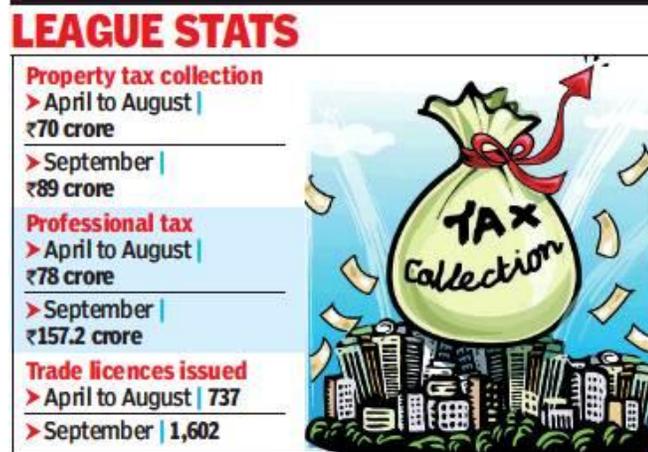


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—OCTOBER 12, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - to sign 14 MoUs for attracting investments worth ₹10,000 crore in the presence of the Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami in Chennai on October 12**
 - ✓ The list of MoUs to be signed include projects involving JSW group and expansion of units of Apollo Tyres and Britannia Industries at Oragadam and Gangaikondan respectively
 - ✓ The JSW group will be investing ₹6,300 crore in wind and solar power projects across four to five districts
 - ✓ The state signed 41 MoUs to attract over ₹30,600 crore in May and July this year.
 - ✓ The fresh MoUs for additional ₹10,000 crore is expected to further enhance the state's investment status
- **Greater Chennai Corporation – has created a new 'league' to motivate tax collectors and improve the civic body's revenue, based on the concept of 'Game theory'**
 - ✓ The new league is titled as the Great (GCC Revenue Evaluation and Augmentation Task) League



- ✓ According to the new initiative, every zone of the civic body is divided into a team and awarded points based on property tax collected, new tax areas assessed, tax collected through PoS machines and trade licenses renewed.
 - ✓ The technical part of the league was designed using game theory by M P Azhagu Pandia Raja, India smart city fellow from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, under the guidance of GCC commissioner G Prakash and deputy commissioner (revenue) Meghanath Reddy.
 - ✓ The novel initiative has been proposed at a time when the civic body's finances are in a total mess due to Covid-19 and moratorium given to residents and commercial establishments on payment of property tax.
 - ✓ Further, the best performing tax collectors (TC), assessors and licence inspectors (LI) are honoured with an award every month and zones that perform well in tax collection are also ranked.
 - ✓ The assistant revenue officers (AROs) of each zone are captains of their teams.
 - ✓ The game, which was started in September, resulted in the collection of ₹89.2 crore property tax in the month of September alone, as against ₹70 crore tax collected from April to August
 - ✓ Similarly, professional tax collected increased from ₹78 crore in the April-August period to ₹157 crore in September.
 - ✓ The number of trade licences issued during April-August was just 737, but in September alone, 1,602 were issued.
 - ✓ GCC's social media team has brought out a mascot, 'Vari Kumar', an ideal citizen who pays taxes on time and gets a rebate.
- **On October 11, Tamil Nadu – reported 5,015 Covid-19 positive cases and 65 deaths, taking the cumulative casecount of the state to 6,56,385 and death toll to 10,252**
- ✓ The state has 44,095 'active cases' undergoing treatment, after the discharge of 5,005 patients
 - ✓ This took the number of those who returned home after recovery from the viral infection to 6,02,038.

