



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS–OCTOBER 24, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- On October 23, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - inaugurated Nokia's defunct plant at Sriperumbudur, which was now acquired by Salcomp, Finnish electronics component maker



Vikram Solar

Solar cell manufacturing unit at Cragodam, Kanchipuram District

at an

Investment of Rs 5512 Crores

Foundation Stone Laying of Project by

Thiru Edappadi K.Palaniswami

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

On

23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020



- ✓ The factory had restarted the production of phone parts and chargers after a gap of six years
- ✓ The unit will be fully occupied in phases until 2022.
- ✓ The CM inaugurated seven projects worth ₹1,298.2 crore with the potential to create 7,879 job opportunities, during the event.
- ✓ Of the seven projects, the MoU for six were signed at the second edition of the Global Investors' Meet that was held at the Chennai Trade Centre in January 2019.
- ✓ Salcomp will now target restarting another factory inside the Nokia SEZ, that of Lite-On-Mobile, by January 2021.
- ✓ Salcomp, largest supplier of chargers for Apple phones, will invest a total of ₹1,800 crore and provide employment to 10,000 additional persons.

- ✓ Nokia shut operations in 2014 after Microsoft decided to keep the Sriperumbudur factory out of a global deal due to tax disputes.
- ✓ The unit was forced shutdown and after a long-drawn legal battle, the dispute was settled in 2018 paving way for Salcomp to take over the factory in 2019.
- **On October 23, Tamil Nadu – reported 3,054 Covid-19 cases and 33 deaths, pushing the state's cumulative case tally to 7,03,250 and cumulative death toll to 10,858.**
- ✓ A total of 32,960 people were under treatment across the state for the viral infection.
- ✓ Chennai reported the highest with 844 people testing positive followed by 280 infections in Coimbatore.

TN TRACKER		The Covid situation in Tamil Nadu as on Friday			
Zone	Cases	Discharged	Deaths	Case tally	Active
Chennai Region	1,285	1,907	17	2,98,063	13,914
North	296	473	3	1,02,063	3,068
Central	267	429	3	63,473	2,682
South	281	433	3	1,22,090	3,322
West	928	1,020	7	1,15,226	9,971
Other	0	0	0	2,335	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,057</b>	<b>4,262</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>7,03,250</b>	<b>32,960</b>

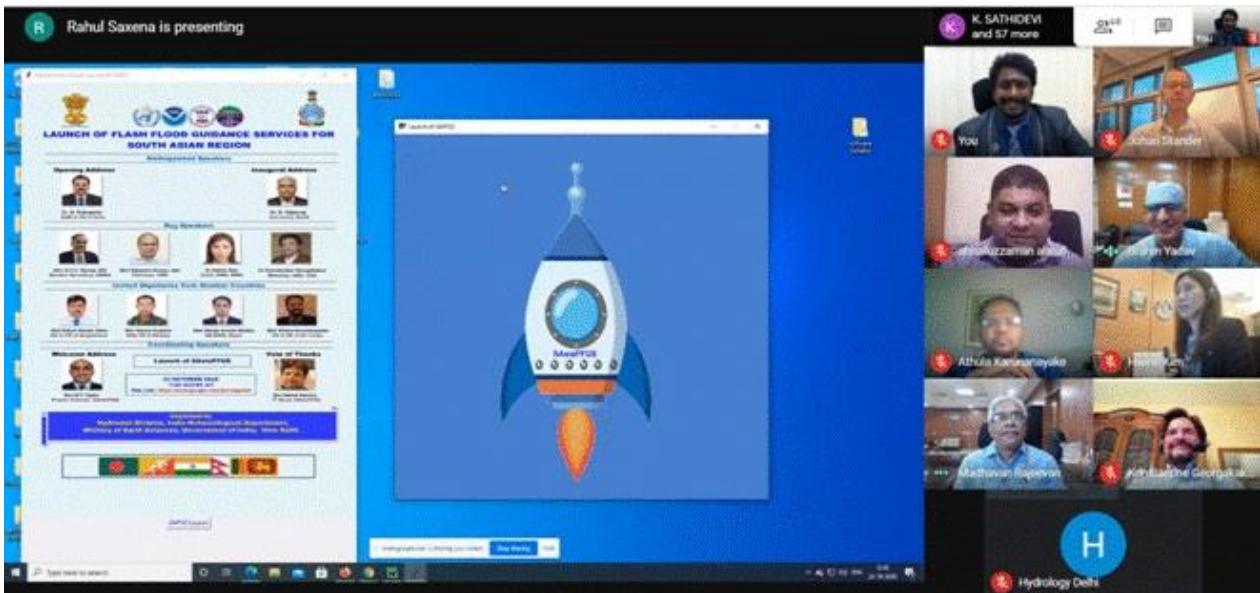
- ✓ The three districts adjacent to Chennai – Chengalpet (186), Tiruvallur (168) and Kancheepuram (87) together reported 441 cases.
- ✓ A total of 4,262 people were discharged in the last 24 hours
- ✓ With this, a total of 6,59,432 people have recovered from the viral infection so far.
- ✓ The total number of samples tested so far stands at 93,56,580 after the testing of 81,472 samples on the day across 198 testing laboratories, which includes 66 in the government sector

