

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- **The state universities – have decided to conduct the final year exams online in view of Covid-19 before September 30**
- ✓ The state higher education department convened a meeting of vice-chancellors on September 10
- ✓ During the meeting, it was unanimously agreed to conduct the exams online but the modalities -- type of questions and host platforms – will be decided by the universities
- ✓ The universities asked to reduce the duration of the exam from three hours to one hour or one and half hours
- ✓ While Anna University plans multiple-choice questions, other universities want to use descriptive- type questions too.
- ✓ Madras University is yet to decide on the duration of the exam and the platform
- ✓ Meanwhile, Anna University announced that it would conduct final-semester exams for undergraduate and postgraduate students online from September 22 to 29
- ✓ The students can appear for the examination from their home using devices such as laptops, desktops, smartphones, tablets with internet, camera and microphone facilities
- ✓ Colleges will be asked to open their facilities for students who are not able to upload their answer scripts
  
- **On September 10, the Tamil Nadu higher education department - permitted all government colleges to increase intake by 20% for 2020-21.**
- ✓ The hike in seats is to meet the demands of students in rural areas and semi-urban areas, who could not afford the fees in private colleges.
- ✓ However, the colleges are asked to get approval from respective universities for the additional intake

- ✓ This year, the higher education department conducted the admission to 109 government arts and science colleges 'online' due to the Covid-19 outbreak.
- ✓ It received more than two lakh applications for the 95,000 seats
- **The Tiruvallur district police have started 'Hello Police' — a special number at a control room — in a move to crack down on illegal activity, including sand mining and ganja and gutkha smuggling, with the help of information from residents.**
  - ✓ The special number is 90033 90050.
  - ✓ A control room with four police personnel, who will work on shift basis, has been set up in the Tiruvallur SP's office for the initiative
  - ✓ The public can call, text or WhatsApp information related to illegal sand mining, gutkha, ganja, lottery, gambling and illicit arrack.
  - ✓ The identity of the sender will not be revealed and the complaint will be sent to the SP.
  - ✓ A total of five special teams have been formed to investigate the complaint.
- **Pondicherry University - has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) for research on marine organisms.**
  - ✓ The MoU seeks to exploit marine living resources using deep-sea exploration facilities of the NIOT and expertise of Pondicherry University
  - ✓ The agreement will be implemented in the field of microbiology, biotechnology and marine biology
- **On September 10, Tamil Nadu - recorded 5,528 new cases of Covid-19 and 64 deaths, taking the cumulative caseload to 4,86,052 and the death toll to 8,154**
  - ✓ The state has 48,482 persons under treatment as 'active cases'

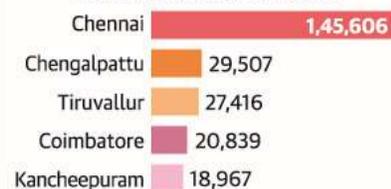
**Keeping count** | A tracker, across parameters, on how the pandemic has affected the State so far

	Until Sept. 3	Sept. 4	Sept. 5	Sept. 6	Sept. 7	Sept. 8	Sept. 9	Sept. 10	Total
<b>Cases reported</b>	4,45,851	5,976	5,870	5,783	5,776	5,684	5,584	5,528	<b>4,86,052</b>
<b>Recovered/ discharged</b>	3,86,173	6,334	5,859	5,820	5,930	6,599	6,516	6,185	<b>4,29,416</b>
<b>Deaths</b>	7,608	79	61	88	89	87	78	64	<b>8,154</b>

Persons tested



Districts with maximum cases



\*CHANGES IN 24 HOURS    As on Sept. 9, 6 p.m.    As on Sept. 10, 6 p.m.

- ✓ A total of 6,185 people were discharged on the day, taking the total recovered to 4,29,416 persons.
- ✓ Chennai reported the maximum of 991 cases and 11 deaths
- ✓ Its neighbours, Chengalpet (279), Kancheepuram (173) and Thiruvallur (296) together added 748 new cases.
- ✓ Further, Coimbatore reported 440 cases while Salem and Cuddalore logged 300 and 263 cases respectively
- ✓ A total of 85,473 samples were tested in the State in the last 24 hours.
- ✓ This has taken the total number of samples tested so far to 56,30,323.

