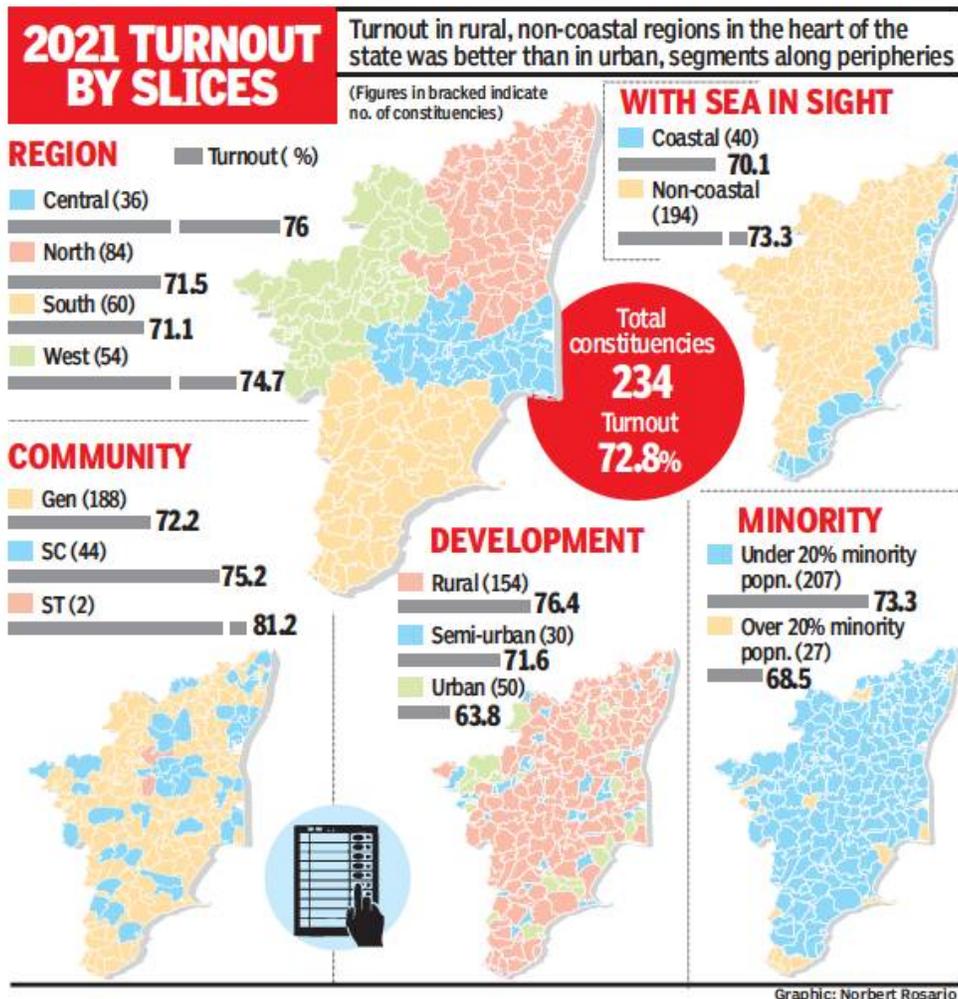




## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 8, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **Tamil Nadu – has reported a voter turnout of 72.78% in the Tamil Nadu assembly election held on April 6, as per the final estimates released by the office of Tamil Nadu chief electoral officer**
- ✓ Palacode constituency in Dharmapuri district witnessed the highest voter turnout of 87.33% and Villivakkam segment in Chennai city the lowest, 55.52%
- ✓ Further, Kulithalai with 86.15% turnout and Edappadi with 85.6% turnout emerged among those with highest polling percentage.
- ✓ Considering the region-wise voting pattern, constituencies in central TN recorded the highest voter turnout of 76%, followed by those in the west with 74.7%.
- ✓ The northern and southern regions recorded 71.5% and 71.1% voter turnout respectively.
- ✓ During the 2016 election, Central TN recorded 78.1%, west 76.9%, north 73.5% and south 72.9% voter turnout.
- ✓ Totally, there are 84 segments in the northern region, 36 segments in the central region, 54 in the western region and 60 segments in the south.
- ✓ Across the state, 37 constituencies saw more than 80% polling and 31 segments saw turnout below 65%.
- ✓ Sholingur, Maduranthakam and Cheyyar are the only assembly segments near Chennai with more than 80% polling.
- ✓ Among districts, Chennai district witnessed the lowest voter turnout of 59.06% and Karur district saw the highest, 83.92%.
- ✓ Nine out of 10 segments that recorded the lowest turnout – ranging from 55.52% to 58.4% - in this election, are in Greater Chennai region.
- ✓ Poonamallee with 73% polling and Avadi with 68% polling topped in voter turnout in Chennai region.
- ✓ The Union territory of Puducherry registered 81.7% polling in the 2021 assembly polls, which is 3.1% less than the polling recorded in 2016 assembly polls.



