambulance network, there were one or two women ambulance drivers in the private sector but Veeralakshmi was the first woman pilot in the 108 ambulance network.
- **On August 31, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - unveiled the foundation stone through video conference for the construction of Sai University, a private university, at Payyanur in Chengalpattu district.**
 - ✓ The campus will be coming up at a cost of ₹600 crore
 - ✓ It will be spread across a built-up area of 12 lakh sq.ft.
 - ✓ The varsity would have about 6,000 students, 300 faculty members and 300 administrative staff during the next seven years in the first phase
- **On August 31, Tamil Nadu – reported 5,956 fresh Covid-19 infections and 91 deaths, taking the cumulative caseload to 3,68,141 and casualties to 7,322**
 - ✓ As many as 6,008 persons were discharged after treatment on the day, taking the total recovered persons to 3,68,141
 - ✓ At the end of the day, there were 52,578 people still under treatment.

Keeping count | A tracker, across parameters, on how the pandemic has affected the State so far

	Until Aug. 24	Aug. 25	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Total
Cases reported	3,85,352	5,951	5,958	5,981	5,996	6,352	6,495	5,956	4,28,041
Recovered/ discharged	3,25,456	6,998	5,606	5,870	5,752	6,045	6,406	6,008	3,68,141
Deceased	6,614	107	118	109	102	87	94	91	7,322

Persons tested



Districts with maximum cases



*Changes in 24 hours As on Aug. 30, 6 p.m. As on Aug. 31, 6 p.m.

- ✓ Chennai reported the maximum number of 1,150 fresh cases
- ✓ The adjoining three districts Chengalpet (347), Kancheepuram (187) and Tiruvallur (299) together added 833 cases and 16 deaths.
- ✓ Further, Coimbatore had 589 cases and Salem reported 497 fresh infections.
- ✓ Other districts reporting high numbers included 307 cases in Cuddalore, 176 in Villupuram, 140 in Thiruvannamalai, 129 from Dindigul, 127 from Madurai, 125 in Vellore, 125 in Thanjavur, 124 in Ranipet, 113 in Thiruvarur, 111 from Tuticorin and 105 in Nagapattinam
- ✓ In the last 24 hours, 75,100 samples were tested across 150 facilities in the state, taking the total figure to 48,13,147.

NATIONAL

- **On August 31, India – reported 65,968 fresh infections and 824 deaths, comparatively lesser figures after the recent surge.**
- ✓ With this, the country's total caseload stands at over 36.8 lakh
- ✓ Of these, 28.3 lakh have recovered while there are nearly 7.9 lakh active cases in the country.
- ✓ India's number of active cases is second only to the US, where the count stands at 25.6 lakh.
- ✓ India reported close to 2 million Covid-19 cases in August, the highest recorded in any country during any month since the outbreak of the pandemic.
- ✓ The 19,87,705 cases recorded during August in India made it the worst outbreak of the virus in any country during a single month — higher than the number of infections reported in the US in July (19,04,462).
- ✓ However, in terms of deaths, the US and Brazil reported a higher toll than India in August.
- ✓ India reported 28,859 fatalities in August, whereas the US had recorded nearly 31,000 deaths till August 30 while Brazil had registered 29,565 fatalities.
- ✓ The virus has so far claimed 65,373 lives in India, the third highest in the world following the US (1.87 lakh) and Brazil (1.2 lakh).
- ✓ Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are the top three states sharing the Covid-19 caseload in the country, accounting for 45.7 % of new cases detected on the day.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On August 31, the Supreme Court – handed down the activist-advocate Prashant Bhushan a fine of ₹1 for committing contempt of court.**
- ✓ The court ordered him to pay the fine by September 15, failing which he would, by default, undergo a simple imprisonment of three months and a ban from practising in the apex court for three years.

