February 24, 2026 - Dinamani Newspaper - Tit bits

1. According to the final electoral roll after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), there are 5.67 crore voters in Tamil Nadu. The names of 74 lakh people have been removed from the list.

(i) The constituency with the highest number of voters in Tamil Nadu is Sholinganallur (5,39,991). The constituency with the lowest number of voters is Port (1,16,896).

(ii) The Chief Electoral Officer of Tamil Nadu, Archana Patnaik, released the final electoral roll at the Secretariat in Chennai.

2. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) of the Government of India has released India's first-ever comprehensive National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy, titled 'PRAHAAR' (Policy for Response Against Hostile Activities and Radicalism)

(i) Historical and Regional Context

- India has been on the front lines of the war against terrorism for several decades.
- Neighboring Threats: The strategy notes that the unstable environment in neighboring Pakistan has historically provided shelters and training grounds for terrorist groups.
- Global Targets: India remains a primary target for global terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda and ISIS, which operate from regions such as Iraq and Syria.

(ii) Modern Technological and CBRN Threats

- WMD Risks: A major challenge highlighted is preventing terrorists from accessing Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons.
- Misuse of Technology: The policy warns against the misuse of modern tools such as drones, robotics, and digital devices for carrying out attacks.
- Cyber attacks: Security agencies must counter strategies involving cyber-attacks on national infrastructure.

(iii) Prevention and De-radicalization

- Stopping Recruitment: The strategy focuses on preventing terrorist groups from recruiting Indian youth through constant monitoring and intelligence.
- Prison Monitoring: There is a specific directive to monitor prisons to stop the radicalization of inmates and the recruitment of new members within the jail system.
- Addressing Root Causes: The policy emphasizes tackling the socio-economic factors that terrorists exploit, such as poverty and youth unemployment, by implementing developmental schemes for marginalized groups.

(iv) Operational Modernization and Security

- Security forces and border officials are being equipped with modern weapons, AI-driven surveillance tools, and advanced robotics to secure national borders.

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) and state police departments are tasked with carrying out coordinated investigations to ensure high conviction rates in court.
- Specialized training and the procurement of the latest technological tools are being prioritized for all counter-terrorism units.

(v) International Cooperation

- India has entered into Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) and extradition treaties with various countries to streamline the pursuit of terrorists abroad.
- The strategy relies on joint task forces and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with international partners to share evidence and real-time intelligence on terrorist activities.

(vi) Human Rights and Legal Framework

- The policy states that while counter-terrorism laws are stringent, they must respect human rights and provide opportunities for legal appeal and Judicial Review.
- The strategy operates within the framework of existing laws, including the Explosives Act, Arms Act, and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to choke terrorist funding.

(vii) Holistic Social Approach

- India is following a "Whole of Society" approach to counter-terrorism.
- The Central Government is working with doctors, psychologists, lawyers, and NGOs to reintegrate individuals from affected communities back into mainstream society.
- The policy explicitly criminalizes not only the act of terrorism but also the provision of funding, weapons, and logistical support to terrorists.

3. The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Water Transport, Sarbananda Sonowal, while inaugurating projects worth Rs.1,500 crore at the Thoothukudi VOC Port, said that the country's cargo handling capacity will be 1,000 crore tonnes by 2030.

(i) The inauguration of project work worth Rs.1,500 crore and the laying of foundation stone for new project works were held at the Thoothukudi VOC Port.

(ii) 111 projects are being implemented in Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs.12,600 crore on behalf of the Central Government. Currently, the Thoothukudi port handles 35.97 million tonnes of cargo. The port's capacity will further increase when the depth of the port is increased to 18 meters.

(iii) Another milestone in maritime development in Thoothukudi is the construction of a shipbuilding facility worth Rs.30,000 crore.

(iv) Thoothukudi port is set to become the country's first green port. Projects like wind power and solar power generation are being implemented at the port. By continuously implementing green energy projects, India will become a zero carbon emission country by 2070.

(v) Prime Minister Modi's policy is to make India a global leader in maritime trade. For this, we are implementing excellent development projects under the Maritime Trade Plan 2030 and the Maritime Trade Development Plan 2047.

