

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 7, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- For the third consecutive year, Tamil Nadu – registered a higher economic growth rate than the national average during 2019-20.
- ✓ The State's growth rate at 8.03% was almost double the all-India average figure of 4.2% last year.
- ✓ The growth rate figures for the year 2019-20 was finalized by the Centre recently
- ✓ The calculations on the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) data have been done at constant prices, keeping 2011-12 as the base year.

Positive signs

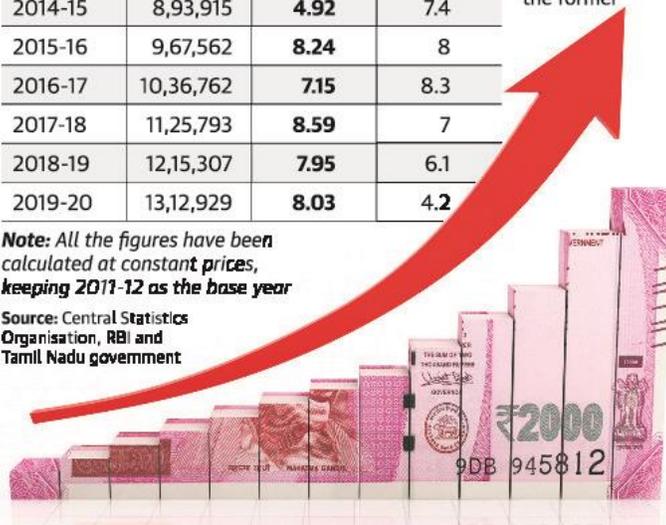
How Tamil Nadu's economy has fared over the years

Year	Value of GSDP (₹ in cr.)	Growth rate (%)	National average growth rate (%)
2012-13	7,91,824	5.37	5.5
2013-14	8,51,976	7.6	6.4
2014-15	8,93,915	4.92	7.4
2015-16	9,67,562	8.24	8
2016-17	10,36,762	7.15	8.3
2017-18	11,25,793	8.59	7
2018-19	12,15,307	7.95	6.1
2019-20	13,12,929	8.03	4.2

Against the all-India average figure of 4.2% last year, the State's performance – 8.03% – was almost double the former

Note: All the figures have been calculated at constant prices, keeping 2011-12 as the base year

Source: Central Statistics Organisation, RBI and Tamil Nadu government



- ✓ In terms of the GSDP figures, the State's rank was consistently placed at second, next to Maharashtra.
 - ✓ During 2019-20, Tamil Nadu was placed first, which could be due to the absence of data for Maharashtra.
- ✓ In terms of capita income (based on Net State Domestic Product), the State's figure for 2019-20 was ₹1,53,853, which was at 6th rank at the all-India level.
 - ✓ During 2018-19, the corresponding figure was ₹1,42,941 with the State standing at 12th rank.
- ✓ The State's macro-level showing in respect of the GSDP was due to an even performance of three sectors — primary, secondary and services.
 - ✓ Out of these sectors, secondary sector posted an impressive double-digit growth rate of 10.02%.
 - ✓ Within this sector, manufacturing and construction, the two important components, posted the double-digit figures of 10.27% and 10.49% respectively.
 - ✓ As per advance estimates for 2019-20, the growth rate of the primary sector, which has agriculture and allied activities and mining and quarrying, stood at 6.08%, while it was 6.63% for the services.
 - ✓ The previous year's figures for the primary, secondary and the services sectors were 8.49%, 6.49% and 7.83% respectively.
 - ✓ Except the primary sector, the other two sectors performed better this time than the previous time.
 - ✓ Even in the primary sector, the component of agriculture recorded higher growth rate of 7.43% this time, than the 5.8% registered in 2018-19.
 - ✓ The livestock sector did extremely well last year with 11.13%, while it's growth dropped to a mere 6.64% this time.
 - ✓ As for the services sector, financial services registered an impressive rate of 11.71%, against just 2.21% in 2018-19
 - ✓ Also, the segment of real estate in the services sector registered a growth of 7.29% against the previous year's 6.69%.
- **On August 6, the Tamil Nadu government - announced Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for gyms, which are allowed to reopen on August 10.**
 - ✓ Among the most notable developments, the government has allowed air conditioners set at 24°-30° with the relative humidity in the range of 40-70% at facilities.
 - ✓ However, the government has decided not to permit those above 50 years old from using gyms.
 - ✓ Other key protocols include not allowing pregnant women and children below the age of 15 to make use of the facilities.
 - ✓ The administration must limit the number of people in the gym and members, trainers and other staff must maintain a distance of minimum of 6ft from one another.