TN COVID TRACKER				
(Oct 11 numbers)				
ZONE	NEW CASES	NEW DEATHS	ACTIVE CASES	DISCHARGED
Chennai	1,864	31	18,420	1,733
North	571	8	4,346	624
Central	572	7	3,990	721
South	529	6	4,395	523
West	1,479	13	12,910	1,400
Other	0	0	34	4
TOTAL	5,015	65	44,095	5,005

- ✓ Chennai topped the infection rate with 1,250 new cases, while neighbouring Chengalpet (258), Kancheepuram (158) and Tiruvallur (198) together had 614 cases.
- ✓ Further, Coimbatore and Salem reported high numbers with 389 and 294 new cases.
- ✓ A total of 90,107 persons were tested on the day

NATIONAL

- **On October 11, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – launched the physical distribution of ‘Swamitva’ property cards**



- ✓ The Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh were also present via video link during the programme.
- ✓ The Swamitva (ownership) programme aims to provide ‘record of rights’ to lakhs of village households in rural areas by allowing them to download their property cards through an SMS link delivered on their mobile phones.
- ✓ This would be followed by physical distribution of the cards by the respective state governments.
- ✓ The scheme to be implemented across the country in a phased manner over a period of four years (2020-2024)
- ✓ It is intended to eventually cover 6.62 lakh villages across the country.
- ✓ The scheme uses drone and satellite technology to map physical assets in rural areas and aims at digitisation of property records
- ✓ This will provide villagers a way to use their property as a financial asset to obtain loans and other financial benefits
- ✓ The beneficiaries under the scheme come from 763 villages across six states.
- ✓ Out of these, 346 villages are from Uttar Pradesh, 221 from Haryana, 100 from Maharashtra, 44 from Madhya Pradesh, 50 from Uttarakhand and 2 from Karnataka.

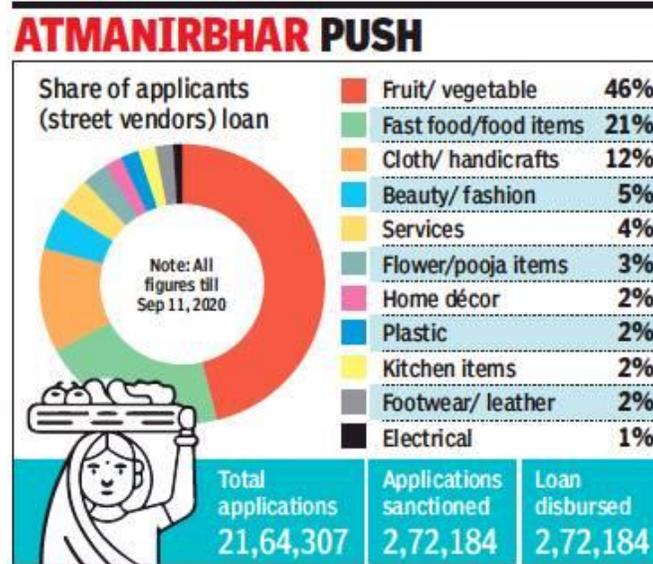
- ✓ The Prime Minister had dedicated the launch of the scheme to two leaders - socialist icon Jaiprakash Narayan and Sangh stalwart Nanaji Deshmukh.
 - ✓ The PM recalled both leaders and said JP's vision was central to Deshmukh's rural empowerment campaign.
 - ✓ According to the PM, the mammoth scheme was being inaugurated on a day which was the birth anniversary of both, who were conferred Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award of the country.
 - ✓ The Svamitva was launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day on April 24 2020
- **Eight Indian beaches - have got the coveted 'Blue Flag' certification — one of the world's most recognised award for clean, safe and environment-friendly beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operation.**



- ✓ The eight beaches to get the international eco-level tag include Shivrajpur beach (Dwarka, Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden Beach (Puri, Odisha) and Radhanagar beach (Andaman & Nicobar Islands)
- ✓ None of the beaches from Tamil Nadu or Puducherry made the cut.
- ✓ The final list of eight beaches have been chosen for the award among the 13 beaches identified by the Centre
- ✓ The beaches that were dropped at the recommendation stage by the experts due to the missing of a few qualifying parameters include Bhogave (Maharashtra), Kovalam (Tamil Nadu), Eden (Puducherry), Miramar (Goa) and Bangaram (Lakshadweep)
- ✓ Blue Flag beaches are considered the world's cleanest beaches.
- ✓ In order to qualify, 33 stringent criteria under the heads relating to environmental, bathing water quality, educational, safety, services and accessibility standards must be met by the beaches.

