

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – NOVEMBER 17, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- Tamil Nadu government – constitutes a committee to study about the revamping of the Tamil Nadu Cooperative State Agriculture and Rural Development Bank (TNCSARDB)
- ✓ The agency, originally meant for facilitating long-term loans to farmers, has become a provider of jewel loans now

Financing farming

A look at the flow of term loans for farmers in Tamil Nadu over the years

(₹ IN CRORE)

Year	Target	Achieved
2016-17	29,938.41	20,576.63 (68.73%)*
2017-18	32,744.81	23,529.23 (71.86)*
2018-19	34,678.25	26,193.31 (75.53)*
2019-20	16,268.27	N.A.
2020-21	66,944**	N.A.



Note: Term loans include medium- and long-term loans, which are provided by all types of financial institutions, including commercial banks

N.A. - Not available or applicable

* Pertains to the proportion of the targeted amount

**Projected figure

SOURCE: NABARD'S STATE FOCUS PAPER 2020-21 AND THE AGENDA OF THE STATE LEVEL BANKERS' COMMITTEE'S 162ND MEETING, HELD IN AUGUST 2020

- ✓ The core function of re-financing undertaken by the agency stopped suddenly after the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) imposed 'stringent conditions' for re-financing in 2004
- ✓ Thereafter, the institution has become the lender of jewel loans only

- ✓ Till 2004, the agency has provided resources to 180 'Primary Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' (PCARDB) for lending to the farm sector for activities such as land purchase and construction of and deepening of wells.
 - ✓ During 2019-20, the jewel loans to the tune of over ₹330 crore were given.
 - ✓ For over 15 years, the RBI has been supporting the PCARDBs with its funds.
 - ✓ Now, the government decided to form a committee of experts and stakeholders to look into the revamp and other areas, including the merger of the long-term credit structure with the short term.
 - ✓ In this regard, the Cooperation, Food and Consumer Protection Department has issued an order last week
 - ✓ Similar high-level committees were constituted by the Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Punjab governments to re-organise the long-term cooperative credit structure.
 - ✓ S. Nagoor Ali Jinnah, former NABARD CGM and an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Ahmedabad, was named as the chairman of the panel.
 - ✓ Among the committee's members are M.S. Sriram, Professor, IIM-Bengaluru, and M. Ravikumar, former IAS officer.
 - ✓ The committee also comprises a nominee from the Finance Department, the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, the NABARD CGM, the presidents of the State Apex Cooperative Bank and Thanjavur Central Cooperative Bank and the Managing Directors of the State Apex Cooperative Bank and the TNCSARDB
 - ✓ The panel will study the working of the TNCSARDB in the last 10 years
 - ✓ It will examine the 'sustainable viability' of the agency, keeping in mind the experience gained in other States, and explore various sources of funding and lending by the bank.
- **The draft electoral rolls for Tamil Nadu – was published on November 16 by the Election Commission of India, following a special summary revision.**
- ✓ As per the rolls, the total electorate in the state remains at 6.10 crore.
 - ✓ There are 3.01 crore male voters, 3.09 women voters and 6,385 third gender voters
 - ✓ Woman voters continue to outnumber men in the state
 - ✓ In terms of largest electorate, Sholinganallur assembly segment tops the state with 6.55 lakh voters.
 - ✓ Kilvelur in Nagapattinam district has the smallest electorate with 1.7 lakh voters
 - ✓ Except districts such as Kallakurichi, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri and Kanyakumari, the remaining 34 districts in the state have more women voters than men.
 - ✓ In Chennai, there are 19.99 lakh woman voters and 19.39 lakh men, taking the total tally to 39.4 lakh voters.
 - ✓ The numbers may vary when the final roll is published in January, which would be the final for the assembly polls.

- ✓ Claims and objections on the draft roll can be made from November 16 to December 15.