- ✓ The equipment too must be placed 6 feet apart, to ensure social distancing
 - ✓ Members must wear a face shield while working out.
 - ✓ Managers have been told to plan activities while keeping a floor area of 4sqm per member.
 - ✓ Gyms are also required to provide adequate disinfectant wipes and disposable paper towels for members and staff to wipe equipment before and after use.
 - ✓ There must be a 15-30 minute gap between each group fitness class to avoid overlap between members arriving and leaving.
 - ✓ Gyms have been instructed to offer online fitness classes wherever possible.
- **A team of six students from SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur - has won the software edition of Smart India Hackathon 2020, a Government of India initiative.**
- ✓ The team developed a medical lab report 'digitization and standardisation' system with user experience and detailed analytics.
 - ✓ The system can also provide details on user's health, based on lab reports, which can help the user to store and understand their lab report.
 - ✓ With machine learning technology, the system will also give out recommendations helping the 'user' stay healthy.
 - ✓ For companies using this platform, it will provide an interactive dashboard with detailed analytics.
- **On August 6, Tamil Nadu - reported 110 deaths, taking the cumulative toll to 4,571.**
- ✓ The state reported 5,684 fresh cases on the day, taking the state's caseload to 2,79,144

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

	Until July 30	July 31	Aug. 01	Aug. 02	Aug. 03	Aug. 04	Aug. 05	Aug. 06	Total
Cases reported	2,39,978	5,881	5,879	5,875	5,609	5,063	5,175	5,684	2,79,144
Recovered and discharged	1,78,178	5,778	7,010	5,517	5,800	6,501	6,031	6,272	2,21,087
Deceased	3,838	97	99	98	109	108	112	110	4,571

Persons tested



*Changes in 24 hours As on Aug.05, 6 p.m. As on Aug. 06, 6 p.m.

Districts with maximum cases



- ✓ As many as 6,272 people got discharged, leaving 53,486 as 'active' cases
- ✓ With this, a total of 2,21,087 persons were discharged after treatment
- ✓ Chennai continued to report the maximum number of cases (1,091) and deaths (22).

- ✓ The capital city has 11, 720 'active' cases, out of the total caseload of 1,06,696, while reporting 2,248 deaths.
- ✓ Chengalpet (408), Kancheepuram (336) and Tiruvallur (320) together had 1,064 cases and 35 deaths.
- ✓ Other districts reporting high numbers included Theni (297 cases), Ranipet (270), Tirunelveli (250), Thoothukudi (237), Kanyakumari (222), Cuddalore (213) and Coimbatore (190)
- ✓ A total of 67,153 samples were tested during the last 24 hours, taking the total samples tested so far to 30,20,714
- ✓ The Government Headquarters Hospital, Kancheepuram, has been approved for testing.
 - ✓ With this, there are 126 testing facilities - 61 in the government sector and 65 in the private sector – in the state
- ✓ On August 6, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami announced that the State government will distribute free rice to all eligible family cardholders till November
- ✓ However, the State government has stopped the free supply of toor dal, edible oil and sugar to ration cardholders through the public distribution system due to 'lack of funds'
- ✓ In another move, the State government has reduced the ex gratia to ₹25 lakh from ₹50 lakh, which was earlier announced by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami for families of front-line workers who die while on Covid-19 duty.

STATES

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy - launched 'E-Raksha Bandhan', an online training programme on cybersecurity, on the eve of Raksha Bandhan**



- ✓ The programme aims to create awareness among the public on cybercrimes across the State
- ✓ It will be undertaken in collaboration with Crime Investigation Department (CID), FM Radio, the Andhra Pradesh Police, Cyber Peace Foundation, Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women and Children (CCPWC), and other organizations

- ✓ These organizations will support the process of organizing, advertising and creating mass awareness about the month-long online awareness programme
- ✓ Through the initiative, as many as 1 lakh women, girls and the general public would be trained.
- ✓ During the launch event, the state CM promoted the Disha APP and urged the victims to complain through the Disha App and in Disha Police Stations on harassment and cybercrimes.