## NATIONAL

- **On September 10, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - launched ₹20, 050 crore 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana' (PMMSY) for development of fisheries sector in 21 states**



- ✓ The scheme seeks to double export earnings and creates additional over five million jobs in the sector by 2024-25.
- ✓ It aims to increase fish production by an additional 70 lakh tonnes, enhance fisheries export earnings to ₹1,00,000 crore, double income of fish-breeders and reduce post-harvest losses from 20-25% to about 10% by 2024-25.
- ✓ During the event, the PM launched several initiatives linked to studies and research in fisheries production, dairy, animal husbandry and agriculture in Bihar, which is scheduled to go to polls in October-November.
- ✓ Out of ₹20,050 crore, projects worth ₹1,700 crore were launched for 21 fish producing states and UTs.
- ✓ For Bihar, the scheme envisages an investment of ₹1,390 crore with central share of ₹535 crore in next five years.
- ✓ During the event, the PM launched several facilities through video conferencing in various places, which included - Patna (two units of 'Fish on Wheels' for fisheries sector and IVF lab for cows), Purnia (semen station for dairy sector), Sitamarhi (fish brood bank), Madhepura (fish feed mill), Begusarai (sex-sorted semen facility)

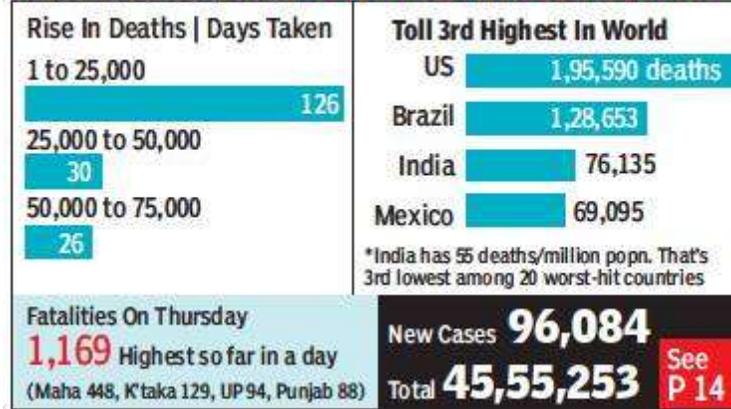
for cows), Kishanganj (aquatic disease referral laboratory) and Samastipur (fish production technology centre) on the day in Bihar.

- **On September 10, Pune-based Serum Institute of India - halted the trials of Covishield, Oxford University-AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine candidate, following a notice issued by the Drug Controller General of India.**
  - ✓ A day earlier, Serum Institute had said that it had not faced any issues in its trials so far and that it was continuing with its trials in India
  - ✓ However, the central drug regulator issued a show cause notice to the vaccine manufacturer late on September 9 asking why the company had not informed the regulator about the issues faced by AstraZeneca during trials in the UK.
  - ✓ Swedish-British drugmaker, AstraZeneca — the co-developer of the Oxford University's Jenner Institute vaccine candidate — had announced that it was temporarily 'pausing' its clinical trials on September 8.
  - ✓ It said a person participating in the studies had developed an adverse and unexplained neurological illness, probably in U.K.
  - ✓ Serum Institute's Covid vaccine candidate was one of the front-runners and the clinical trials are being closely watched not only in India but globally
  - ✓ Till date, 100 volunteers have been administered the vaccine shots, following the commencement of the phase two trials in India on August 26.
  - ✓ As many as 34 of the volunteers who were administered the shots were from the Pune-based Bharti Vidyapeeth Medical College and Hospital.
  - ✓ However, options are still open for India with two more vaccine candidates developed locally by Bharat Biotech and Cadila Healthcare moving into phase 2 of clinical trials.
  - ✓ Besides, the government, along with a few other Indian drug makers, is also working to collaborate on the Russian vaccine candidate
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- **The home ministry has granted a licence to Amritsar's Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib-Darbar Sahib — popularly known as the Golden Temple — to receive foreign donations**