- ✓ Yanam constituency recorded the highest voter turnout of 91.28%, while Raj Bhavan recorded the lowest (72.68%).
- **On April 7, Dr K N Selvakumar - was appointed vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) for a period of three years by governor Banwarilal Purohit.**
- ✓ Dr Selvakumar, being the senior most serving professor of Tanuvas, has a teaching experience of about 32 years and is serving as Dean, Madras Veterinary College at present.
- ✓ He had also earlier served as director of distance education, Controller of Examinations of Madras Veterinary College and as Dean, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Orathanadu.
- ✓ He has also served as Member, Technical monitoring committee, Animal Husbandry department.
- **Former Tamil Nadu chief secretary Girija Vaidyanathan - has been appointed expert member of the National Green Tribunal's Southern Zone (NGT-SZ) in Chennai.**
- ✓ She was appointed by the principal bench of NGT in Delhi on April 5.

- ✓ Incumbent expert member of the NGT SZ Saibal Dasgupta has been transferred to Eastern Zonal Bench in Kolkata.
- ✓ On an average, the bench in Chennai was hearing 15 to 20 environment cases before the pandemic.
- **A Sati stone, which is believed to be at least 300 years old – has been unearthed in Tirupur recently**
- ✓ The 75cm high and 45cm wide stone was found by construction workers at barely a metre beneath the ground
- ✓ The stone depicts the images of a man and woman.
- ✓ The man was identified as a soldier who had died fighting for a kingdom or community, or while safeguarding or rescuing cattle, and was considered a hero.
- ✓ The woman was identified as the hero's wife and was ready to commit Sati.



- ✓ Sati was the practice of women immolating themselves their husbands' pyres.
- ✓ Such women were highly respected and venerated in earlier times.
- ✓ Sati was declared illegal and the practice was completely banned in British India in 1829.
- ✓ The Sati stone may be of 250 years to 300 years old and belonging to the Nayaka period when Sati was very prevalent in the region.

## **NATIONAL**

- **The Health Ministry - has allowed workplaces in both public and private sector to organise vaccination sessions for their employees from April 11.**
- ✓ However, only employees aged 45 years and above can get vaccinated
- ✓ Any outsiders, including eligible family members, cannot be vaccinated at such sessions.
- ✓ The move is aimed at making the vaccination drive more “citizen-centric” and to boost the vaccination exercise amid rising infections
- ✓ The ministry also issued guidelines to support states/ UTs to help organise these sessions.

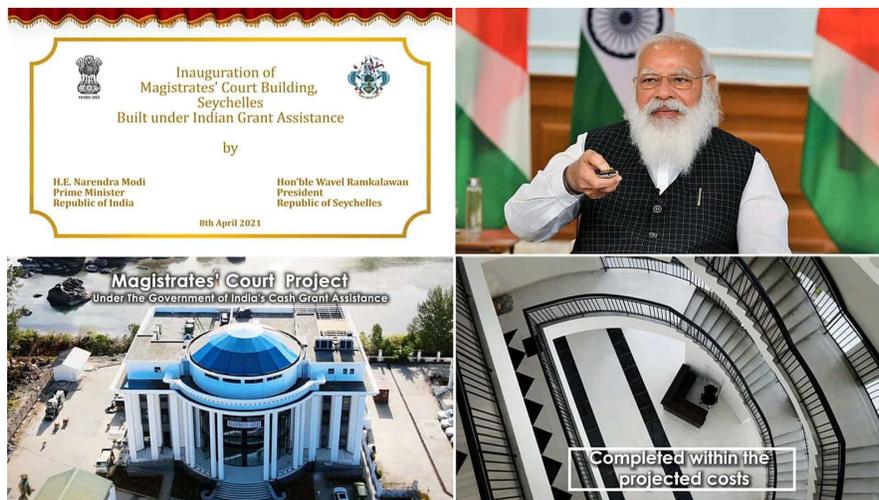
- ✓ As per the guidelines, Covid-19 vaccination sessions may be organised at workplaces which are having about 100 eligible and willing beneficiaries by tagging these work places with an existing Covid Vaccination Centre (CVC).
  - ✓ The sessions will still require beneficiaries to register on the Co-Win portal prior to vaccination
  - ✓ The workplace management will designate one of its senior staff members to be the nodal officer for coordinating with district health authorities or private CVC and support vaccination activities.
  - ✓ The schedule of vaccination session can be made up 15 days in advance and intimated to the work place so that maximum attendance is ensured on the day of the vaccination.
- **On April 7, the shipping and waterway ministry - said that water taxis would be introduced on 12 routes and RoPax ferry services would be launched on four routes in Mumbai by December 2021**
- ✓ Accordingly, the water taxis and Ropax ferries will become a part of Mumbai's public transportation system soon.
  - ✓ These services will help reduce traffic congestion on roads, as per the ministry
  - ✓ The ministry said using the roll-on and roll-off passenger (RoPax) services, people can cover the stretch in just one hour, instead of the earlier 3-4 hours.