NATIONAL

- **The Union government - has announced the release of more than ₹890 crore as the second instalment of Covid-19 aid to strengthen the health response in 22 States and Union Territories.**
 - ✓ According to the Health Ministry, the allocated amount was based on state's individual case load.
 - ✓ The grant is part of the ₹15,000-crore package announced in March to support the States' emergency response and the preparedness of their health systems.
 - ✓ The money was meant for patient treatment, manpower training and medical infrastructure.
 - ✓ The money would also be used to recruit, train and pay incentives to healthcare workers and volunteers, including ASHA workers, on Covid-19 duty.
 - ✓ The States that will be getting the funds include Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim.
 - ✓ Earlier, the first instalment of ₹3,000 crore was released in April to all States and UTs
 - ✓ It was used to ramp up testing facilities, augment hospital infrastructure and conduct surveillance activities, along with procurement of essential equipment, drugs and other supplies.
- **The first of the country's two VVIP planes, which were bought by Air India - is set to reach India later this month, after a delay of two months due to the Covid-19 pandemic**
 - ✓ The two Boeing 777-300s will be the first of its kind, meant for exclusive use by the President, the Vice-President and the Prime Minister.
 - ✓ As of now, Air India lends its Boeing 747 aircraft for VVIP foreign trips by withdrawing them from commercial flights.
 - ✓ The Boeing 777-300 planes were inducted into Air India's fleet in 2018, but sent to Boeing's facility at Dallas-Fort Worth within months for a retrofit.

- ✓ These planes were scheduled to return by June 30 and July 30 this year, but Boeing sought an extension after delays in regulatory clearances from the U.S. Federal Aviation Authority due to travel restrictions.



- ✓ The first of the two planes will arrive in the last week of August and the second a month later
 - ✓ Once these planes arrive in India, they will be de-registered by Air India and handed over to the Indian Air Force.
 - ✓ These planes will then get a K-series registration number given to military aircraft.
 - ✓ The revamped aircraft will include a press conference room, a conference room for VVIPs, a suite comprising a bedroom and a bathroom.
 - ✓ The aircraft will be equipped with missile warning sensors and counter measures dispensing defence system.
 - ✓ The government has paid Air India ₹4,632 crore for the retrofit.
- **On August 6, Covid-19 cases recorded in India - crossed the 2 million mark, after reporting an all-time high of more than 62,000 in a single day.**
- ✓ India also reported 912 deaths on the day, the second-highest in a day so far.



- ✓ As on date, only two countries have recorded more than 2 million coronavirus cases, the US and Brazil.
 - ✓ India has the fastest growth rate of the infection (3.1%) among these countries, while US had a rate of 1.1% and Brazil 2% at the same stage.
 - ✓ However, the number of deaths in India at the 2-million stage is far less than the other two

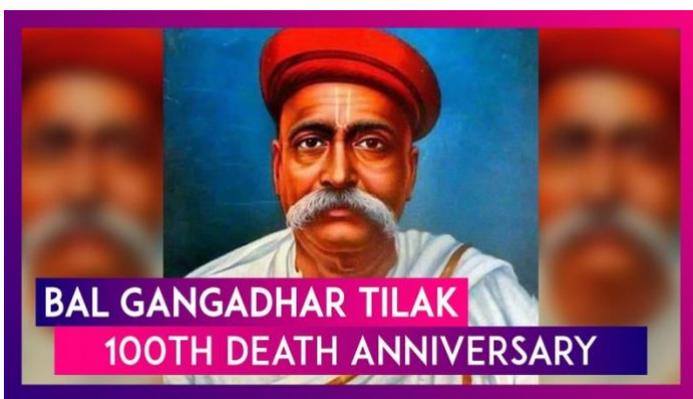
- ✓ India recorded 62,482 cases on the day, taking the total caseload to 20,23,821, as per data collated from state governments.
- ✓ This was the first time that daily cases in the country crossed the 60,000 mark.
- ✓ As on August 5, the number of tests conducted across the country was also the highest so far at over 6.6 lakh.
- ✓ Maharashtra topped the number of infections reported on the day with 11,514 cases followed by Andhra Pradesh accounting 10,328 cases.
- ✓ Other states to report high numbers included Karnataka (6,805 new cases), Uttar Pradesh (4,658) and Bengal (2,954)

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On August 6, the Supreme Court - approved the Tripura government's proposal to absorb over 10,000 terminated postgraduate, graduate and under-graduate teachers as peons, night guards, gardeners, cooks and lower division clerks.**
- ✓ The Tripura government had recruited 1,035 PGTs, 4,666 TGTs and 4,612 UGTs in 2010 and 2014 through oral interview under the Revised Employment Policy, 2003.
- ✓ The high court on May 7, 2014, set aside the 2003 policy and quashed the appointment of all teachers.
- ✓ The SC on March 29, 2017, upheld the HC order, directed framing of a new policy and recruitment thereunder by December 31, 2017.
- ✓ Citing over 15,000 vacancies in teachers' posts in the state, these teachers made a second attempt in the SC to get reinstated.
- ✓ But a bench of Justice U ULalit and Vineet Saran refused.
- ✓ The state also informed the court that those eligible among the terminated teachers could compete in the fresh selection process and they had been given age relaxation till March 31, 2023.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **A two-day international webinar on the 100th death anniversary of the great Indian freedom fighter Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak - was organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations on August 1**
- ✓ This international webinar on the theme of 'Lokmanya Tilak – Swaraj to Self-reliant India' was inaugurated by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
- ✓ A group of eminent historians like Gordon Johnson and Sadanand More, history professor Rizwan Kadri, Muang Muang, a scholar who translated Tilak's biography into Burmese Vikas Paranjpe from Mumbai spoke at the event along with participants from various institutes.



