

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

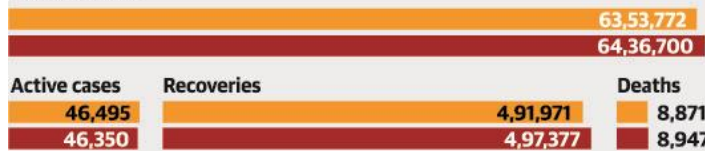
### TAMIL NADU

- On September 22, Tamil Nadu – reported 5,337 Covid-19 fresh infections and 76 more deaths, taking the cumulative case count to 5,52,674 and cumulative death toll to 8,947
- ✓ A total of 5,406 persons got discharged on the day, taking the total number of people cured to 4,97,377

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

	Until Sept. 15	Sept. 16	Sept. 17	Sept. 18	Sept. 19	Sept. 20	Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Total
Cases reported	5,14,208	5,652	5,560	5,488	5,569	5,516	5,344	5,337	5,52,674
Recovered/ discharged	4,58,900	5,768	5,524	5,525	5,556	5,206	5,492	5,406	4,97,377
Deceased	8,502	57	59	67	66	60	60	76	8,947

Persons tested



Districts with maximum cases



\*Changes in 24 hours    As on Sept. 21, 6 p.m.    As on Sept. 22, 6 p.m.

- ✓ At present, the State has 46,350 active cases undergoing treatment at various hospitals.
- ✓ In Chennai, 989 persons tested positive for the viral infection, while its neighbours Chengalpet, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram reported 231, 230 and 209 fresh cases respectively
- ✓ Further, Coimbatore reported 595 cases, while Tiruppur reported 369, Salem 291 and Cuddalore 233 cases.
- ✓ A total of 84,730 samples were tested in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of samples tested till date to 66,40,058.
- ✓ As on date, the state has 110 private laboratories and 66 government testing centres for the Covid-19 infection.

## STATES

- **Madhya Pradesh government - has announced a new scheme 'Mukhya Mantri Kisan Kalyan Yojana' on the lines of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi.**
- ✓ As per the new scheme, the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, getting Rs. 6,000 per annum, will be getting additional financial assistance of Rs. 4,000
- ✓ That makes the total annual assistance to be Rs. 10,000 per annum for the beneficiaries
- ✓ Around 80 lakh farmers will be benefitted from the state government scheme.
- ✓ This announcement was made in the Sabko sakh- Sabka Vikas program that was attended by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan
- ✓ The program was organised under the Garib Kalyan Week in Bhopal on September 22
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi is an initiative of the Indian government in which all the farmers get up to Rs. 6000 per year as minimum income support.
- ✓ The scheme came into effect from December 2019 and costs the exchequer Rs. 75,000 crores per annum.
- ✓ The initiative was announced by the Union Minister Piyush Goyal during the interim Union Budget of India, 2019.
- ✓ Under the scheme, Rs. 6000 is paid to each eligible farmer in three installments and is deposited directly into their bank accounts

## NATIONAL

- **On September 22, the Parliament - has passed the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill 2020 after the Rajya Sabha approved the bill.**
- ✓ The bill seeks to give five IIITs in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode – IIIT Bhopal, IIIT Agartala, IIIT Surat, IIIT Bhagalpur and IIIT Raichur, a designation of Institutions of National importance.
- ✓ Before this, there are 20 IIITs which are designated as Institutions of national importance.
- ✓ With the addition of these 5 institutes, the total number would now increase to 25.
- ✓ The Institutions of National importance would enable these institutions to give degrees such as B.Tech, M.Tech or Ph.D. degree, which is currently issued by a University of National Importance.
- ✓ The IIIT Laws Amendment Bill 2020 will amend the principal Acts of 2014 and 2017.
- ✓ The bill mainly aims to formalize the institutes.
- ✓ The institutes functioning as societies, registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, will now fall under the IIIT (PPP) Act, 2017.

- ✓ It also formalizes the post of Director and Registrar in each of these IIITs without any additional financial burden.
- ✓ Apart from this, in November 2010, the Union Cabinet had also approved the scheme to set up 20 new IIITs in Public Private Partnership mode.
- ✓ Out of these, 15 IIITs have been covered under the IIIT (PPP) Act, 2017.
  