TOPPING THE CHART

Districts with highest electorate

Districts	Men	Women
Chennai	19.39	19.99
Tiruvallur	16.73	17.04
Coimbatore	14.68	15.02
Salem	14.79	14.82
Chengalpet	13.01	13.19
Madurai	12.84	13.23

*Figures in lakh



- ✓ The election department also prepared a list of 13.75 lakh voters in the state above 80 years, who may be given the option of postal ballot due to Covid-19.
- ✓ The election commission has facilitated postal ballot facilities for those who are 80 years and above and people with disabilities for the first time.
- ✓ In Tamil Nadu, Chennai (1.12 lakh), Salem (71,220) and Coimbatore (69,835) topped the districts in terms of high electorate in the age group of 80 years and above.
- ✓ All those who will complete 18 years as on January 1, 2021, and those whose names are not included on the roll can apply for inclusion by filing Form 6.
- ✓ A total of 2.08 lakh persons have entered the rolls for the first time.

IN THE CITY

Top 2 constituencies in Chennai in terms of voters

➤ Velachery | 3.06 lakh

➤ Perambur | 3.01 lakh

Ones with least voters

➤ Royapuram | 1.84 lakh

➤ Harbour | 1.73 lakh

- ✓ Velachery, has the largest number of voters with more than 3.06 lakh residents on the rolls in Chennai, as per the Greater Chennai Corporation
- ✓ Harbour constituency (1.73 lakh) has the lowest number of electors and it is also the only city constituency where men voters outnumber women voters.
- ✓ Egmore (1.86 lakh), Royapuram (1.84 lakh) and Harbour(1.73 lakh) are the bottom three constituencies have less than 2 lakh voters
- ✓ Perambur (3.01 lakh) and Velachery (3.06 lakh) are the top two constituencies having more than 3 lakh voters.

- **Two faculty members from IIT Madras - have been selected for the prestigious "Swarnajayanti Fellowship" awards for 2019-20 conferred by the Union government's Department of Science and Technology.**



- ✓ They were among the 21 researchers selected for this recognition
 - ✓ The awards provide special assistance and support to enable the winners to pursue basic research in frontier areas.
 - ✓ Professor Prabhu Rajagopal from the Department of Mechanical Engineering and P Anbarasan, Associate Professor from the Department of Chemistry have been selected under engineering science and chemical science disciplines respectively.
 - ✓ For Prabhu Rajagopal, the award serves as recognition for the work in quantum phononics which is an exciting new area of research that studies the quantum nature of phonons.
 - ✓ Among the major projects Anbarasan is currently involved in are the design and development of chiral ligands.
 - ✓ The award consists of a fellowship of Rs.25,000 per month in addition to the salary drawn from the parent Institute along with a Research Grant of Rs 5 lakh per annum by department of science and technology for a period of five years.
 - ✓ The project submitted by the selected Fellows will be considered for funding by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).
- **Union home minister Amit Shah - would inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for three projects in the state on November 21.**
 - ✓ The three projects includes the Thervoy Kandigai reservoir in Thiruvallur district, Coimbatore-Avinashi elevated expressway and Chennai Metro Rail phase II
 - ✓ The state government is making elaborate arrangements for the event at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai, where social distancing norms for Covid-19 can be maintained.
 - ✓ Officials and invitees would be allowed to participate only after the mandatory Covid tests.
 - ✓ In 2012, former chief minister J Jayalalithaa announced Thervoy Kandigai reservoir in Tiruvallur district as the fifth reservoir to meet the drinking water needs of Chennai.

- ✓ It would help store 1tmcft of water diverted from the Kandaleru-Poondi canal (two fillings of 0.5tmcft a year).
 - ✓ The Rs 61,842 crore Phase II project of Metro rail has been largely funded by the multilateral banks, JICA, ADB, NDB and AIIB.
 - ✓ The three corridors of the phase II connect Madhavaram and SIPCOT, Siruseri, Light-House and Poonamallee, and Madhavaram and Sholinganallur.
 - ✓ The 10-km-long Coimbatore-Avinashi elevated expressway will be the longest elevated expressway in the state followed by NHA's Natham Road elevated highway in Madurai.
 - ✓ The project costs Rs 1,621 crore, which includes Rs.300 crore for land acquisition alone.
- **The State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited (Sipcot) - has obtained environmental clearance for the development of an industrial park at Manallur and Soorapoondi villages in Gummidipoondi, Tiruvallur district.**
- ✓ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) gave the clearance for the industrial park last week.
 - ✓ The industrial park will be spread over 691.587 acres
 - ✓ The tentative project cost is around ₹250 crore.
 - ✓ An electric vehicle park is expected to come up within this premises and a land parcel of 300 acres has been set aside for it.
 - ✓ The industrial park is planned with 90% e-vehicles and other industries pertaining to auto components
 - ✓ The park is expected to be developed in a phased manner over the next five to seven years.
 - ✓ Sipcot is also in the process of establishing new industrial parks across the state in other places including Manaparai, Thoothukudi Phase II, Manakudi, Thindivanam, Nemili and Sakkarakottai.

