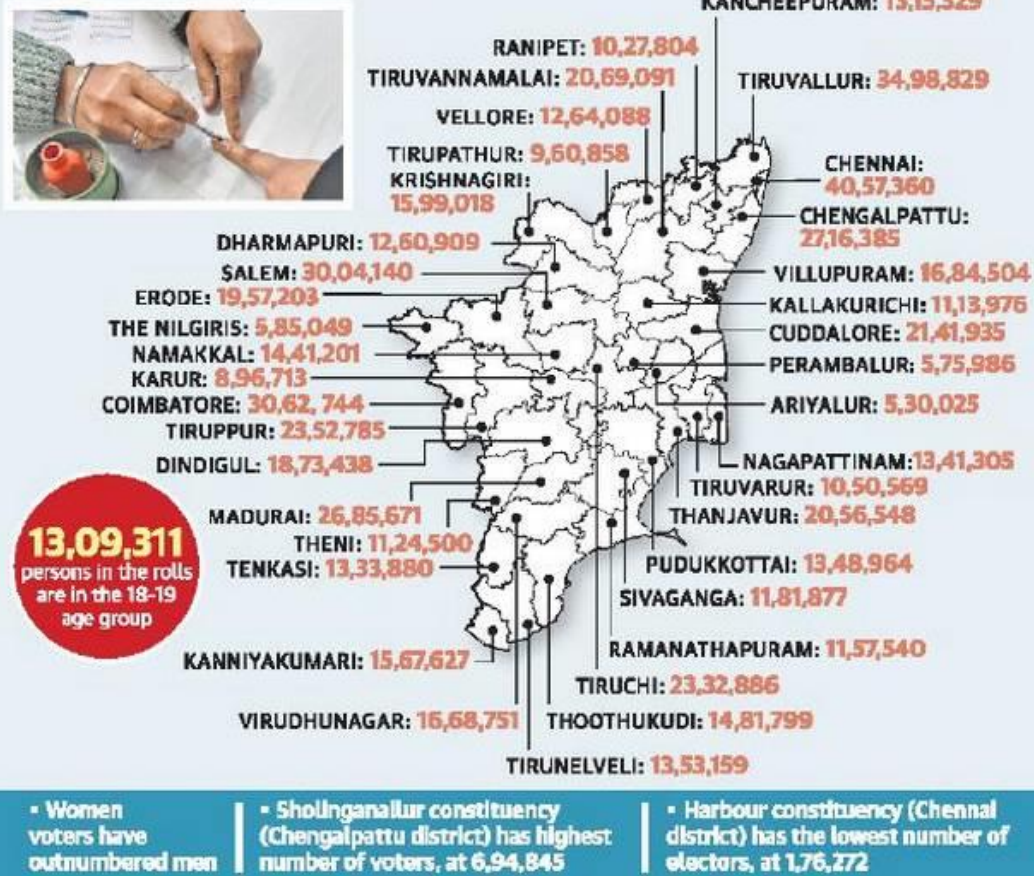


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 21, 2021

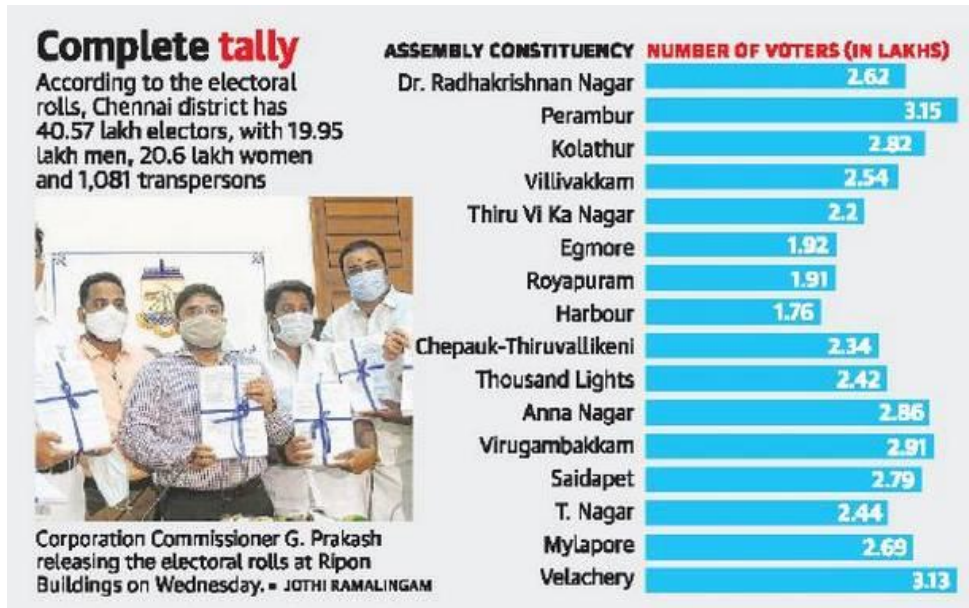
TAMIL NADU

- On January 20, the State Elections Department – has released the final electoral rolls of special summary revision, 2021
- ✓ As per the rolls, the total electorate in the state stands at 6.26 crore, with 3.08 crore male voters, 3.18 crore female voters and third gender at 7,246

Voter count | The names of 3.18 crore women, 3.08 crore men and over 7,200 persons from the third gender have been published in the State's final electoral rolls. Here is a district-wise break-up of the electorate:



- ✓ The revision of electoral roll was done with January 1 as the qualifying date for inclusion of names.
- ✓ Sholinganallur assembly constituency in Chengalpeta district recorded the highest electorate with 6.94 lakh voters on the final roll



- ✓ Harbour constituency in Chennai district recorded lowest with 1.76 lakh voters.
 - ✓ Further, 4.62 lakh people with disabilities (PwD) have been listed out in the electoral rolls
 - ✓ The PwD voters and 12.98 lakh voters above 80 years are eligible for postal ballots.
 - ✓ As many as 8.97 lakh voters in the age group of 18-19 are entitled to cast votes for the first time.
 - ✓ A total of 47 overseas electors have also been enrolled during the Special Summary Revision, 2021.
 - ✓ The cut-off for inclusion of names in the electoral rolls is the completion of 18 years as on January 1, 2021
 - ✓ The application for new entry can be submitted by visiting the respective offices of the electoral registration officers and submitting Form-6 (inclusion of names), online through www.nvsp.in, or through voter helpline app available on Google playstore.
 - ✓ The electoral rolls are available online and voters can check their names by visiting the site, <http://elections.tn.gov.in>.
 - ✓ As per the directions of the election commission, district contact centres have been established in all the districts with a toll free helpline, 1950, available uniformly across the state.
- **The Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute, Tamil Nadu (EDII-TN) – has announced a seed grant of ₹10 lakh each to 10 startups**

- ✓ The EDII-TN is the nodal agency implementing various initiatives to promote innovation and startup ecosystem