- ✓ A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, B R Gavai and Krishna Murari had convicted Bhushan on August 20 through a 108-page judgment for tweeting “false and malicious” statements to scandalise the court besides the present and former CJs.
- ✓ On August 31, the apex court delivered an 82-page sentencing judgment rejecting his defence as “neither bona fide nor in public interest”.
- ✓ The bench held that that lawyer’s responses aggravated the crime of contempt.
- ✓ Minutes after the judgment, Bhushan indicated that he had accepted the punishment and would pay the fine ₹1 before the September 15 deadline
- ✓ Bhushan was convicted on August 14 in a suo motu contempt action for his tweet of a picture of the Chief Justice of India on a high-end bike while the court was in “lockdown” and another about the functioning of the court in the past six years.
- ✓ When asked to apologise, he issued two statements, in one of which he said he neither asked for the magnanimity or mercy of the court but would “cheerfully” submit to any punishment.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **On August 31, 2020, the Japanese Government - announced an ‘emergency’ loan assistance of Rs 3,500 crores to India as part of its support in response to Covid-19 crisis.**
- ✓ This will also include implementation of health and medical policy by the government
- ✓ The assistance will be primarily used to develop hospital equipment, ICUs and management facilities.
- ✓ The loan agreement was signed by Japan International Cooperation Agency in New Delhi.
- ✓ It has an interest of 0.01% per annum along with a redemption period of 15 years.
- ✓ During the event, India and Japan also exchanged notes worth 1 billion Yen through a Japanese scheme called “The Economic and Social Development Programme”.
- ✓ It is one of Japanese official developmental assistance programme.

COMMITTEES

- **The Ministry of Defence - has set up a three-member committee under Lt General Shekatkar (retd) to review the utilization of Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Services (AFHCS)**
- ✓ The committee is also mandated to suggest measures to enhance the combat potential and rebalance defence expenditure
- ✓ Further, it will identify appointments in inter service organizations and service headquarters.

- ✓ The main objective of the committee is to help save expenditure of Rs 25,000 crores in the next five years.
- ✓ The committee was suggested by the 11 member Shekatkar committee, which was formed by the then Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar in 2016.
- ✓ It made around 216 recommendations, with most of them was already implemented in 2017.

PERSONALITIES

- **On August 30, an oil painting by the late Indian artist M F Husain titled 'Voices' - sold for a record ₹18.47 crore at an online auction**
- ✓ This is the highest price for the artist's work in an auction so far



- ✓ Made in 1958, the oil-on-canvas painting measures 18.8 feet and is his largest work from the 1950s.
- ✓ Husain did the painting a couple of years after the disbanding of the Bombay-based Progressive Artists Group, which he had co-founded with modern artists such as S H Raza and FN Souza in 1947.
- ✓ The work was lauded internationally and won him an award at the Tokyo Biennale in 1959.
- ✓ Over the decades, the painting has been exhibited several times but was offered for sale for the first time.

- **On August 31, Singapore's Indian-origin leader Pritam Singh - scripted history by becoming the country's first leader of the opposition**
- ✓ Pritam was conferred the duties and privileges on the day by Singapore's parliament



- ✓ Singh's Workers' Party won 10 seats out of the 93 it contested in the July polls
- ✓ This makes the Worker's party, the biggest opposition in Singapore's parliamentary history.
- ✓ Singh took the seat directly opposite PM Lee Hsien Loong in the chamber.
- ✓ He will be given the right to ask the lead question to ministers.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Indian Tech Startup, Muse Nanobots - has launched a nanotech coating for textiles that can inactivate the coronavirus within five minutes of contact**



- ✓ IIT-Madras backed Muse's nano-coated textiles can offer enhanced protection for common people to travel and will provide great safety to frontline healthcare, hospital, hotels and restaurant workers
 - ✓ Muse Nanobots conducted a study with the US-based Situ Biosciences, an ISO-accredited, independent product test laboratory in Chicago, which specializes in providing microbial product testing.
 - ✓ The study showed that it inactivated 99.99% of coronavirus 229E within five minutes of contact.
 - ✓ Muse Nanobots coating can be applied on any kind of fabric and can be coated on masks, PPE kits, clothes and packaging material.
 - ✓ The test also has shown that it is non-toxic to human cells and is comfortable to use.
 - ✓ Muse Nanobots face masks will be available in the market by the first week of September on e-commerce platforms and Muse Nanobots website.
 - ✓ The start-up aims to install its nanocoating machines in about 15 Indian textile companies that make regular office and casual attire, sportswear, PPEs, decor (curtains, bedsheets) and packaging material by end of 2020.
- **The CSIR-CMERI, operating under the Ministry of Science and Technology - has developed world largest solar tree at its residential colony in Durgapur, West Bengal.**