STATES

- **The NDA government, led by Nitish Kumar – sworn in on November 16 in Bihar at the Raj Bhavan in Patna**
- ✓ The 69 year-old Janata Dal (United) chief took charge as the Chief Minister along with BJP's Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi, who are set to be designated Deputy CMs.
 - ✓ Tarakishore Prasad is a staunch RSS man and an MLA from Katihar constituency
 - ✓ In this election, Tarakishore won the seat for the fourth time by defeating his old rival Prakash Mahto of RJD by over 12,000 votes.
 - ✓ Before being sworn-in as deputy CM, he was unanimously elected as the BJP Legislature Party leader.

- ✓ Another four-time MLA Renu Devi from Bettiah constituency has risen from being an insurance agent to become Bihar's first woman deputy CM

Nitish returns

JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar once again took over as the CM of Bihar on Monday. A look at his stints in the past 20 years

- **March 3 to March 10, 2000:** Nitish Kumar's first term ends in 7 days as he could not prove his majority
- **Nov. 2005 to Nov. 2010:** Serves a full-term, leading the JD(U)-BJP alliance
- **Nov. 2010 to May 2014:** Resigns as CM after JD(U)'s poor show in the Lok Sabha election. The JD(U) had split with the BJP in 2013
- **Feb. 2015 to Nov. 2015:** Returns as Chief Minister. Joins hands with the RJD in June
- **Nov. 2015 to July 2017:** Assumes CM's post after the JD(U)-RJD alliance wins the Assembly poll
- **July 2017 to Nov. 2020:** Comes back as CM after severing ties with the RJD and joining hands with the BJP once again
- **Nov. 2020:** Takes oath as CM for the seventh time



Power point: Bihar Governor Phagu Chauhan, right, greeting Nitish Kumar after the swearing-in ceremony in Patna. • PTI

- ✓ Twelve others, five each from BJP and JD(U) and one each from smaller NDA partners HAM and VIP, took oath
- ✓ The event marks the beginning of a record-breaking sixth term for Nitish Kumar
- ✓ The ceremony was attended by home minister Amit Shah, BJP chief JP Nadda and former Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis
- ✓ It was boycotted by RJD and other parties in the Mahagathbandhan, which lost the closely-fought elections last week
- ✓ The RJD emerged as the largest party in the 243-seat Assembly with 75 seats
- ✓ In the current assembly, BJP has 74 members, while JD(U) is 30 short of them with current strength.
- ✓ In the previous government, JD(U) having 71 members, comprised of 18 ministers other than Nitish as Chief Minister.
- ✓ On the other hand, BJP consisting of 52 legislators, had 13 ministers, including Deputy CM SushilModi.