- ✓ The agency is organising the Tamil Nadu Startup Seed Grant Fund (Tanseed) 2021 challenge in association with Headstart Network Foundation to help state-based startups scale up their business.
- ✓ The programme is now inviting applications from interested startups who seek the seed grant
- ✓ The startups will have to participate in bootcamps and a pitchfest that will serve to shortlist startups for the grant.
- ✓ The state launched the Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Policy 2018-23 in January 2019 and had organised the Tamil Nadu Innovation Grand Challenge (TNIGC) for the last three years.
- ✓ TNIGC has had three cohorts with a total of 16 startups awarded a seed grant of ₹5 lakh each till date.
- ✓ Startups registered in the state or willing to register in the state with a prototype or proof of concept can apply.

NATIONAL

- **On January 20, the Centre - said it was ready to suspend implementation of the legislation for up to one and a half years**
 - ✓ The offer will be applicable in case the farm leaders agreed to form a committee to discuss all issues and objections and arrive at a solution.
 - ✓ The government's offer was seen as a climbdown as it had opposed the Supreme Court's decision to suspend the laws.
 - ✓ However, the agriculture minister Narendra Tomar reiterated that the laws would not be repealed completely, but the government was ready to discuss and implement any amendments.
 - ✓ The Minister said the Centre could submit an affidavit to this effect in the SC to assure the unions that it would not backtrack.
 - ✓ The unions will hold more meetings to decide on the offer, even as they made it clear they will not appear before the SC-constituted committee.
 - ✓ The proposal was made during the 10th round of talks on January 20
 - ✓ It is the first serious sign of movement in the negotiations since tens of thousands of farmers began their protest on the borders of Delhi almost two months ago
- **The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) – to become 50 minutes-shorter in duration, after the scrapping of subject tests**
 - ✓ The College Board, the New York-based organization which runs the Test, has also decided to remove the optional essay topic.
 - ✓ Candidates are admitted based on SAT scores for UG programmes in the US and to 40 universities in India, private and deemed.