- ✓ The association has been engaged in several social welfare schemes with its domestic donations
  - ✓ It was offering free 'community meal' to devotees and public, provide financial assistance to the poor, needy, students and medical patients and assist with disaster relief with the domestic donations received by it.
  - ✓ The association was established in the year 1925.
  - ✓ The gurdwara is currently administered by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), controlled by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), one of the oldest allies of the BJP.
  - ✓ Now, the Ministry of home affairs has allowed the registration of the Gurdwara Sri Harmandir Sahib under FCRA, 2010
  - ✓ Henceforth, the association will be entitled to receive contributions from Sikh devotees and others across the world for its various social objectives.
  - ✓ The Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib, Sri Darbar Sahib, Punjab, had applied for registration under FCRA on May 27, 2020.
  - ✓ On September 10, the decision to register it as an association of "religious nature" under FCRA, was communicated by MHA.
  - ✓ The registration shall remain valid for five years.
  - ✓ Any association, non-government organisation (NGO) or registered society requires FCRA registration to receive foreign donations for specified purposes.
- **Seven districts in Kerala - are among India's 10 best performing districts in Covid-19 control, as per the findings of a study conducted.**
- ✓ The study estimated the performance on the basis of case fatality rate (CFR) or proportion of deaths to cases in a particular period of time.
  - ✓ Mahendragarh in Haryana has the lowest CFR of 0.049% in India.
  - ✓ Kottayam ranks second on the list with a CFR of 0.064%, followed by Pathanamthitta (0.077%), Palakkad (0.081%), Idukki (0.161%), Alappuzha (0.223%) and Malappuram (0.253%)., all from Kerala.
  - ✓ Sirmaur in Himachal Pradesh ranks eighth with a CFR of 0.293%, followed by Wayanad (0.3%) and Purulia in West Bengal (0.305%)
  - ✓ The study was done by Project Jeevan Raksha— a public-private partnership initiative of Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) and Proxima.
  - ✓ Kerala's overall CFR of 0.4% is among the lowest in the country despite the surge in cases.
  - ✓ However, the state could lose its tag of one of the best performing states in Covid control with rise in cases.
  - ✓ In the first week of August, almost all districts in Kerala featured among the top 20 performing districts in terms of CFR, with nine districts among the top 10
- **On September 10, India – reported a single-day high of 1,169 deaths, taking the total casualties to over 75,000**

## INDIA'S COVID DEATHS CROSS 75,000



- ✓ Further, 96,084 new cases were reported, the second highest single-day surge so far after the previous day's tally of 97,399
- ✓ Maharashtra topped the states in terms of single-day spike with 23,446 cases, while Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh reported 10175, 9217 and 7042 fresh infections respectively
- ✓ The total caseload in Maharashtra stands at 9,90,795, on course to reach one million on September 11
- ✓ Maharashtra reported its biggest surge in deaths with 448 fatalities, accounting for more than 38% of all virus-related deaths in the country in the past 24 hours.
- ✓ The country has 9,45,915 active cases, while 35,33,187 people were discharged after the treatment, as on date
- ✓ On September 9, the Union government has again urged all states and Union Territories to mandatorily retest all symptomatic patients who test negative in rapid antigen tests
- ✓ The retests must be done through the more reliable RT-PCR method to ensure positive cases don't go undetected

## INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **On September 9, India and Japan - signed mutual military logistics support arrangement (MLSA) in their annual summit**
- ✓ Defence secretary Ajay Kumar and Japanese ambassador Suzuki Satoshi signed the agreement on "reciprocal provision of supplies and services" between the Indian armed forces and the Japanese self-defence forces in Delhi
- ✓ Japan has now become the sixth country, after the US, France, Australia, South Korea and Singapore, with which India has such an agreement
- ✓ The pact enables military forces of both countries to share logistics to support each other's warships and aircraft as well as boost overall interoperability and defence cooperation
- ✓ India is negotiating similar pacts with the UK and Russia.