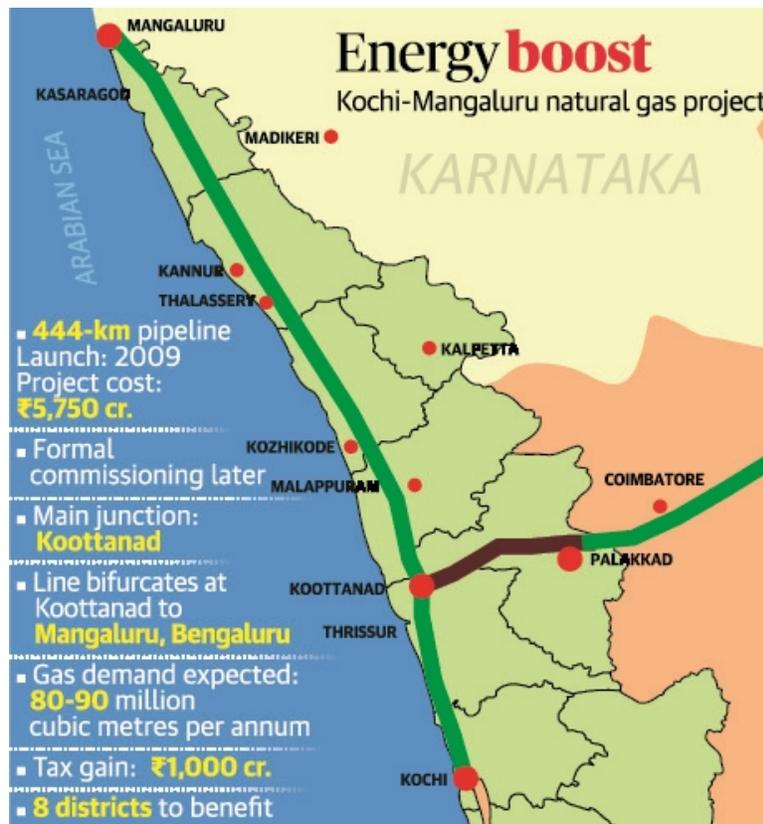
NATIONAL

- **On November 16, the Centre - announced a five-year action plan (2020-25) for conservation of the Vultures in the backdrop of substantial decline in the population of vultures in the country**



- ✓ Vultures are called Nature's scavengers which feed on animal carcasses, thereby cleaning up the surroundings.
 - ✓ The 5-year plan includes instituting a system with the help of Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to remove drugs from veterinary use, such as Diclofenac, if they are found to be toxic for vultures.
 - ✓ This will ensure preventing poisoning of animal carcasses, the principal food of vultures.
 - ✓ Just 0.4-0.7% of animal carcasses, contaminated with Diclofenac, was sufficient to decimate 99% of vulture population.
 - ✓ Vultures were very common in India till 1980s when its population was estimated to be 40 million.
 - ✓ The overall population of vultures, however, dwindled by over 90% during mid-90s.
 - ✓ By 2007, 99% of the three species had been wiped out.
 - ✓ The drastic reduction of vultures prompted the ministry to come out with a dedicated conservation plan as the earlier three-year plan of 2006 could not achieve the desired results.
 - ✓ The new action plan (2020-25) with an estimated budget of ₹207 crore includes setting up five additional Vulture Conservation Breeding Centers – one each in Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- **The much-delayed Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline project - is finally ready for commissioning after the completion of the final stretch across the Chandragiri river in northern Kerala by GAIL India**
 - ✓ The 444-km-long natural gas pipeline was launched in 2009 at an estimated cost of ₹2,915 crore and was to be commissioned in 2014.
 - ✓ Later, the project cost nearly doubled to over ₹5,750 crore, considering other safety and commercial aspects, including the land price

- ✓ Within this week itself, gas transport is expected to reach Mangaluru through the 444-km pipeline



- ✓ The formal commissioning will be done later, depending the availability of dignitaries
 - ✓ The pipeline is charged up to Kannur now and has been 'live' up to Koottanad in Palakkad district, 90 km north of Kochi, since June 2019.
 - ✓ Koottanad is the main junction of the project, from where the line bifurcates to Mangaluru and Bengaluru.
 - ✓ The first phase of the project was commissioned in August 2013 in the Kochi metropolitan area, with industrial supplies and domestic supplies from February 2016 by Adani Gas.
 - ✓ With the commissioning of the pipeline, gas demand in Kerala will touch 80-90 million cubic metres per annum from 60 million cubic metres now.
 - ✓ Apart from huge environmental gains, the State also benefits financially considering the tax collections to the tune of ₹1,000 crore
 - ✓ The pipeline would supply gas to all seven districts it passed through in Kerala — Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod — and the hilly Wayanad district.
- **On November 16, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - unveiled "Statue of Peace" in Pali city of Rajasthan**