## SUPREME COURT

- **Chief Justice S A Bobde - has scheduled 'unprecedented' Supreme Court collegium meetings on April 8 to consider names for appointment as SC judges**
- ✓ This is for the first time that a CJI will be holding meeting, as against the conventional practice, after the President named his successor
  - ✓ On April 6, President appointed Justice N V Ramana, the senior-most SC judge, as CJI designate and the new CJI will take oath on April 24.
  - ✓ It is a convention that once the President appoints CJI-designate, all files get routed through the next CJI
  - ✓ During that period, the incumbent refrains from holding collegium meetings to recommend appointment of judges to the SC or HCs, appointment of chief justices of HCs or transfers of HC judges.
  - ✓ Justice Bobde took oath as CJI on November 18, 2019, and will retire on April 23 after a tenure of one year and five months.
  - ✓ The five-member collegium consists of the CJI and member judges — Justices Ramana, R F Nariman, U U Lalit and A M Khanwilkar
  - ✓ It has to be noted that CJI Bobde has not appointed a single judge to the SC during his tenure.
  - ✓ Earlier, former CJI H L Dattu, during his one year and three months tenure, had appointed only Justice Amitava Roy as the SC judge.

## INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **PM Narendra Modi and Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan - will jointly inaugurate a range of Indian projects in the Seychelles archipelago on April 8.**



- ✓ The virtual event will see inauguration of a new magistrates' court building in Seychelles, handing over of a fast patrol vessel to Seychelles Coast Guard, handing over of a 1 mw solar power plant and 10 high impact community development projects (HICDPs).
- ✓ The new magistrates' court building in the capital city Victoria is India's first major civil infrastructure project in Seychelles built with grant assistance
- ✓ It is a state of the art building which was developed to enhance the capacity of the Seychelles judicial system and aid in better delivery of judicial services.
- ✓ The fast patrol vessel, which is a modern and fully equipped naval ship, has been made in India by GRSE, Kolkata
- ✓ It is being gifted to Seychelles under Indian grant assistance to strengthen its maritime surveillance capabilities
- ✓ The 1mw ground-mounted solar power plant on Romainville Island of Seychelles was completed as part of the 'Solar PV Democratisation Project' being implemented in Seychelles by India under grant assistance.
- ✓ The virtual event will also see the handing over of 10 HICDPs implemented by the Indian high commission in collaboration with local bodies and educational and vocational institutions.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Mexico's health regulator COFEPRIS (Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios) - has granted approval for emergency use to India's Covid-19 vaccine, Covaxin.**

- ✓ The news of the approval was tweeted by Mexico's foreign minister Marcelo Ebrard.
- ✓ Covaxin now becomes the sixth Covid-19 vaccine to be approved in Mexico after Russia's Sputnik V, the Pfizer & BioNTech vaccine, AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine, Sinovac's Coronavac and CanSino's vaccine.
- ✓ With the approval, Mexico joins other countries like Zimbabwe, Nepal, Iran, Paraguay and Mauritius, among others, to have approved the use of indigenous Indian vaccine.

## **ECONOMY**

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - has announced a government securities acquisition programme (G-SAP 1.0) on April 7**
  - ✓ Under the programme, the RBI has committed to buy bonds worth Rs 1 lakh crore in the first quarter.
  - ✓ The first purchase of Rs 25,000 crore is to be made on April 15, 2021.
  - ✓ This unprecedented step has been taken to keep interest rates in check to support growth.
  - ✓ The RBI clarified that the G-SAP will run alongside other instruments, namely longer term repo/reverse repo auctions, forex operations, operation twist, and other open market operations.
  - ✓ In the fiscal year 2021, the Reserve Bank of India purchased Rs 3.13 trillion worth bonds from the secondary market
  - ✓ Internationally, central banks have been buying assets from banks as part of their quantitative easing programme.
  - ✓ The RBI chose to buy government bonds as it was the best quality asset, and the prices of government bonds have an impact on all credit markets.
  - ✓ The Government Securities are debt instruments that are issued by the Centre to borrow money.
  - ✓ There are two types of securities - namely short-term instruments that mature in 91 days and long-term instruments that can mature in between five years and forty years.
- **On April 7, the Monetary Policy Committee of RBI - announced the outcome of its bi-monthly monetary policy review**
  - ✓ The monetary policy committee (MPC) decided to keep the repo rate, the rate at which the RBI lends to banks, unchanged at 4%.
  - ✓ The reverse repo rate, the rate at which the Reserve Bank of India borrows money from the commercial banks, has been kept at 3.35%.
  - ✓ The MPC also decided to retain the GDP growth estimates for 2021-22 at 10.5%
  - ✓ The projection for CPI inflation has been revised to 5% in the fourth quarter of 2020-21, 5.2% in the first quarter of 2021-22, 5.2% in the second quarter, 4.4% in the third quarter; and 5.1% in the fourth quarter