## NATIONAL

- **On October 23, the government - invoked stock limit norms under the Essential Commodities Act for onions**
- ✓ The move follows the continuous increase of prices of onions across the entire country, since September
- ✓ This is the first time stock limits have been imposed on any commodity after the Essential Commodities Act was amended last month including a provision to invoke this clause in extraordinary price rise situations.
- ✓ As per the new norms, retailers could store a maximum of 2 tonnes of onion, wholesale traders could keep up to 25 tonnes at a particular time.

- ✓ This restriction will be effective till December 31 to ensure traders do not create artificial conditions to raise prices.
  - ✓ The all-India average retail price variation of onions as of October 21 when compared to last year was 22.12 % (from Rs.45.33 to Rs.55.6 per kg) and when compared to last five years, the average was 114.96 % (from Rs 25.87 to Rs 55.6 per kg).
  - ✓ The government justified the reason for imposing stock limits by saying that the production of onion in 2019-20 was 261 lakh tonnes, which was the highest in the last five years.
- **Vaccine maker, Bharat Biotech - plans to conduct the Phase III clinical trial for COVID-19 vaccine candidate Covaxin from November.**
- ✓ The company intends to conduct the trial on 26,000 participants across 25 cities.
  - ✓ Bharat Biotech is developing the vaccine in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
  - ✓ The company recently secured approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for the Phase III clinical trial of Covaxin.
  - ✓ The vaccine was already tested in 12 hospitals on volunteers between ages 18 and 55 years in phase one and two of the trials
  - ✓ It was found to have generated robust immune responses in patients who have been exposed to COVID-19 infections
  - ✓ The Covaxin vaccine was derived from a strain of the virus which was isolated by the National Institute of virology in Pune.
  - ✓ At present, there are 3 vaccines that are under trial in the country - Covaxin, ZyCoV-D vaccine by Zydus Cadila and the Oxford University's Covishield Vaccine.
- **Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) – had announced that wastage or misuse of potable water resources tapped from underground will now be a punishable offence in the country.**
- ✓ In this aspect, CGWA has issued a fresh directive under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 on October 8 based on an earlier order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT).
  - ✓ Accordingly, violators will face imprisonment up to five years or fine which may extend to Rs. 1 lakh, or with both, for non-compliance of a mechanism to be framed by local civic bodies to implement the order.
  - ✓ The local civic bodies, dealing with water supply, will specifically elaborate on 'wastage' or 'misuse'— both in terms of domestic and commercial use— and enforce it through proper monitoring.
  - ✓ The NGT order had come on petitions of Rajendra Tyagi and a non-for-profit organisation, Friends.

- On October 22, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) - launched the 'South Asia Flash Flood Guidance Services' (SAsiaFFGS)



- ✓ The new service is designed to forecast flash floods in real-time to support the agency's warning system about 6-12 hours in advance.
- ✓ It will enable all member countries — India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka — to issue impact-based forecasting at watershed and city level of flash floods with resolution of 4km x 4km.
- ✓ There is a separate system at Islamabad for issuing similar warnings for Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- ✓ The guidance for flash floods will be in the form of threats (6 hours in advance) and risks (24 hours in advance)
- ✓ It will be provided by the Regional Centre to National Meteorological & Hydrological Services, national and state disaster management authorities and all other stakeholders
  
- **India - assumed the role of chair of the International Labour Organisation's governing body from October 2020 till June 2021**
- ✓ This was informed by the Labour Ministry on October 23.
- ✓ India is taking up the role after a gap of 35 years.
- ✓ Labour Secretary Apurva Chandra will preside over its meeting in November.
- ✓ The ILO body decides on matters of agenda and budget apart from electing the Director-General of the organisation

## INTERNATIONAL

- On October 23, the US FDA - said that it had formally approved remdesivir as the first drug to treat Covid-19 for hospitalised patients.