- ✓ The statue is being unveiled to mark the 151st birth anniversary of Jain Acharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.
- ✓ The 151-inches tall statue is made of Ashtadhatu, referring to an octo-alloy.
- ✓ The alloy is mainly used in casting metallic idols in Hindu and Jain temples.
- ✓ It is made of metals such as gold, copper, silver, tin, zinc, iron, tin and antimony (or mercury), which are mixed in equal proportions to create the idol.
- ✓ Shri Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj was a Jain monk born on October 26, 1870.
- ✓ He was a disciple of Vijayanand Suri and supported non-violent independent movements of Mahatma Gandhiji.
- ✓ He was the founder of Shri Parshwanath Jain Vidyalaya in Pali district of Rajasthan.
- ✓ Also, he established the Mahavir Jain Vidyalaya in Mumbai, Pune and Vadodara.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping – to have a face to face ‘virtual’ meeting on November 17 for the second time this month at the 12th BRICS summit**
- ✓ The summit will be hosted by Russian President Vladimir Putin
- ✓ It is to be held under the theme “Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth”.
- ✓ The BRICS member countries, China, India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa, will participate in the meeting
- ✓ During the meeting, the leaders will discuss intra-BRICS cooperation and key issues in the global context, including reform of the multilateral system, measures to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, cooperation in counter-terrorism, trade, health, energy and people to people exchanges.
- ✓ Ahead of the summit, Russian authorities ruled out any possibility of the forum being used to address any bilateral issue.

- ✓ While focusing on economic issues and cooperation in the service sector, the PM is expected to highlight that terrorism, terror financing, drug trafficking and organised crime adversely impact the business environment.
- ✓ The PM had described terrorism at the last summit in Brazil as the biggest threat to development.
- ✓ The 12th BRICS summit was supposed to have been held at St Peterburg in July 2020
- ✓ However, it was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Lastly, Russia chaired the 7th BRICS summit.

DEFENCE

- **The second phase of Malabar exercise – kicks off in the Northern Arabian Sea from November 17**



- ✓ The Indian Navy's Vikramaditya carrier battle group, the Nimitz strike group of the US navy and several frontline warships from the Australian and Japanese navies will carry out a four-day high-intensity activities under this phase.
- ✓ This is the first time in the decade that the four countries are participating in such as large war-gaming naval exercise.
- ✓ This exercise will involve coordinated operations of increasing complexity among the navies of the four 'Quad' or Quadrilateral Coalition countries
- ✓ During this phase, the navies of four countries will undertake naval operations such as cross deck flying and also air defence exercises by F-18 fighters from Nimitz and MIG-29K fighters of Vikramaditya
- ✓ Further, anti-submarine warfare, advanced surface warfare, weapon firings and seamanship evolutions will also be performed during the second phase
- ✓ Apart from INS Vikramaditya, helicopter air-wings, indigenous destroyers Chennai and Kolkata, fleet support ship Deepak, stealth frigate Talwar and integral helicopters are scheduled to participate in the exercise.
- ✓ Also, the indigenously built P81, the maritime reconnaissance Poseidon and submarine Khanderi are expected to participate in the exercise.
- ✓ The first phase of the Malabar exercise was conducted in the Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6

- ✓ It featured a number of complex drills including anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations.
- ✓ The first phase involved fighter jets, aircraft carriers, submarine and other ships
- ✓ The exercise will witness operations centered around the Vikramaditya carrier battle group and Nimitz carrier strike group.
- ✓ A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.
- ✓ The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz is the world's largest warship.
- ✓ The mega exercise will conclude on November 20, 2020

NATIONAL DAY

➤ **National Epilepsy Day - November 17**



- ✓ Every year, the day is observed to create awareness about the chronic brain disorder, epilepsy
- ✓ Epilepsy results in recurrent fits or seizures, which occur due to sudden and excessive discharges occurring in brain cells or neurons.
- ✓ Mostly epilepsy occurs in patients who are over the age of 65 and in children.
- ✓ According to the World Health Organization, around 50 million people, with 80% from developing countries alone, are suffering from epilepsy.
- ✓ In India, more than 10 million are suffering from epilepsy, which is a curable disease
- ✓ 'Epilepsy, a Public Health Imperative report' was released by World Health Organization, International Bureau of Epilepsy and the International League Against Epilepsy in 2019.