- ✓ The Bank rate has been kept unchanged at 4.25%.
- ✓ The RBI has cut rates by 115 basis points (100bps = 1 percentage point) since March last year

<b>KEEPING LIQUIDITY TAP OPEN</b>	
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
> Targeted long-term repo ops to continue until October 9, 2021	> Adequate liquidity assured for banks, corporates & NBFCs
> ₹50,000cr finance for Nabard, National Housing Bank and Sidbi	> Will encourage banks to lend to housing, rural, small businesses
> Committee to look into working of asset reconstruction cos (ARCs)	> Likely aimed at enabling the creation of a national ARC
> Banks permitted to on-lend through NBFCs	> Will ensure credit flow to those at the bottom of the pyramid
> Higher limits for lending against electronic warehouse receipts	> Will encourage farm credit to individual farmers
> The central bank to set up a financial inclusion index	> It will help measure the success of the financial sector in serving the underprivileged
> External commercial borrowing proceeds allowed to be retained in term deposits until March 2022	> Will give more flexibility in fund management to businesses that are hit by the pandemic

- ✓ Further, the RBI announced an additional liquidity facility of Rs 50,000 crores for NABARD, SIDBI and NHB in 2021-22.
- **The RBI - has extended payments system access to Prepaid Instrument (PPI) Issuers and standalone credit card companies and brought them on a par with banks.**
- ✓ This has been done to enable financial inclusion using prepaid instruments, which can now almost double up as bank account.
- ✓ Further, the withdrawal of cash from ATMs using non-bank prepaid instruments (PPIs) is also allowed now.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India made three main changes to the Prepaid Payment Instruments.
  - ✓ The RBI has cleared PPI issuers, credit card companies and white label operators to participate in centralised payment systems like Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT).
    - ✓ This will enable holders of prepaid instruments to send and receive money from other banks.
  - ✓ The facility of cash withdrawal is also permitted for full KYC-compliant PPIs of non-bank PPI issuers.
  - ✓ The RBI also doubled the end-of-the-day limit for maximum balances that can be held by a payments bank to Rs 2 lakh from Rs 1 lakh.
- ✓ The Prepaid Payment Instruments or PPI are used to effect purchase of goods and services against the value stored in such instruments.

- ✓ The Prepaid instruments shall be used as magnetic stripe cards, smart cards, internet accounts, mobile accounts, online wallets, paper vouchers or any other instrument and are utilised to access a prepaid amount
- ✓ **In another development, the RBI has asked all lenders to compensate borrowers with interest on interest charged between March 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020.**
- ✓ This will apply to all borrowers irrespective of whether the moratorium had been fully or partially availed, or not availed.
- ✓ This followed an order by the Supreme Court on March 23 this year in a case filed by borrowers seeking interest relief.
- ✓ Even before the order, the government had said that it would compensate lenders for refunding interest on interest on small loans below Rs 2 crore, which has already been done.
- ✓ The new directive applies to all loans.

## SPORTS

- **Tamil Nadu's Nethra Kumanan - is all set to make history by becoming the first Indian woman sailor to qualify for the Olympics.**



- ✓ In the Mussanah Open Championship in Oman--- the Olympic Qualifier for Asia --- the 22-year-old from Chennai needs to finish the 10-boat medal race without any negative points to seal the Tokyo berth.
- ✓ At the end of Day 5 of the races on April 7, Nethra was leading in women's Laser Radial class with 18 points.
- ✓ She is well-ahead of her nearest rival --- Stephanie Norton from Hong Kong --- who is on 41 points.
- ✓ Sailing follows a low-scoring system.
- ✓ Nethra is also ahead of the second-placed Emma Charlotte Jeanne Savelon by three points
- ✓ Last year, Nethra became the first Indian woman to win a medal at the Sailing World Cup -- a bronze -- in the Laser Radial category.
- ✓ Nethra has represented India in the 2014 Incheon and 2018 Jakarta Asian Games