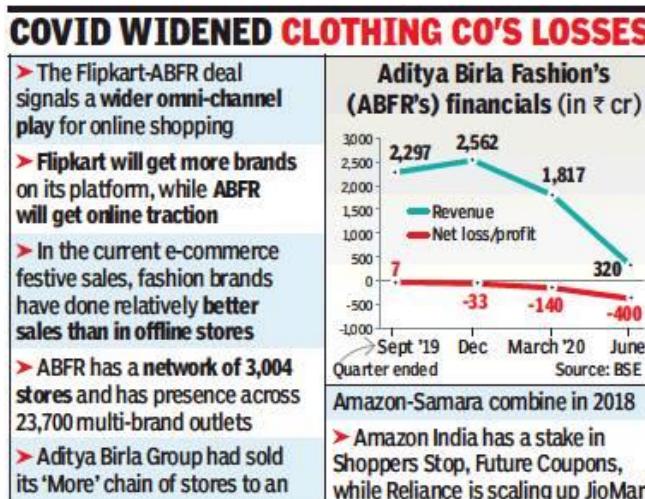
- ✓ According to the FDA, the drug had been approved for adults and pediatric patients ages 12 years and older and weighing at least 88 pounds who require hospitalisation for Covid-19.
  - ✓ The FDA had granted remdesivir emergency authorisation in May after a trial by the National Institutes of Health indicated that it modestly reduced the recovery time in hospitalised patients.
  - ✓ President Trump received the antiviral drug after he began showing symptoms earlier this month.
  - ✓ However, the drug does not prevent death.
  - ✓ Meanwhile, the WHO is preparing guidelines on use of remdesivir and would release them in three to four weeks.
- **On October 23, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) - decided to keep the Pakistan on its 'grey' or 'increased monitoring' list.**
- ✓ However, the global terror watchdog acknowledged "significant progress" made by Pakistan in addressing issues related to terror-financing and money laundering
  - ✓ The decision to keep Pakistan in 'grey' list was taken mainly due to Pakistan's failure to address six 'serious deficiencies' in its 27-point action plan to check terror-financing
  - ✓ It includes the failure to act against all UNSC designated terrorists like Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed and LeT operations chief, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, and prohibit their funding sources by freezing their movable and immovable assets
  - ✓ While Saeed was sentenced in February to 11 years for terror financing, and he remains behind bars, Islamabad claims the others are "untraceable".
  - ✓ The Paris-based agency, in its plenary meeting, also acknowledged the progress shown by Pakistan in "largely" addressing 21 items in the action plan
  - ✓ The agency urged Pakistan to "swiftly complete" its action plans before the next plenary meeting, due for February 2021, as all deadlines have already expired.
  - ✓ The Asia-Pacific Group of FATF had also submitted a report called "Follow up report on mutual evaluation of Pakistan" recently and suggested to put Pakistan under grey list
  - ✓ In 2019, the Asia Pacific group of the organization had downgraded Pakistan status from "regular follow-up" to "enhanced follow up" category
  - ✓ Pakistan recently passed three crucial legislations after it was downgraded under the FATF list in 2019
  - ✓ The decision to keep Pakistan in grey list will make it difficult for the country to secure financial aid from International organisations including the Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.
- **On October 23, Israel and Sudan - agreed to take steps to normalise relations in a deal brokered with the help of the US**



- ✓ This makes Sudan the third Arab government — after UAE and Bahrain — to resume diplomatic relations with Israel in the last two months.
- ✓ US President Trump sealed the agreement in a phone call with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and Sudanese PM Abdalla Hamdok and transitional council head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan
- ✓ Trump's decision earlier this week to remove Sudan from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism paved the way for the deal with Israel.
- ✓ Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinians reject and condemn Sudan's move.
- ✓ Earlier, UAE, Bahrain and Israel signed the first peace agreement called as the Abraham accord in September 2020.
- ✓ Egypt and Jordan are the first two countries to recognize Israel and resume diplomatic relations.

## ECONOMY

- Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFR) - has entered into a commercial pact with e-commerce platform, Flipkart for raising ₹1,500 crore by selling nearly 8% stake.



- ✓ Once the deal is approved by shareholders and regulators, Bengaluru-based e-tailer Flipkart will also have the option to appoint a board observer.
- ✓ Beyond its current business-to-business (B2B) arrangements with Flipkart India, ABFR has entered into a pact with the e-tailer for sale and distribution of its brands on the platform.
- ✓ ABFR owns Pantaloons and sells brands like Allen Solly, Peter England, Louis Philippe and Van Heusen in India.
- ✓ For US-based Walmart owned Flipkart, this will enhance its range of fashion brands offered on its group platforms, including Myntra.
- ✓ Flipkart recently picked up a 27% stake in Arvind's Flying Machine brand