- ✓ The agreement will be valid for a period of 10 years, beyond which it will be automatically extended every decade unless one side decides to terminate it.
- ✓ The talks for the agreement commenced in October 2018
- ✓ The MLSA will “further enhance the depth of defence cooperation” between India and Japan and “contribute to peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region”, according to PM Narendra Modi and his counterpart Shinzo Abe
- ✓ The Prime Ministers of Japan and India welcomed the signing of the agreement, which will help both sides coordinate on medical requirements, supplies, maintenance, airlifting and communication.
- ✓ It will also assist in bilateral training activities, UN peacekeeping operations, humanitarian international relief and other mutually agreed activities.
- ✓ As for the logistics pacts, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) signed with the US in 2016 gives India refuelling facilities and access to American bases in Djibouti, Diego Garcia, Guam and Subic Bay.
- ✓ The one signed with France in 2018 extends the Indian Navy’s reach in southwestern IOR due to French bases in the Reunion Islands near Madagascar and Djibouti on the Horn of Africa
- ✓ The mutual logistics support arrangement (MLSA) signed with Australia in June will help Indian warships in southern Indian Ocean and the western Pacific region.
- ✓ China, which now has the world’s largest Navy with 350 warships and submarines, is looking to set up more logistics bases after its first overseas military facility in Djibouti became operational in August 2017.
- ✓ It also has access to Karachi and Gwadar ports in Pakistan for turnaround facilities for its submarines and warships.
- ✓ According to the latest US Pentagon report, China is actively looking to set up military logistics facilities in Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UAE, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola and Tajikistan
- **India’s foreign minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi – held a meeting in Moscow for over two hours on September 10**
- ✓ The meeting took place on the sidelines of the RIC (Russia-India-China) trilateral grouping, after the completion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council’s Foreign Minister’s meeting



- ✓ It was the first in-person meeting between the foreign ministers of India and China to discuss the four-month-long stand-off at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh
- ✓ The meeting involved intense discussions on the crisis, the future of bilateral border management agreements and the state of the bilateral relationship itself.
- ✓ It was hosted by Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov
- ✓ In the past week, Chinese PLA troops acquired positions on the heights of the south bank of Pangong Tso
- ✓ In Retaliation, Indian forces strengthened defences and positions in areas such as Gurung Hill, Magar Hill, Rezang La and Richen La.
- ✓ Jaishankar, who travelled to Russia to attend the 8-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, also held bilateral meetings with Foreign Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on the sidelines of the 2-day Council of Foreign Ministers meet.
- ✓ The only member of SCO he did not meet was Pakistan, whose Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was also present.
- ✓ Last week, Moscow provided the venue for the first face-to-face political level talks between the two sides when Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met with his Chinese counterpart General Wei Fenghe along with their delegations.
- ✓ There was no breakthrough, but the talks set the stage for Jaishankar's visit to Moscow.

## COMMITTEES

- **On September 10, the government – announced the setting up of a three-member panel to decide on interest waiver for loan instalments during moratorium**
- ✓ The committee will assess the issue of waiver of interest, waiver of interest on interest and other related aspects on loan instalments, which were under moratorium due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- ✓ The panel will be headed by former comptroller and auditor general (CAG) Rajiv Mehrishi.