- ✓ The Home Minister also talked about the slogan of 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it' given by Lokmanya Tilak, in his speech.
- ✓ During the webinar, discussions revolved mainly around Tilak's contribution to the Indian Freedom Movement, his global vision, his thoughts on swadeshi and also his attempts at India's cultural revival.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The four Indian astronaut-elects completed training - at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center (GCTC) in Russia**
- ✓ The training to the astronaut-elects has been provided by Glavkosmos, a subsidiary of Russian space organisation
- ✓ They were trained on crew actions in the event of an abnormal descent module landing in three different scenarios — on wooded and marshy areas in February 2020, on water in June 2020, and in the steppe in July 2020.
- ✓ In June 2020, all Indian astronaut-elects passed training in short-term weightlessness mode aboard the IL-76MDK special laboratory aircraft
- ✓ Further, in July, they were trained to lift aboard a helicopter while evacuating from the descent module landing point.
- ✓ Isro's Human Spaceflight Centre (HSC) had signed an agreement with Glavkosmos for the training of Indian astronauts in 2019 and the training of the four astronaut-elects in Russia commenced on February 10.
- ✓ The programme for Indian astronauts also includes training in a centrifuge and in a hyperbaric chamber to prepare them for sustaining spaceflight factors, such as G-force, hypoxia and pressure drops.
 - ✓ These training modules are to be held in the near future.

ECONOMY

- **On August 6, 2020, the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of Reserve Bank of India - held its meeting in New Delhi**
- ✓ The committee was headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.
- ✓ During the meet, the following key decisions were taken
 - ✓ The repo rate was kept the same at 4%

- ✓ The reverse repo rate was kept at 3.35%

Policy prescription
Some key policy decisions of the Reserve Bank of India

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Banks allowed to restructure stressed corporate and MSME loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Borrowing limits against gold relaxed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relief to individual borrowers at banks' discretion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tenure can be extended upto two years for personal loans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No extension announced on loan moratorium beyond August 31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ₹10,000 crore support for NHB, NABARD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Start-ups included in priority sector lending norms

While space for further monetary policy action is available, it is important to use it judiciously to maximise the beneficial effects for underlying economic activity
SHAKTIKANTA DAS, RBI Governor



- ✓ No extension of moratorium on loan repayments offered to borrowers beyond August 31
- ✓ Providing Rs 10,000 crore additional liquidity facility to National Housing Bank (NHB), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
- ✓ Loans against gold have been enhanced to 90% of the value as against the current 75%
- ✓ Allowing the lenders to restructure loans of individual borrowers, corporate to ease COVID-19 impact.
- ✓ The stressed MSME borrowers are now eligible to restructure the debt if their accounts were classified 'standard'.
- ✓ The Monetary Policy Committee is constituted by the Government of India under Section 45ZB of RBI act, 1934
 - ✓ It is responsible for framing policy by fixing bank rate, repo rate, reverse repo rate, cash reserve ratio
 - ✓ There are six members in the committee, out of which three are nominated by the Governor.
 - ✓ The Governor is the chairman of the committee, which also consists of deputy Governor as a member.
 - ✓ The members of the committee are appointed for a period of four years.
 - ✓ However, they are not eligible for reappointment.
- **On August 6, the Reserve Bank of India - announced a loan restructuring scheme that will extend to individuals, in addition to large corporate and micro, small and medium enterprises**

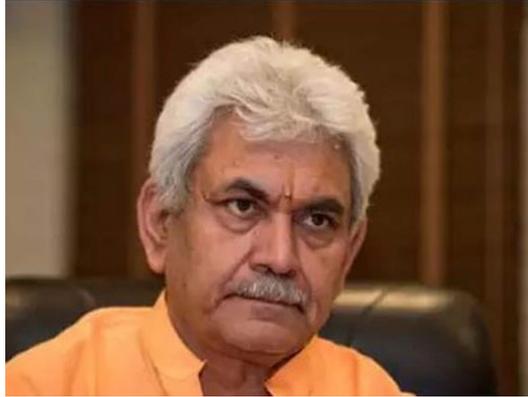
- ✓ The scheme is also applicable to airlines, hotels and steel and cement companies hit by the pandemic.
- ✓ This is the first time since the 2008 financial crisis such a scheme is being offered by the RBI
- ✓ The step is being viewed as the central bank's effort to boost the sagging economy, worst affected by the pandemic.