4. The Russia-Ukraine war, which caused the greatest humanitarian catastrophe on the European

continent since World War II, has completed 4 years.

5. Rob Zeten has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

(i) This makes him the youngest Prime Minister in the history of the Netherlands (38).

(ii) In a grand ceremony at the Royal Palace, King Willem-Alexander swore-in the new cabinet led by Rob Zeten.

(iii) The new Government is a minority coalition. The agreement was reached 117 days after the election and after long negotiations.

(iv) The coalition has only 66 seats in the 150-seat Dutch Parliament. As a result, Rob Zeten is forced to seek the support of the opposition parties to pass every law.

6. The European Union has categorically stated that it cannot accept US President Donald Trump's additional import tariffs. It has also been emphasized that the US should respect the bilateral trade agreement.

(i) The US Supreme Court has annulled the import tariffs imposed by US President Trump on countries around the world.

(ii) Trump, who expressed dissatisfaction with the Supreme Court, declared that he would not back down from his stance of prioritizing American interests. He also immediately announced a 10 percent tariff on all countries around the world, which he increased to 15 percent.

(iii) According to the trade agreement between the US and the European Union concluded last year, a 15 percent tariff ceiling was set for most EU products, and some products, including aircraft parts, were exempted from customs duties. There are fears that the new 15 percent tariff announced by Trump will cancel these concessions.

(iv) In this context, the European Union has expressed dissatisfaction that 'the current level of equal and mutually beneficial trade with the United States, as per last year's trade agreement, is not available.

(v) 60% opposition to Trump:

- 60 percent of the American people have expressed dissatisfaction with the policies of President Trump's administration. In particular, 2/3 of the people are dissatisfied with inflation and import tariffs.
- A recent survey conducted by the American media has revealed that 58 percent are opposed to immigration policy and 62 percent are opposed to foreign policy.

7. The 25th Winter Olympics in Italy have officially concluded. Norway topped the medal tally.

(i) The 16-day Games in Milan and Cortina, Italy, saw 2,871 competitors from 92 countries participate. This included 1,533 male and 1,338 female athletes.

(ii) Competitions were held in 116 categories across 8 sports. At the end of the Games, Norway topped the medal tally with 18 gold, 12 silver and 11 bronze medals. The United States came in second with 33 medals (12+12+9) and the Netherlands came in third with 20 medals (10+7+3). Host country Italy came in fourth

with 30 medals (10 gold, 6 silver and 14 bronze).

(iii) India participated in two categories in the competition. India did not have much luck in either.

(iv) The Norwegian skier Johannes Hosflot Klebo won the most gold medals in the competition, winning 6 gold medals. He set a record for winning the most gold medals in a single edition of the Winter Olympics.

(v) The Olympic flag was handed over to France, which will host the next Winter Olympics (2030).

8. The officials of the Election Commission of India will hold consultations with State Election Commissioners in Delhi on election procedures including technology sharing and voter list.

(i) This consultation meeting will be held after 27 years since 1999.

(ii) In this regard, a press release issued by the Election Commission of India said, 'Chief Election Commissioner of India Gyanesh Kumar will chair the consultation meeting to be held at Bharat Mandapam, Delhi on Tuesday (February 24). Election Commissioners Sukhvir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi will preside over the meeting.

(iii) State Election Commissioners from all states and union territories, legal and technical experts, and Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of 36 states and union territories will participate in it.

(iv) As part of the meeting, senior officials will explain through videos about the technological initiatives taken by the Election Commission of India, including the 'ECINET platform.'

(v) The State Election Commission uses the information they require for local body elections from the electoral rolls prepared by the Election Commission of India for state assembly elections.

(vi) The Election Commission of India provides the State Election Commissions with the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) used for assembly elections and general elections for local body elections.

(vii) EVMs are generally used for only 15 years. After that, the machines are destroyed. EVMs are manufactured by two public sector undertakings, Electronics Corporation of India (ECIL) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

(viii) Funds are allocated to the Law Ministry in the Union Budget for the procurement of EVMs by the Election Commission of India.