- ✓ The other members include Ravindra Dholakia, former IIM-Ahmedabad professor and ex-member of the RBI's monetary policy committee, and B Sriram, former MD of SBI and IDBI Bank.
- ✓ The terms of reference of the committee include measuring the impact on the national economy and financial stability of waiving interest and waiving interest on interest on loan instalments during the moratorium period
- ✓ The committee will submit its report within one week.
- ✓ State Bank of India will provide secretarial support to the panel and it may consult banks or other stakeholders, as deemed necessary

## DEFENCE

- **India - formally inducted the 4.5-generation Rafale fighter jets into the Indian Air Force (IAF) on September 10**
- ✓ Defence minister Rajnath Singh and French armed forces minister Florence Parly were present at the Rafale induction ceremony at the country's oldest, largest and strategically important airbase at Ambala

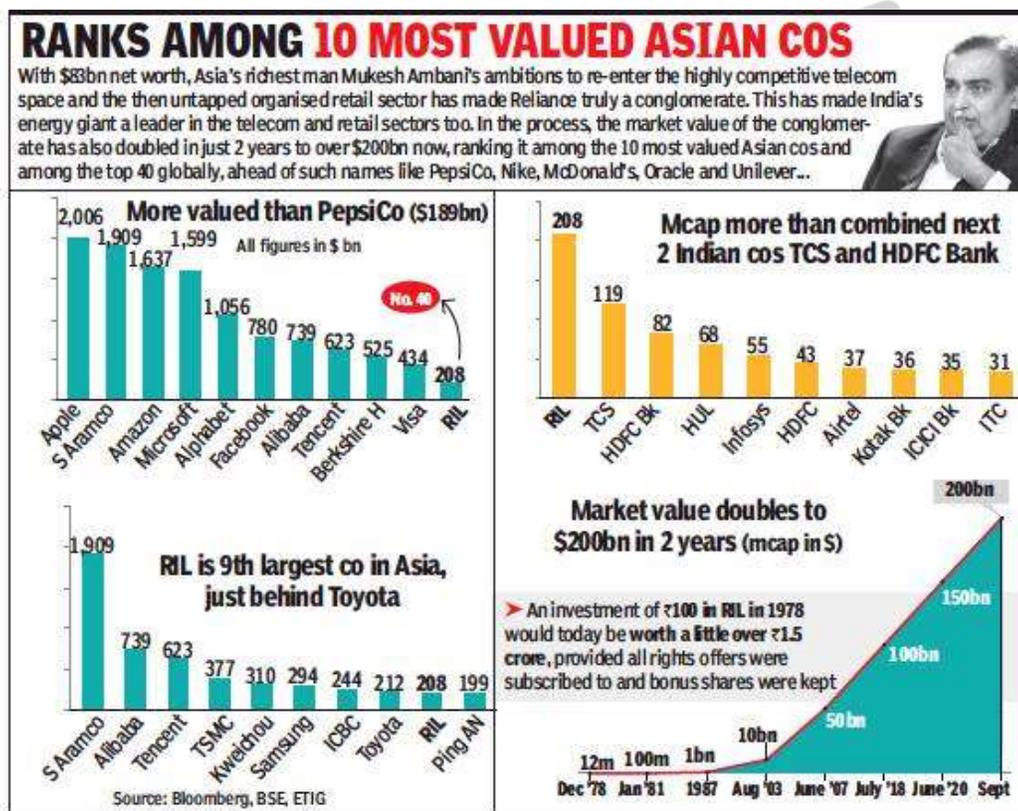


- ✓ The formal ceremony marked the full operational induction of the jets into the IAF
- ✓ The aircraft would be part of the 17th Squadron, popularly known as the "Golden Arrows"
- ✓ This is the first imported fighter to be inducted since the Sukhoi-30s came from Russia in the late 90s.
- ✓ The first five Rafale aircraft had arrived at the Ambala airbase from France on July 27.
- ✓ They were handed over to India in France last October but have since been used for training IAF pilots there.
- ✓ The second batch of four more aircraft is expected to arrive by the end of November this year.
- ✓ In all, 31 more aircraft are to arrive and France assured their timely delivery at the ceremony.

- ✓ A traditional water cannon salute to the Rafale aircraft, symbolising formal induction of the flying machine into the IAF, was also given.
- ✓ Before the ceremonial unveiling of the Rafale jets, a traditional 'Sarva Dharma Puja (a prayer by Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian preachers)' was performed.
- ✓ Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, IAF chief Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhaduria and defence secretary Ajay Kumar were among those who were present at the ceremony.
- ✓ Apart from Parly, the French delegation included Emmanuel Lenain, ambassador of France to India, and people from the French industry.