RATE CUT PAUSE DUE TO INFLATION FEARS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Indian economy is expected to shrink this year ➤ Consumer confidence index is at an all-time low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ RBI seeks to get inflation in the 2-6% band from 6.1% in June, fears it may remain elevated until Sept
RBI SEEKS TO INJECT LIQUIDITY, REDUCE STRESS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional liquidity of ₹1000cr to Nabard, NHB ➤ Start-ups included in priority sector bank loans, focus on under-banked districts ➤ Steps for enhancing cheque payment, retail payments by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cards & mobile in offline mode ➤ Online dispute resolution tool for digital payments to be introduced ➤ Restrictions against large borrowers opening multiple current accounts
<p>“ In the worst peacetime health & economic crisis of the last 100 years that we face today, the regulatory response has to be dynamic, proactive and balanced — RBI gov Shaktikanta Das</p>	

- ✓ The loan restructuring scheme comes against the backdrop of the government deciding not to implement the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, at least for the time being.
 - ✓ The Centre promulgated an ordinance to keep insolvency action in abeyance for at least six months after acknowledging that IBC was helping improve the payment culture.
- ✓ The regulator has mandated that banks set aside 10% of the restructured amount for possible loss in future
 - ✓ This will force the government to provide additional capital to state-run lenders that control two-thirds of the business.
- ✓ **The details of the scheme will be worked out by an expert panel headed by veteran banker K V Kamath.**
- ✓ The committee will provide a checklist to lenders to help them decide on restructuring and also vet large loans for viability.
- ✓ The RBI has allowed banks to restructure individual borrowers' loans by December 31, 2020, permitting a maximum extension of two years.
- ✓ Limits for loans against gold were also enhanced.
- ✓ Also, borrowers who have defaulted before the moratorium announced in March 2020 will not be eligible for restructuring.
 - ✓ Restructuring is also not available to financial sector entities, central and state government as well as local bodies like municipalities.
- ✓ Until now, banks could not provide relief without classifying a borrower as a defaulter (non-performing asset) or changing the owner.
- ✓ Now banks can restructure loans for existing owners of businesses.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Senior BJP leader and former Union minister Manoj Sinha - was appointed lieutenant governor of Jammu & Kashmir after the abrupt exit of G C Murmu on August 5.**



- ✓ He will be the first politician to be appointed LG in the newly formed Union territory
 - ✓ Sinha served as the Minister of communications and as Minister of State, Railways in the first tenure of PM Modi's government
 - ✓ Sinha lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election from Ghazipur to BSP's Afzal Ansari, who was backed by the Samajwadi Party
 - ✓ A three-time Lok Sabha member, Sinha is an engineer and an alumnus of Banaras Hindu University, where he was elected president of the students' union in 1982
 - ✓ He was given ticket by the BJP to contest from Ghazipur in 1996 and he won the seat that time, and in 1999 and 2014.
 - ✓ Sinha will be the third Governor/Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the government in J&K in three years.
 - ✓ Murmu's appointment as L-G was preceded by that of BJP leader Satyapal Malik, who was sent to Goa as Governor when J&K was reduced to a UT.
 - ✓ The special status of J&K under Article 370 was revoked last year and it was bifurcated into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.
- **Former J&K lieutenant governor G C Murmu, a 1985 batch IAS officer - was appointed the comptroller and auditor general (CAG) on August 6.**
 - ✓ He will succeed Rajiv Mehrishi, who is retiring on August 7.
 - ✓ As per a government notification, the President had appointed Murmu to be the CAG from the date he took charge of the office.
 - ✓ Murmu resigned as J&K LG on August 5 in a surprise move.
 - ✓ Of late, Murmu was in the news for his controversial statements, at odds with the Centre and the Election Commission

- ✓ Murmu was in favour of restoring 4G connectivity in J&K, which has been suspended since August 5 last year, a move opposed by the security agencies



- ✓ Last week, the Election Commission took exception to Murmu's statement that the Assembly election would be held after delimitation
- ✓ Murmu served in the home department of Gujarat when the PM Modi was chief minister.
- ✓ Later, he served as the PM's principal secretary in the state