- ✓ It is an outstanding feat considering that no 'Blue Flag' nation has ever been awarded for eight beaches in a single attempt
 - ✓ The Union environment minister Prakash Javadekar announced the decision of the international jury.
 - ✓ India is also the first country in the Asia-Pacific region which has achieved this feat in just about two years' time.
 - ✓ The Union environment ministry had sent the list of these eight beaches to the international jury, seeking Blue Flag certification, last month
 - ✓ The blue flag certification is accorded by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark.
 - ✓ The jury, which takes a final call on this certification, comprises eminent members from the UN Environment Programme, World Tourism Organisation, FEE and IUCN.
 - ✓ Over 4,600 beaches, marinas and boats from around 50 countries have, so far, got the Blue Flag certification.
 - ✓ Spain has the highest number of Blue Flag tagged sites.
 - ✓ India has started working on getting the tag only in 2018
 - ✓ It has ambitious plans to expand the network of Blue Flag certification to 100 such beaches in the country in the next five years.
 - ✓ To achieve this goal, the environment ministry had last month launched India's own eco-label "BEAMS" (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) under its Integrated Coastal Zone Management project.
 - ✓ It was launched by the Union Ministry of environment on the occasion of International Coastal Clean-Up day.
 - ✓ Besides the Blue Flag tag for its eight beaches, India has also been awarded a third prize by the jury under the "International Best Practices" for pollution control in coastal regions.
 - ✓ The certification is considered important for tourism as this tag attracts both domestic and international tourists to these beaches
- **Railways – has decided to phase out sleeper coaches on mail and express trains that will run at 130kmph or above on its tracks.**
- ✓ Such trains will have only AC coaches as it plans to upgrade the network.
 - ✓ However, trains running at less speed will continue to have the sleeper coaches
 - ✓ The railways have set the December 2023 deadline to complete the upgradation of Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah to enable trains to run at 160kmph.
 - ✓ This means most of the future long distance trains on these corridors won't have sleeper coaches.
 - ✓ The ticket prices of such trains will be affordable, while the comfort and conveniences increase manifold and there is a substantial reduction in travel time too.

- **The finance ministry - asked banks to speed up disbursement of loans under the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme.**
- ✓ The ministry held a meeting with the lenders on October 9
- ✓ Under the scheme, any street vendor registered with an urban body is eligible for a collateral-free loan of ₹10,000.



- ✓ The government has designed an online platform where it can get a view on the status of all loans disbursed under the scheme.
- ✓ Although the PM SVANidhi was announced by the finance minister, it is being operationalised through a tie-up between the housing & urban affairs ministry and Sidbi.
- ✓ As against the targeted 50 lakh street vendors, only 21 lakh applications have been collected, 9 lakh loans sanctioned and 2.7 lakh disbursed.
- ✓ Street vendors selling fruits and vegetables have the maximum share of 46% of total 21.64 lakh loan applications received by the banks and financing agencies under the scheme.
- ✓ Women vendors comprise 40% of all the applications received.
- ✓ Varanasi Municipal Corporation leads the list of municipal areas where 10,000 vendors have got the loan followed by Indore (7,838) and Bhopal (7,483).
- ✓ A total of only 271 street vendors have got the loan in Delhi, which has four municipal bodies and one cantonment area.
- ✓ The total disbursed amount, under the scheme, is ₹266 crore.
- ✓ SBI tops the list with 5.2 lakh applications and 75,000 sanctioned loans, followed by Union Bank which has received 2.2 lakh applications and has sanctioned 45,000.
- ✓ Other banks in the top five are Bank of India, Canara Bank and Central Bank.
- ✓ Among all states and UTs, a maximum of 1.19 lakh applicants have got the loan from Madhya Pradesh.