9. President Draupadi Murmu has praised Rajaji as a man of multifaceted creativity and multi-dimensionality.

(i) Rajaji Utsav was celebrated at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi to celebrate the life and legacy of C.Rajagopalachari, popularly known as Rajaji, who served as the first and last Governor General of independent India.

(ii) On this occasion, President Draupadi Murmu unveiled the bust of Rajaji. The bust of the English architect Edwin Lutyens, which was located in the courtyard of the Grand Open Staircase near the Ashoka Hall inside the Rashtrapati Bhavan, has been removed and the Rajaji statue has been installed there.

10. The High Level Committee on Centre-State Relations, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Kurian

Joseph, met in Delhi to deliberate on the second part of its comprehensive report.

(i) The High Level Committee on Centre-State Relations was constituted by the Tamil Nadu Government on April 15 last year. The Committee, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Kurian Joseph, includes former Vice-Chancellor of the Madras Maritime University and retired IAS officer K. Ashokvardhan Shetty and former Vice-Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Planning Commission M.Naganathan as members. The Committee is tasked with reviewing the functioning of the federation and recommending measures to strengthen state autonomy.

(ii) The Committee met in Delhi and discussed the topics for the second part of the report. The first part of the report of the committee, which covers 10 key aspects including language policy, role of the Governor, education, health, constituency redelineation, elections, and Goods and Services Tax (GST), was prepared in Tamil and English and was recently tabled in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin.

(iii) While the committee is making impartial recommendations to strengthen federal and state autonomy, the Tamil Nadu Government has proposed to bring translations of the first part of the report in 10 Indian languages, namely Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Gujarati, Punjabi and Assamese. These were also discussed in the meeting held on Monday.

11. Growing disconnect between technological advancement, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the catastrophic reality of climate change affecting the Himalayan region and global ecology.

(i) The Warning of Delayed Snowfall :-

- The period from November 2025 to the third week of January 2026 saw an unusual dry spell and high temperatures instead of the expected winter conditions.
- Snowfall in the Himalayan regions began significantly later than usual, which should be considered as a grave warning that should not be taken lightly.
- Human Intelligence vs. Nature: While the world is focused on the triumphs of Artificial Intelligence, humanity's "small intelligence" is failing to confront the actual fury of nature.

(ii) The Arctic Vortex Phenomenon

- The "Arctic Vortex" is a high-altitude, low-pressure system of cold air that rotates around the North Pole.
- When the vortex is strong, it keeps the cold air contained in the Arctic; however, when it weakens, this cold air moves southward, creating severe cold waves and snowstorms in northern and western parts of the globe.
- Recent studies indicate that the Arctic regions are warming faster than the rest of the planet, which is directly disrupting the Arctic Vortex and reducing snowfall in the Himalayas.
- The competition between nations for crude oil and rare earth minerals in the Arctic is further worsening the environmental crisis.

(iii) Threats to Water and Energy Security

- Global warming is causing the Himalayan glaciers, which cover an area of 42,000 sq. km, to melt at an alarming rate.
- During the 2024–25 season (November to March), snowfall decreased by 23.6%, which is

considered an extraordinary and dangerous decline.

- The reduction in snow affects the catchment areas of the Ganga, Indus, and Brahmaputra river systems, leading to reduced water flow in their tributaries.
- This water shortage threatens the drinking water and irrigation needs of 100 crore (1 billion) people and disrupts 26,000 MW of hydroelectric power production.

4. Ecological and Agricultural Consequences

- The lack of seasonal rain and snow has led to devastating forest fires in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir, destroying thousands of hectares of forest and killing wildlife.
- Apple trees require 1,200 to 1,600 hours of cold during their flowering season.
- Due to delayed snowfall and rising temperatures in Mandi, Shimla, and Kullu, many farmers are uprooting their apple trees and switching to vegetable cultivation out of necessity.
- The decline in snowfall is also severely impacting the tourism industry in these northern states, causing a significant economic downturn for local communities.

(v) The Limits of Artificial Intelligence

- The "great danger" posed by nature is not visible to or solvable by Artificial Intelligence.
- No amount of technical intelligence can prevent it, if we continue to ignore the laws of nature.