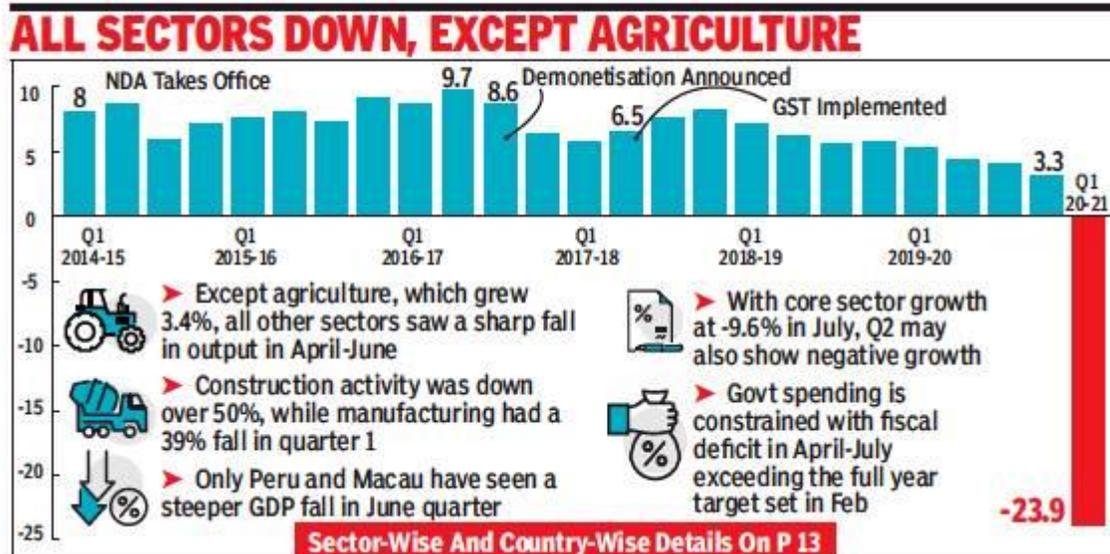


- ✓ The tree has an annual capacity of generating 12,000 to 14,000 units of clean and green power
- ✓ Totally, there are 35 Solar PV panels in each tree with each panel having a capacity of 330 watt-power.
- ✓ The arms of the solar tree have been designed in such a way that maximum exposure of each solar photo voltaic panel is achieved
- ✓ The arms holding the solar PV panels are adjustable and are placed in an inclined position to the arms holding them.
- ✓ The cost of a solar tree is Rs 7.5 lakhs.
- ✓ According to the institute, the interested MSMEs can become partner with Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha (PM KUSUM) to develop such renewable energy based grids
- ✓ One solar tree can reduce ten to twelve tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions and make the country carbon-neutral
- ✓ Also, the surplus power from these trees can be fed to the energy grids.
- ✓ The solar trees can be used as part of agriculture to substitute fossil fuels.
- ✓ The Government of India has unveiled KUSUM scheme to harness solar energy.
- ✓ It aims to replace all the diesel pumps with solar pumps.
- ✓ Under the scheme, the excess power generated by using solar power is to be purchased by the state governments at profitable price from the farmers.

ECONOMY

- **India's economy - posted its steepest contraction on record in the April-June quarter of the current fiscal year**
- ✓ In April-June, it suffered a contraction for the first time since India began maintaining quarterly records in 1996.

- ✓ As per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on August 31, the GDP in the April-June quarter of 2020-21 dropped to 23.9% compared with growth of 3.1% in the previous (January-March) quarter.



- ✓ Among major economies, India's contraction was the sharpest.
- ✓ China, after posting a contraction in the January-March quarter has recovered with 3.2% growth in the April-June quarter.
- ✓ Globally, India is close to UK's contraction of 20.4% in the second quarter.
- ✓ Agriculture was the only bright spot, which has registered an annual growth of 3.4% in the June quarter compared with a growth of 3% in the June quarter of 2019-20.
- ✓ On a quarterly basis, recession deepened in the manufacturing sector as it posted four consecutive quarters of contraction while the construction sector declined for the third quarter in a row.
- ✓ According to economists, recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth.
- ✓ The manufacturing sector, which has been in the grip of a sharp slowdown, fell 39.3% in the June quarter while construction slumped 50.3% during the three-month period.
- ✓ Trade, hotels, transport and communications sector posted the second highest contraction, declining 47% in the June quarter.
- ✓ The services sector, which accounts for nearly 60% of the economy, declined 20.6% in the June quarter, compared to a 4.4% growth in the previous.
- ✓ Private consumption, a key driver of the economy witnessed a sharp decline of 24.5% in the first quarter from 8.5% increase in the year ago period.
- ✓ However, government consumption saw a 20.2% increase in the June quarter compared with the 9.5% growth in the same quarter of the previous year.
 - ✓ This highlights the role of government spending in supporting the economy