- ✓ Telangana has the second highest such applications (44,000) followed by Uttar Pradesh (43,200).
- **On October 11, India – recorded 69,167 fresh Covid-19 infections and 827 deaths**
 - ✓ While the infection has slowed down in almost all states, the situation continues to be serious in Kerala, Karnataka and Bengal.
 - ✓ Kerala reported 9,347 new cases of Covid-19, while Karnataka recorded 9,523 fresh cases on the day
 - ✓ Maharashtra reported 10,792 infections, taking the total caseload to 15,28,226.
 - ✓ Further, Andhra Pradesh reported 5,210 new infections and 30 deaths
 - ✓ While India's caseload reached 71,18,941 on the day, the number of total patients who are discharged stood at 61,43,983, which translates to a recovery rate of 86.3%.
 - ✓ The country's toll reached 1,09,132 while the number of active cases remain below the nine-lakh mark – 8,65,826.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On October 11, China - announced that it was providing a \$90 million financial grant to Sri Lanka**
 - ✓ The assistance comes two days after the Sri Lankan President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa sought help from a visiting Chinese delegation to disprove a perception that China-funded megaprojects are “debt traps”.
 - ✓ The grant would be used for medical care, education and water supplies in Sri Lanka's rural areas, as per the Chinese embassy in Sri Lanka
 - ✓ The announcement follows a visit to the Indian Ocean island nation on October 9 by a Chinese delegation led by Yang Jiechi, a Communist Party Politburo member and a former foreign minister.
 - ✓ China considers Sri Lanka to be a critical link in its massive “Belt and Road” global infrastructure building initiative
 - ✓ It has already provided billions of dollars in loans for Sri Lankan projects over the past decade.
 - ✓ The projects include a seaport, airport, port-city, highways and power stations.
 - ✓ However, there is a widespread criticism that the Chinese-funded projects are not financially viable and that Lanka will face difficulties in repaying the loans.
 - ✓ In 2017, Sri Lanka leased out a Chinese-built port located near busy shipping routes to a Chinese company for 99 years to recover from the heavy burden of repaying the Chinese loan the country received to build it.
 - ✓ The facility is part of Beijing's plan for a line of ports stretching from Chinese waters to the Persian Gulf.
 - ✓ Recently, the top diplomats of four Indo-Pacific nations — the US, Japan, India and Australia — met in Tokyo to increase their involvement in a regional initiative

called “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” aimed at countering China’s growing assertiveness in the region

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- On October 11, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan - said the country would soon roll out the FELUDA paper-strip test for SARS-CoV-2 diagnosis during the fifth edition of “Sunday Samvaad”
- ✓ FELUDA Test (FNCAS9 editor linked uniform detection test) has been developed by the CSIR-IGIB based on the CRISPR gene editing technology.
- ✓ It was approved by the Drug Controller General of India for a commercial launch.

A new test on the horizon

A COVID-19 test named FELUDA, developed by the Delhi-based CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, is quicker and cheaper. A lowdown on the test



(RT-PCR) test takes 1.5 hours; Rapid antigen test takes 30-40 minutes and TruNat test gives results in 60 minutes

Test in time: The paper-strip test has been approved for a commercial launch. ■ ANI

Cost: It is expected to cost between ₹500 and ₹600

Accuracy: Based on tests in over 2,000 patients, it showed **96% sensitivity** (100% sensitivity = all positive samples return positive results) and **98% specificity** (100% specificity = all negative samples return negative results)

Type of sample: Either saliva or blood, but saliva is preferred for testing

Turnaround time: The kit takes 45 minutes to give a result. In comparison, the real-time polymerase chain reaction

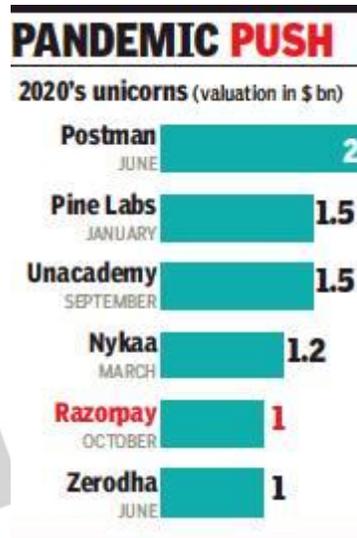
Is it similar to the pregnancy color-code test?