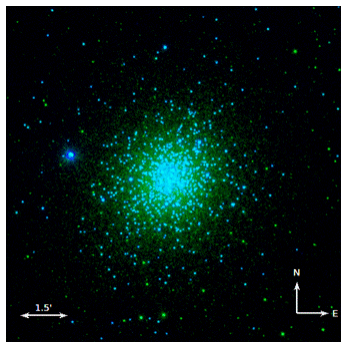
- ✓ The subject tests were 20 multiple-choice standardized tests offered by the board for individual subjects
 - ✓ These tests were taken typically to improve a candidate's credentials for college admissions in the US.
 - ✓ The hour-long 800-point SAT were popular among Indians who completed high school from a state board or national board.
- **The names of Colonel B Santosh Babu and 19 other soldiers - have now been inscribed on the walls of the National War Memorial in New Delhi**



- ✓ The 20 martyred soldiers laid down their lives while bravely fighting the Chinese troops in the violent skirmish at Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on June 15
- ✓ Col Babu, who was the commanding officer of 16 Bihar, and at least four other soldiers will be posthumously honoured with gallantry medals on the Republic Day next week.
- ✓ The National War Memorial (NWM), which was inaugurated near the majestic India Gate in 2019, honours over 26,000 soldiers who have laid down their lives in wars and operations since Independence.
- ✓ Their names and ranks are etched on small granite tablets on the concentric walls at the memorial

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Astronomers from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) - have spotted rare, hot ultraviolet-bright stars in Milky Way galaxy**



- ✓ The stars were cited in a globular cluster called NGC 2808 that is said to have at least five generations of stars.
- ✓ A team comprising IIA scientists Deepthi S Prabhu, Annapurni Subramaniam and Snehalata Sahu captured these stars using Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (UVIT) on board AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength space satellite.
- ✓ In September 2020, AstroSat completed five years in orbit.
- ✓ These stars, whose inner core is almost exposed, making them very hot, exist in the late stages of evolution of a Sun-like star.
- ✓ IIA is an autonomous institute under the department of science and technology (DST).
- ✓ With spectacular UV images of the cluster, they distinguished the hot UV-bright stars from the relatively cooler red giant and main-sequence stars, which appear dim in these images.
- ✓ The scientists combined the UVIT data with observations made using other space missions, such as Hubble Space Telescope and Gaia telescope, along with groundbased optical observations.
- ✓ About 34 UV-bright stars were found to be members of the globular cluster.
- ✓ From the data, the team derived properties of these stars, such as their surface temperatures, luminosities and radii.

APPOINTMENTS

- **On January 20, 78-year old Joseph R Biden - was sworn in as the 46th — and oldest — President of the United States**
- ✓ Chief Justice John Roberts administered the oath of office to Biden at the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C
- ✓ The presidential inauguration was preceded by administering of oath to Kamala Harris, 56, as the country's first female vice-president, the first of black and Indian heritage and the first Asian-American to serve in the position
- ✓ Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina on the Supreme Court bench administered the oath of office to the 49th Vice President of US, Kamala Harris, the daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India
- ✓ Almost immediately after taking oath of office, Biden, will sign 15 executive orders and legislative proposals on January 21 to control the Covid-19 pandemic with mask mandates and 100 million vaccinations in 100 days, combat climate change and advance racial equity.
- ✓ Biden lifted the travel ban on 13 Muslim-majority and African countries, halted construction of the US-Mexico border wall, announced the rejoining of the global climate accord and the World Health Organisation, reversing of immigration norms and directed officials to preserve the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), among other things.