- ✓ According to a Care Ratings analysis, investment growth witnessed a sharp decrease of 47.9% in the June quarter.
 - ✓ As a percentage of GDP, investments (as measured by Gross Fixed Capital Formation) at 19.5% during the quarter was the lowest under the new series (2011-12)
 - ✓ There have been four other instances of minor contraction between 1965-68, and 1972-73, but this year is likely to be the worst since Independence
- **Billionaire Gautam Adani's group - will acquire 74% stake in Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) and build the upcoming ₹16,000-crore Navi Mumbai Airport**
- ✓ On August 31, Adani Group said it had decided to acquire debt of GVK Airport Developers (GVKADL), the firm through which GVK Group holds 50.5% stake in Mumbai International Airport Ltd. (MIAL).
 - ✓ Separately, GVK Group said it had signed an agreement to cooperate with Adani in relation to MIAL.
 - ✓ That means, the GVK Group will exit these projects, with Adani Group picking up its entire 50.5% stake in MIAL, along with the 23.5% stake that two South African companies have in the company running India's second busiest airport.
 - ✓ Post deal conclusion, MIAL will have only two stakeholders — Adani (74%) and Airports Authority of India (AAI, 26%).
 - ✓ Apart from financial troubles, GVK Group has in past few months been under the scanner of CBI and ED after an anonymous letter alleged it had reportedly handled ₹705 crore from MIAL's accounts.
 - ✓ The Adani Group had earlier emerged as the highest bidder to run six AAI airports — Jaipur, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram (being opposed by Kerala government), Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru — for 50 years.
 - ✓ With Mumbai and Navi Mumbai in its kitty, Gautam Adani will be the largest private sector airport developer in India in terms of number of projects.
 - ✓ These airports together handled about 7.5 crore passengers in 2019-20.
 - ✓ Three years back, GVK had sold its entire 43% stake in Bengaluru Airport to Prem Watsa's Fairfax Holdings to trim the group's mounting debt.
 - ✓ Last October, it agreed to sell 79% stake in its airport arm for ₹7,614 crore to an investor trio of Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, Canada's PSP Investments and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund

OBITUARY

- **Pranab Mukherjee, former President of India (84 years)**
- ✓ Pranab Mukherjee passed away on August 31, after testing positive for Covid-19

- ✓ He was admitted to the Army Hospital (Research and Referral) in New Delhi following an emergency operation on August 10 for a clot in the brain from which he never recovered



Bharat Ratna

Shri Pranab Mukherjee

Former President of India

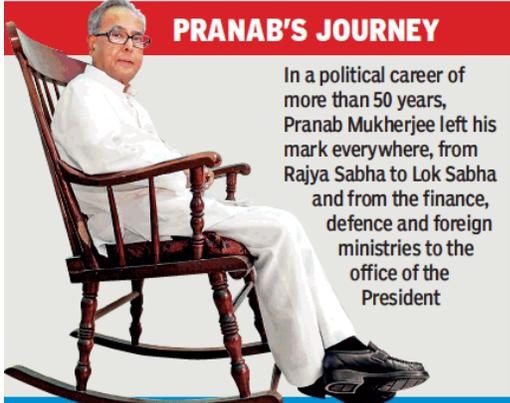
(1935 - 2020)

DIED on August 31st 2020

**13th President of India
Minister of Finance
Minister of Defence
Minister of External Affairs
Leader of the Lok Sabha
Deputy Chairman of the Planning
Commission
Leader of the Rajya Sabha
Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha
Member of Parliament, Rajya
Sabha**