The paper strip generates two lines for a positive result and one line in the case of a negative result, much like a pregnancy test kit. However, this is a nucleic acid test and not a protein based one

- ✓ The test showed 96% sensitivity and 98% specificity.
- ✓ It can produce results within two hours and costs less than Rs. 600
- ✓ The other tests that are being used to detect the virus include RT PCR, Rapid Antigen Detection Test, ELISA Antibody Test and the Saliva Direct Test.
- ✓ During the meeting, the health Minister informed that the Covid-19 vaccines currently in trial in India are two-dose and three-dose vaccines.
- ✓ The vaccine by Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech requires two doses, while the Cadila Healthcare vaccine requires three

ECONOMY

- **Payments startup Razorpay – has become the sixth unicorn of the country in this year**
- ✓ The valuation of the startup has more than doubled to \$1 billion with its latest \$100-million fund-raise
- ✓ The funding was co-led by Singapore’s sovereign wealth fund GIC and marquee venture capital firm Sequoia Capital.
- ✓ The unicorns are the companies that are valued at over \$1 billion



- ✓ The Bengaluru-based company saw five times growth in transaction value to \$25 billion this year, as compared to last year
- ✓ With this, in 2020, three unicorns have emerged in the fintech space (Pine Labs, Zerodha & Razorpay), and one each in software (Postman), edtech (Unacademy) and beauty space (Nykaa).
- ✓ Razorpay now has five million merchants compared to 1 million in 2019.
- ✓ While its payments gateway remains a core business, it has been expanding in lending and neo-banking services too.
- ✓ In total, the company has raised over \$206 million since starting in 2014.
- ✓ Currently, non-payment gateway business contributes about 20% of its revenue, which could go up to 35% in 12-18 months.
- ✓ Razorpay’s lending is largely focused on meeting the advance payment requirements of small businesses.

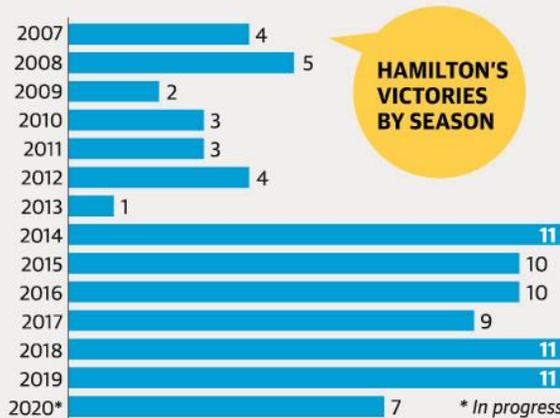
SPORTS

- **On October 11, Formula one leader, Lewis Hamilton (Britain) - equalled Michael Schumacher's all-time record of 91 Formula One wins**
- ✓ He achieved the record with a victory in the Eifel Grand Prix, taking him closer to a seventh world championship.

Champagne moment

Hamilton scored his 91st Grand Prix win at the Eifel Grand Prix in the Nurburgring, equalling Michael Schumacher for the most wins in F1 history

Hamilton		Schumacher
261	Career starts	306
91	Wins	91
96	Pole positions	68
224	Points finishes	221
160	Podiums	155
51	Fastest laps	77
6	Driver's titles	7
261	Number of races to reach the 91st win	246
2007 Canadian GP (McLaren)	First win	1992 Belgian GP (Benetton)