- ✓ Biden, a Democrat who took over from Republican President Donald Trump, has promised a fierce fight against the pandemic that killed 400,000 people in the United States
- ✓ The defeated President is said to be considering forming a new political outfit, called the Patriot Party.
- ✓ Joe Biden's first call with a foreign leader as President will be to Canada's Justin Trudeau
- ✓ As Vice-President, Kamala Harris plays an important and decisive role in the US Senate, which is currently divided 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats.
- ✓ Harris' tiebreaking vote will help push Joe Biden's proposed legislations in the US Senate
- ✓ Just two weeks earlier, a mob had broken into the Capitol seeking to block the ratification of the election results on January 6
- ✓ **All through the presidential election, Joe Biden's speeches were chosen and crafted by C Vinay Reddy, who has his roots in Telangana.**
- ✓ He was director of speech writing in Biden's transition team
- ✓ He had also been with Biden during his second term as US vice-president from 2013 to 2017.
- ✓ Former US vice-president Mike Pence was the most prominent member of the Trump administration to attend the inaugural ceremony.
- ✓ Pence opted not to attend former President Trump's farewell speech before boarding Air Force One for a final time as president and travelling to his home in Florida.

'DEMOCRACY HAS PREVAILED'

“ We shall write an American story of hope, not fear; unity, not division; light, not darkness




America has been tested, and we have come out stronger for it. We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again — Joe Biden | US President



- Biden is only the **second Catholic to become US President** after John F Kennedy
- He took his oath on a **127-year-old family Bible**, held by his wife Jill
- **Kamala Harris used two Bibles** — one that formerly belonged to Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and another to Regina Shelton, a family friend Harris considered a second mother
- Trump is the **first president to skip his successor's inauguration** since 1869

“ My warmest congratulations to @JoeBiden on his assumption of office as President of the United States of America. I look forward to working with him to strengthen the India-US strategic partnership

—PM Narendra Modi



RANKINGS

- **The Government – released the second edition of the Innovation Index, unveiled by government think tank NITI Aayog on January 20**
- ✓ Karnataka has retained its top position among the major states, while Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu remained at the second and third position

Best performers Four of the five highest scoring major States in the India Innovation Index are from the south <th>Rank</th> <th>Major States</th> <th>Score</th>	Rank	Major States	Score
	1	Karnataka	42.5
	2	Maharashtra	38.03
	3	Tamil Nadu	37.91
	4	Telangana	33.23
	5	Kerala	30.58
	6	Haryana	25.81
	7	Andhra Pradesh	24.19
	8	Gujarat	23.63
	9	Uttar Pradesh	22.85
	10	Punjab	22.54

- ✓ Telangana, Kerala, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab complete the top ten states.
- ✓ Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar scored the lowest on the index, which put them at the bottom in the “major States” category.
- ✓ Among union territories and north-eastern and Hill States, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh occupy the top spots respectively.
- ✓ Among the major states, the average innovation score is 25.35.
- ✓ Karnataka tops at 42.5, which is attributable to its strong number of venture capital deals, registered GIs and ICT exports.
- ✓ Karnataka’s high FDI inflow has also enhanced the innovation capabilities of the state.
- ✓ Maharashtra follows second at 38, while Bihar finishes last at 14.5.
- ✓ Four southern states feature as the top performers and occupy the top-five spots within the major states category.
- ✓ The north east and hill states achieve an average innovation score of 17.89, with Himachal Pradesh as the best performer with a score of 25, followed by Manipur (22.77) and Sikkim (22.28), respectively.
- ✓ The innovation score of union territory and city states averages at 26.01.
- ✓ Delhi, the best performer among all groups, tops the ranking.
- ✓ Chandigarh follows second with a score of 38.57, whereas Lakshadweep and Jammu and Kashmir occupy the last two positions in the group respectively.

- ✓ New Delhi recorded the highest number of trademark and patent applications, along with the establishment of new startups and companies in the last financial year
- ✓ As per the report, the national capital has managed to deliver superior results in the domain of knowledge output.
- ✓ The innovation index measures innovation through parameters such as human capital, investment, knowledge workers, business environment, safety and legal environment, knowledge output and diffusion.
- ✓ States and union territories have been divided into major states, north east and hill states and union territory and city states
- ✓ To instill a culture of innovation among the states, NITI Aayog had introduced the first-ever India Innovation Index in 2019
- ✓ Karnataka emerged as the topper in overall rankings in the category of major states in India Innovation Index, 2019.
- ✓ Maharashtra performed the best in the dimension of Enablers.
- ✓ Sikkim topped the ranking in north eastern states category and Delhi topped the list in the category of Union Territories.

