



## Current Affairs of the Day

### Govt. gives nod for Cipla to import Moderna's vaccine

1. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) granted permission to Mumbai-based pharma major Cipla to import Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine, making it the fourth vaccine in the country to be given the emergency use authorisation (EUA).

2. NITI Aayog said the modalities were being worked out for the import of the vaccine and added

that India is also in talks with Pfizer and JJ to add to the basket of vaccines available in the country.

3. Currently, India has made available three COVID vaccines — Covaxin, Covishield and Sputnik.

#### 7-month storage

1. The Moderna vaccine would be brought in as a ready-to-use injectable vaccine, which can be stored for seven months at a prescribed temperature, and that normal storage after a vial is opened is 30 days.

2. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Moderna vaccine has shown to have an efficacy of approximately 94.1%.

### One more joins the battle

Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine has become the fourth one to get emergency use authorisation in India

■ Three other COVID-19 vaccines – **Covaxin, Covishield and Sputnik B** – are currently available

■ India is also in talks with **Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson** to add to the vaccines available

■ Moderna's vaccine can be stored for a period of **seven months** at prescribed temperature and normal storage after the vial is opened is **30 days**

■ It has shown to have an efficacy of approximately **94.1%** in protecting against COVID-19, starting **14 days after the first dose**



Based on evidence collected so far, the new variants of SARS-CoV-2 do not alter the effectiveness of the vaccine



## Ensure that no migrant worker goes hungry, SC instructs govt.

Court sets July 31 deadline, tells States to implement One Nation One Ration Card.

### Highlights:

1. A government cannot “abdicate” its duties to feed migrant workers, especially during a pandemic, merely because they did not have ration cards, the Supreme Court said in a judgment.
2. There is a large number of such migrants who do not possess any cards. Their above disability is due to their poverty and lack of education. The State cannot abdicate its duty towards such persons, especially in the wake of the pandemic where large numbers of migrant workers are not able to get jobs that may satisfy their basic needs.
3. The court set July 31 as the deadline for the Centre and the States to ensure their “bounden duty” that none among the estimated 38 crore migrant workers, who form one-fourth of the country’s population, goes hungry during the pandemic. These workers too have made “considerable contributions” to the country’s growth and economic development.
4. The court ordered the State governments to frame schemes to distribute dry rations to migrant workers by July 31. The States/Union Territories have to make extra efforts to reach migrant labourers so that no migrant labourer is denied two meals a day.
5. The Centre has to supply whatever additional quantity of food grains a State demanded. The allocation of additional food grains and running of community kitchens in prominent places to feed workers should continue throughout the pandemic, the court directed.
6. Right to food, one of the “bare necessities of life”, was an intrinsic part of the right to live with dignity, the court told the government.

It ordered all the States to fully implement the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme by July 31. The scheme allows migrant labourers covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) to access food at any fair price shop with his or her ration card in any part of the country.



## ‘Unpardonable apathy’

1. The court slammed the Labour Ministry for its “unpardonable apathy” in not completing the work of the ₹45.39 crore National Database for Unorganised Workers (NDUW) portal to register and identify migrant workers and unorganised labourers to ensure their rights, welfare and food security.
2. The court had ordered the Ministry to finalise the NDUW module way back in 2018. The Centre has blamed the delay in implementation on “software” problems.

## Activists welcome the top court’s ruling

‘It should result in universalisation of rations to all migrant workers during the pandemic’.

### Highlights:

1. The Supreme Court’s ruling should result in the universalisation of rations to all migrant workers across India as long as the pandemic continues, as opposed to the government’s one-time relief measures, said the petition
2. Social activists welcomed the court’s direction to the government to re-determine the number of people covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), given that the population has grown since the law was enacted.

## ‘Indians value religious freedom, not integration’

South India more inclusive, says Pew Center report on religious attitudes in the country.

1. Most Indians, cutting across religions, feel they enjoy religious freedom, value religious tolerance, and regard respect for all religions as central to what India is as a nation.
2. At the same time, the majority in each of the major religious groups show a marked preference for religious segregation and “want to live separately”, according to a nationwide survey on religious attitudes, behaviours and beliefs conducted by Pew Research Center, a non-profit based in Washington DC.



3. For instance, the report found that 91% of Hindus felt they have religious freedom, while 85% of them believed that respecting all religions was very important 'to being truly Indian'.

4. Also, for most Hindus, religious tolerance was not just a civic virtue but also a religious value, with

80% of them stating that respecting other religions was an integral aspect of 'being Hindu'.

5. Other religions showed similar numbers for freedom of religion and religious tolerance. While 89% of Muslims and Christians said they felt free to practice their religion, the comparative figures for Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains were 82%, 93%, and 85% respectively.

6. And yet, paradoxically the majority in all the faiths scored poorly on the metrics for religious segregation: composition of friends circle, views on stopping inter-religious marriage, and willingness to accept people of other religions as neighbours.

## Free to choose

More than 80% of adults across all major religions in India said that they were free to practice their religion in the country

Religion	% of Indian adults who said...		
	They are very free to practice their religion	Respecting all religions is very important to being truly Indian	Respecting other religions is a very important part of their religious identity
Hindus	91	85	80
Muslims	89	78	79
Christians	89	78	78
Sikhs	82	81	75
Buddhists	93	84	86
Jains	85	83	73
General population	91	84	80

## 'Chamoli disaster due to avalanche'

1. The flash flood in Chamoli district in Feb 2021, Uttarakhand, that claimed at least 72 lives with at least 200 missing was due to a large mass of snow, ice and rock avalanche along with a hanging mass of rock crashing into the Raunthi Garh valley floor.

2. This impact pulverised the combination of rock, snow and ice causing a rapid flow downstream of Raunthi Garh and into the Rishiganga valley leading to the deluge, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) said in a report.



3. The deluge had destroyed the 13.2 MW Rishiganga power plant and damaged the 520 MW Tapovan-Vishnugadh hydel power project, in which tunnels several workers had been fatally trapped.
4. The event had sparked global scientific interest with several groups of scientists, both in India and abroad, perusing satellite imagery as well as some teams making field visits to the site to determine the cause of the disaster.
5. A report in the journal Science earlier this month too came to a similar conclusion, reporting that nearly 27 million cubic metres of rock and ice had crashed into the valley floor.

### Warm weather

1. A contributory factor, according to a senior scientist at the GSI, was unusually warm weather in the region. Observed change in the hydro-meteorological conditions between 4th and 6th February 2021 (heavy snowfall followed by sudden warmer climate) possibly triggered this huge snow and rock avalanche/landslide causing a sudden domino effect of flash flood in the downstream.
2. There was no evidence of a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) having caused the event.