- ✓ Winning the title would bring Hamilton level with Schumacher's record of seven championships.
- ✓ Schumacher's son Mick presented Hamilton with one of his father's red helmets after the race, and Hamilton took it with him to the podium.
- ✓ During the race, Kimi Raikkonen's 323 starts have made him the most experienced driver in F1 history, beating the mark set by Rubens Barrichello from 1993 through 2011.
- ✓ It was the first F1 race since 2013 at the Nurburgring in Germany and was named the Eifel Grand Prix after a nearby mountain range.
- **On October 10, the 22-year old Polish Chess Grandmaster Jan-Krzysztof Duda – defeated the World Champion Magnus Carlsen in Round 5 of the Altibox Norway chess event**
 - ✓ The victory ends Carlsen's world record 125-match unbeaten streak in classical time format that lasted 2 years, 2 months and 10 days.
 - ✓ The last time Carlsen lost in a classical time format clash was to Shakhriyar Mamedyarov at the Biel festival on July 31, 2018.
 - ✓ Carlsen has posted 44 wins and 81 draws since then



- ✓ At the Tata Steel chess in January this year, Carlsen had broken the previous record of 111 unbeaten classical games set by Russia's Sergei Tiviakov back in 2005.
- ✓ Interestingly, this is not the first time Duda has got the better of Carlsen in 2020.
- ✓ The world no. 15 Duda defeated the world champion in the Lindores Abbey Rapid challenge in May in the blitz format.
- **The 34-year old Rafael Nadal (Spain) – defeated top-seeded Novak Djokovic in straight sets to win his 13th French Open Men's title at Roland Garros, Paris**
- ✓ During the course, World No. 2 Nadal has reached multiple records which included -- a century of wins at Roland Garros, 13 French Open crowns and the epic, equalling Roger Federer's haul of 20 Grand Slam titles.

MOST GRAND SLAM SINGLES TITLES

ROGER FEDERER (SUI)	20
RAFAEL NADAL (ESP)	20
NOVAK DJOKOVIC (SRB)	17
PETE SAMPRAS (USA)	14
ROY EMERSON (AUS)	12

THE GOAT RACE

Nadal: 20 Grand Slam titles
(13 French Open titles, 4 US Open titles, 2 Wimbledon titles and 1 Australian Open title)

Turned pro: 2001

Career titles: 86

Total Grand Slam matches: Won 276, lost 39

Most weeks as No. 1: 209

56 Meetings between Nadal and Djokovic.

100 Victory on Sunday gives the 34-year-old his 100th match win in Paris against just two defeats in 15 years.

- ✓ The champion received 1,600,000 in prize money for the victory, while the World No. 1 Djokovic collected the runner-up cheque of 850,000
- ✓ Nadal has also become the first player in the Open Era to win 13 singles titles at any Tour-level event
- ✓ Nadal has put together streaks of four or more French Open championships thrice — 2005-08, 2010-14 and 2017-20 — to go alongside his four trophies at the U.S. Open, two at Wimbledon and one at the Australian Open.

- ✓ As of now, Nadal has won 2 Olympic medals, 21 ATP Tour 500 titles, 35 ATP Tour Masters 1000 titles

NADAL MAKES IT 20:20 IN 2020

- Nadal (in pic) beats Djokovic 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 in French Open final, equals Federer's record of most men's singles Grand Slam title wins: 20
- The two have faced each other 56 times, more than any other men in the Open era. Nadal leads 29-27
- Nadal hasn't dropped a set in 7 matches at French Open this yr. Final was his **100th match at Roland Garros**

“Winning here means everything, so it's not about equalling Roger. It is a Roland Garros win
RAFAEL NADAL

(Rafa is) my greatest rival... we have pushed each other to become better players
ROGER FEDERER



- ✓ Iga Swiatek won the French Open female's single title a day earlier, becoming the first player from Poland to win a Grand Slam

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **International Day of the Girl Child – October 11**



- ✓ The observance of the day aims to empower women to get their rights in order to face the challenges
- ✓ Theme 2020 - “My voice, our equal future”
- ✓ The first International Day of the Girl Child was observed in 2012 with the theme “Ending Child Marriage”
- ✓ Earlier, on December 19, 2011, United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution 66/170 and declared October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child.