- ✓ He had slipped into a deep coma after the operation, and his medical condition was further complicated as he tested positive for Covid-19 and finally succumbed to septic shock caused by a lung infection.
- ✓ The government has announced a seven-day period of mourning till September 6.
- ✓ Pranab Mukherjee had served as the 13th President of India from 2012 till 2017.
- ✓ He is one of only three people (excluding PMs holding portfolios) who have held three or more different portfolios in the Cabinet Committee on Security, which is the key decision-making body of the Cabinet — in his case finance, defence and external affairs.
- ✓ Y B Chavan is the only one to have held four — finance, defence, home and external affairs , while R Venkataraman held the finance, defence and home portfolios at different points
- ✓ He was also leader of the House in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha.
- ✓ A Congressman all his political life, Mukherjee worked with three PMs - Indira Gandhi, P V Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh.
- ✓ However, he was surpassed for the PM's job in 2004 when Sonia Gandhi chose Manmohan Singh.
- ✓ He won only one Lok Sabha election in 2004 and never made a mark in state politics
- ✓ As defence minister in 2004, he was part of efforts to work out the India-US defence framework and subsequently the nuclear deal.
- ✓ In 2006, India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement was signed.
- ✓ Mukherjee was heading all empowered GoMs expect one and was head of 15 of 34 other GoMs in the year 2010

- ✓ In all, he headed 95 GoMs during his time in the two UPA governments, dealing with issues ranging from telecom spectrum to special economic zones.



PRANAB'S JOURNEY

In a political career of more than 50 years, Pranab Mukherjee left his mark everywhere, from Rajya Sabha to Lok Sabha and from the finance, defence and foreign ministries to the office of the President

1935-1960s

Born on December 11, 1935, in Mirati village in West Bengal's Birbhum, Mukherjee did his college in Calcutta and married Suvra, a Rabindra Sangeet singer and artist, in 1957. The couple has two sons – Abhijit and Indrajeet – and a daughter, Sharmistha

1969

After early stints as a college teacher and journalist, he was elected to Rajya Sabha as a Bangla Congress member. He would be reelected to the Upper House in 1975, 1981, 1993 and 1999

1973

He first became a Union minister under PM Indira Gandhi, serving in multiple ministries. In 1980, when Congress returned to power, he was minister of commerce, and steel and mines



1982

First stint as Union finance minister. But after Indira's assassination in 1984, he fell out with her son Rajiv and was moved out. He left Congress in 1986 to float his own outfit but was back in the Congress fold in 1989



1991-2004

Under PV Narasimha Rao as PM, Mukherjee was named deputy chairman of Planning Commission in 1991. He went on to serve as minister of commerce, and then foreign affairs, under Rao

2004-2012

Won his first Lok Sabha polls from Jangipur in Bengal. Under the UPA-I and -II governments, Mukherjee served as minister of defence, foreign affairs and finance

2012-2017

Served as 13th President of India from July 2012 to July 2017, entering office during UPA-I and finishing under NDA



With wife Suvra at the Rashtrapati Bhavan

- ✓ Pranab Mukherjee first came into the political scene in 1969 when he became Rajya Sabha MP with the support of Indira Gandhi
- ✓ Mukherjee entered Indira Gandhi's council of ministers in 1973-74 as deputy minister handling industry, and later, shipping, transport and steel.
- ✓ In October 1974, he was moved to finance as junior minister in charge of revenue and expenditure,
- ✓ He served as the country's Finance Minister between 1982- 84 and went on to present seven Budgets and one interim budget over the next 30 years.
- ✓ He was the Finance Minister when Manmohan Singh was appointed Reserve Bank of India governor in 1982.
- ✓ He was also nominated as the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha from 1980 to 1985.
- ✓ After the assassination of Indira Gandhi, Mukherjee left Congress to start his own party, the Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress, which he merged with Congress in 1989
- ✓ The then Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao appointed Mukherjee as the head of the Planning Commission in 1991 and foreign minister in 1995.
- ✓ In 1995, when he was the External Affairs Minister, India was made the full dialogue partner of ASEAN as a part of the Look East Policy

- ✓ Throughout his political career till his resignation in 2012, he held several key cabinet portfolios including as Defence Minister from 2004-2006, External Affairs from 2006-2009, and Finance Minister from 2009-2012
- ✓ In July 2012, Mukherjee had comfortably beaten PA Sangma in the race to Rashtrapati Bhavan, winning 70% of the electoral-college vote.
- ✓ He was succeeded by Ram Nath Kovind as the 14th President of India.
- ✓ Pranab Mukherjee brought in several tax reforms and instrumental in the scrapping of the commodities transaction tax and the fringe benefits tax.
- ✓ Mukherjee received the Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian honour, from incumbent President Ram Nath Kovind in 2019.