## ECONOMY

- On September 10, Reliance Industries (RIL) - became the first Indian company to cross the \$200-billion market capitalisation mark

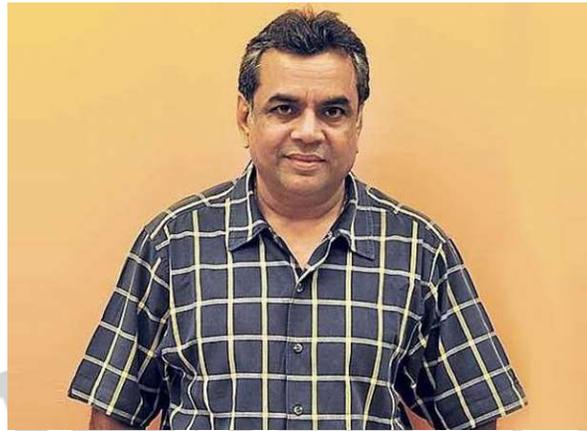


- ✓ The company reached the coveted honour after its stock surged over 8% on the back of reports that global retailing giant Amazon has been offered a \$20-billion worth of stake in its retail venture.
- ✓ The company's market value has risen almost five times in the last five years, from being an entity with a market cap of nearly \$43 billion a little over five years ago
- ✓ From being a pure-play business-to-business (B2B) entity, the company has scaled up its two consumer-focused businesses — telecom and organised retail — during the intervening period

- ✓ With this, in the last five years, RIL has become a major business-to-consumer (B2C) entity, in a country with over 1.3 billion people
- ✓ In the process, it became one of the 10 most valued companies in Asia and also among the top 40 globally.
- ✓ RIL is the only Indian company in these exclusive clubs, as per Bloomberg data.

## APPOINTMENTS

- **On September 10, actor and former MP Paresh Rawal - was named chairperson of the governing council of National School of Drama (NSD) in New Delhi.**



- ✓ The appointment was cleared by President Ram Nath Kovind and announced by Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel
  - ✓ Rawal will head the institute for four years.
  - ✓ He replaces playwright Ratan Thiyam whose tenure ended in August 2017.
  - ✓ Rawal, who served one term as the Ahmedabad East MP from 2014 to 2019, is a recipient of the Padma Shri.
- **On September 10, Citigroup, the third-largest bank in the US – announced that Jane Fraser will become its chief executive in February 2021**



### 16-YEAR VETERAN

➤ Fraser, 53, was last Oct named Citigroup president, marking her as heir apparent after she was viewed as a potential CEO candidate at other banks



➤ Fraser joined Citigroup 16 years ago and is credited internally with helping the bank recover after the financial crisis, when it had to take \$45 billion in taxpayer funds to survive

- ✓ Fraser is the bank's president and head of its global consumer banking business
- ✓ She will succeed Michael Corbat, who has served as chief executive since 2012.
- ✓ She becomes the first-ever woman executive to head a major Wall Street bank
- ✓ Fraser, 53, will join a very small group of female leaders at major corporations.
- ✓ There are only 31 women among the CEOs of the 500 companies that make up the S&P 500 stock index.
- ✓ The 10 largest US banks don't have any female chief executives
- ✓ With the appointment, Fraser will oversee a bank with \$1.96 trillion in assets

## SPORTS

- **The autobiography of G.K. Mahantesh, President of the Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) and President of World Blind Cricket (WBC) - was released by former India captain Rahul Dravid on September 10.**



- ✓ The book — titled 'Eye Opener', and written by Mahantesh and veteran cricket journalist Satish Viswanathan — highlights the story of visually challenged Mahantesh.
- ✓ Apart from his long association with blind cricket, Mahantesh is also the Founder Managing Trustee of Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled.