- **On September 22, the Lok Sabha - cleared three labour Bills, combining laws on social security, occupational safety and industrial relations, by voice vote after a debate**
- ✓ The three bills includes - The Industrial Relations Code, 2020; the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020; and the Code of Social Security, 2020
- ✓ These bills are the part of government's labour reform agenda under which all the existing labour laws are brought into four labour codes - on wages, industrial relations, social security and safety, health and working conditions
- ✓ The bill subsumes- the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; the Trade Unions Act, 1926; and the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
- ✓ **The Industrial Relations Code, 2020** would usher in several changes including allowing companies with less than 300 workers to hire and fire without prior approval
- ✓ It recognizes the trade unions and contains provision for "notice periods" for strikes and lock-outs, standing orders, and resolution for industrial disputes
- ✓ **The Social Security Bill, 2020** subsumes nine social security laws including the Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1952, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, and the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008.
- ✓ It seeks to bring unorganised sector and gig workers under the umbrella of social security schemes such as health benefits, maternity benefits, provident funds and skill upgradation.
- ✓ **The Occupational Safety Code, 2020** subsumes 13 labour laws on safety, health and working conditions, including Factories Act, 1948; Mines Act, 1952; Dock Workers Act, 1986; Contract Labour Act, 1970; and Inter-State Migrant Workers Act, 1979
- ✓ The bill seeks to regulate health and safety conditions of workers in establishments with 10 or more workers.
- ✓ The new Bill covers contract and directly hired inter-State workers.
- ✓ These three bills will be tabled in the Rajya Sabha on September 23.
  
- **The Rajya Sabha – passed the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020 through a voice vote on September 22**
- ✓ It seeks to amend the direct and indirect tax laws including the Income Tax Act, 1961 (IT Act), Finance Acts, the Customs Act, 1962, and the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988.

- ✓ The amendment replaces the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020 that was promulgated on March 31
  - ✓ The new bill extends the deadlines for filing returns and to link PAN and Aadhaar.
  - ✓ It proposes 100% tax deduction to donations made to PM CARES fund and also amends the IT Act to make the PM CARES fund on par with the PM National Relief Fund.
  - ✓ It further seeks to amend the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 in order to allow the central government to notify an extension to the time limits for various GST-related compliances and actions.
- **On September 22, the Lok Sabha – passed the Indian medicine central council and Homeopathy central council through voice vote**
- ✓ The Rajya Sabha had approved the two bills earlier this month.
  - ✓ The Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020 seeks one year extension to form the Central Council of Homeopathy, following the end of its two-year deadline.
  - ✓ The bill seeks to amend the Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973.
  - ✓ It replaces the Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 that was promulgated on April 24, 2020
  - ✓ The Indian Medicine Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020 also seeks a year to reconstitute the central council.
  - ✓ The bill amends the Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970.
  - ✓ It replaces the Indian Medicine Central Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 which was promulgated on April 24, 2020
  - ✓ In the interim period for both the bills, a Board of Governors is to be constituted by the government to exercise the powers of the Central Council.
- **On September 22, the Lok Sabha - passed the J&K Official Languages Bill, 2020 that seeks to include Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi as the official languages in the newly-created Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- ✓ Earlier, only English and Urdu were the official languages in the former State.
  - ✓ The bill was passed by the voice vote in the Lower House.
  - ✓ Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy said that as per the 2011 Census, only 0.16% of the population in the Union territory spoke Urdu, even though it's an official language
  - ✓ He stated that over 56% speak Kashmiri and it had not been recognised as an official language yet.
  - ✓ Further, 20.64% speak Dogri and 2.3% speak Hindi in the UT, as per the Minister
  - ✓ No other state in the country has five official languages
  - ✓ There are 22 languages that are officially recognized under the Eighth schedule of the constitution.
  - ✓ It includes Assamese, Bengali, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Telugu, Sindhi (added by 21st

Amendment Act, 1967), Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali (added by 71st Amendment Act, 1992), Maithili, Bodo, Dogri, Santhal (added by 92nd Amendment 2003)

- **The Rajya Sabha - passed seven key Bills in three-and-a-half hours on September 22, amid the boycott of the proceedings by the Opposition in protest against the suspension of eight MPs.**
- ✓ The first Bill passed was the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020
- ✓ It seeks to declare five Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) set up under the public-private partnership mode in Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala, and Raichur as institutions of national importance.
- ✓ The second Bill to be moved by Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Danve Raosaheb Dadarao was the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020.
- ✓ The Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020, which was moved by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, was the third bill that was passed in the Upper House.
- ✓ The fourth Bill that was passed was the Companies (Amendment) Bill which amended 13 sections and added one chapter.
- ✓ The fifth Bill that was cleared was the National Forensic Sciences University Bill, 2020.
- ✓ As per the bill moved by the Minister of state for Home, G. Kishan Reddy, the Gujarat Forensic Sciences University is being upgraded to a national university.
- ✓ The sixth bill to be passed by the House was the Rashtriya Raksha University Bill, 2020 that seeks to upgrade the Gandhinagar police training university to a national university.
- ✓ The seventh Bill — the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020 — was also passed by Rajya Sabha.
  
- **The UGC - approved the guidelines for first year students of both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at its meeting on September 21**
- ✓ The Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank released the University Grants Commission's calendar for 2020-21
- ✓ The classes for the students entering colleges and universities for their first year will begin from November 1 in a delayed start to the new academic session.
- ✓ Holiday breaks will be curtailed and classes are likely to run six days a week to compensate for the time lost due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The admissions process for the first year will now be completed by the end of October
- ✓ The classes for the first semester will run till the end of February 2021 without any winter break.
- ✓ Students will then get one week gap to prepare for first semester exams, which are due to be held from March 8-26.

- ✓ Schools and colleges were shut in March due to the Covid-19 induced lockdown
- ✓ The board examinations as well as entrance tests for professional courses have been postponed multiple times.
- **Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Atomic Energy and Space, Jitendra Singh - announced that the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor will be commissioned by October 2022.**
- ✓ The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor is being constructed by Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI) and the Indira Gandhi centre for Atomic Research (ICGAR) at Kalpakkam Atomic Power Station in Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- ✓ It will add 500 MW of power to the national grid once commissioned.
- ✓ The reactor was planned to be commissioned in 2012 but it getting delayed due to technical errors.
- ✓ The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor is a pool-type reactor whose core is immersed in liquid (water).
- ✓ It has a high level of nuclear safety and uses Liquid sodium as the coolant.
- ✓ Currently India is in the third stage of its three Stage Nuclear Programme
- ✓ The programme was designed with an objective to use Thorium reserves in India to meet the energy requirements
- ✓ This was initiated by Homi Bhabha by using the thorium and uranium reserves found in Monazite sands of coastal regions of India.
- ✓ The three stages in the programme includes,
  - ✓ Stage 1- Pressurized Heavy Water Reactor
  - ✓ Stage 2- Fast Breeder Reactor
  - ✓ Stage 3- Thorium based reactor

## DEFENCE

- **The Navies of India and Australia – to conduct a mega naval exercise in the Indian Ocean commencing from September 23**
- ✓ The two-day exercise will include various anti-aircraft drills, complex naval maneuvers, and helicopter operations.
- ✓ From Indian side, Karmuk and Sahyadri ships will be a part of the exercise, while HMAS Hobart will be deployed in the exercise by the Royal Australian Navy
- ✓ This is the fourth major drill by the Indian Navy since June 2020 in the Indian Ocean.
- ✓ Earlier, Indian Navy conducted similar exercises with Japan (in June), Russia (in September) and The US (in July).
- ✓ The exercise with the US Navy was led by the Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (world's largest warship) along the coast of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- **The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) - conducted a successful flight test of ABHYAS- High speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) vehicle at the Balasore test range in Odisha on September 22.**



- ✓ The air vehicle can be used as a target for the evaluation of various missile systems.
- ✓ While testing, the vehicle achieved 5 km of flying altitude at a vehicle speed of 0.5 mach.
- ✓ The development cost of the project stands at Rs 150 million.
- ✓ ABHYAS – HEAT is an air vehicle that uses twin underslung boosters and is powered by a small gas turbine.
- ✓ It was developed by adopting DRDO's Lakshya, which is a high-speed target drone system
- ✓ The vehicle was designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment of DRDO.
- ✓ It contains a Flight Control Computer for control and guidance and has MEMS based Inertial Navigation System.
- ✓ The ABHYAS was launched first in Chitradurga Aeronautical Testing Range in 2012.

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY**

- **International Day of Sign Languages – September 23**



- ✓ The United Nations celebrates the day to create awareness about the importance of the sign languages for the deaf people
- ✓ Theme 2020 - Sign Languages are for Everyone
- ✓ The day marks the inauguration of the World Federation of the Deaf in the year 1951 in Rome, Italy
- ✓ The first International Day of Sign Languages was celebrated in 2018 along with the International Week of the Deaf.
- ✓ The International week of the Deaf was first celebrated in 1958 by World Federation of the Deaf.
- ✓ According to World Federation of Deaf, there are more than 72 million deaf people across the world, with 80% of them living in developing countries.
- ✓ These deaf people use more than 300 sign languages for communication
- ✓ To assist the disabled people, the Indian government had launched the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan to make public places more accessible to them
- ✓ The Goal No. 10 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) deals with the prevalence of disability in the world
- ✓ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in the year 2006
- ✓ The main aim of the convention is to end the discrimination against disabled persons.
- ✓ It recognizes and promotes the learning and use of sign languages.
- ✓ The convention has been ratified 177 times so far.

