



On the Occasion of DNA Day EVA Precisor Health care was inaugurated by Prof Dr Gouri Kishore Ratha, Former Director, Cancer, AIIMS, New Delhi & Chief, National Cancer Institute, JHAJJAR, NCR

Mamata hits out at Modi after virtual meeting, says interaction was 'one-sided and misleading'

KOLKATA(KCN): A virtual interaction with chief ministers Narendra Modi held a few hours after PM on the Covid review issue on Wednesday. West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee hit out at the PM and the BJP-led Centre on several issues ranging from the Bengal government's dues from the Centre to the PM's request to reduce VAT on fuel to benefit the common people. Mamata's retort came three days before she is scheduled to be present in Delhi for a conference of chief ministers and high court judges which will be inaugurated by Modi. "It would have been

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China, Russia, India in US property rights blacklist

WASHINGTON(KCN): The United States has put China, Russia and five other countries on its annual blacklist for lax enforcement of intellectual property rights and trademark piracy.



too. "China continues to be the largest origin economy for counterfeit and pirated goods," according to the report. Also on the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative's "priority watch list" were Argentina, Chile, India, Indonesia and Venezuela. The U.S. suspended its review this year of Ukraine -- which

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UP Congress awaiting appointment of new state chief, organisational activities at standstill

LUCKNOW(KCN): After the resignation of UP Pradesh Congress Committee chief Kishor leaves unanswered questions as party seeks revival. In the absence of



chief Ajay Kumar Lallu owning responsibility for the party's dismal show in the recently concluded state Assembly elections, the state unit has not got a new chief even a month after the results. The Congress could win just two seats with a vote share of 2.33 per cent. As per senior functionaries of the grand old party, the activities of the organisation had come to a grinding halt after a hectic election campaign. "The party is waiting for the appointment of the new state chief," said a senior party leader. However, the names of former UPCC president Nirmal Khatri, former Rajya Sabha MPs and senior leaders Pramod Tiwari and PL Punia are doing the rounds as possible contenders for the UPCC chief's post. ALSO READ: Breakup between Congress, Prashant

regular president of the state unit of the party, senior general secretary Dinesh Singh is taking care of day-to-day work to ensure smooth functioning of the party. Apart from the resignation of the then UPCC chief who himself lost his seat, the Congress high command had entrusted party general secretary Bhanwar Jitendra Singh with the responsibility to ascertain the factors behind party's decimation in the assem-

bly elections. While the high command's decision is awaited, party insiders claim that the feedback report mentioned that a large section of party cadre blamed lack of infrastructure at grassroots level for the rout. The Congress's number of seats has been dwindling in election after election. In 2012, Congress had won 15 seats. In 2017, the party stitched up an alliance with the Samajwadi Party but failed to cut much ice among the voters and the number of its seats came down to seven under the sweeping saffron surge. In 2022, despite an aggressive campaign by AICC general secretary and UP in-charge Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the party could win just two seats. After the 2022 poll results, Priyanka has not visited the state.

Iran seeks to expand its military cooperation with China

TEHRAN(KCN): Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi expressed Wednesday as U.S. unilateralism as talks to revive Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers Iranian counterpart, Gen. Mohammad Reza Ashtinai, and reportedly invited Wei said his visit was aimed at "improving the strategic defense cooperation" between Iran and China — cooperation that he said would have a "remarkable" impact in defusing unilateralism and fighting terrorism. Iran and China have increased their military ties in recent years, with their navies visiting each other's ports and holding joint naval drills in the Indian Ocean. In 2021, Iran and China signed a 25-year strategic cooperation agreement that covered a variety of economic activities from oil and mining to promoting industrial activity in Iran, as well as transportation and agricultural collaborations. China is a signatory to the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, along with Russia, Britain, France and Germany.



his government's desire for closer cooperation with China in remarks made during a visit by the Chinese defense minister, state media reported. According to the report, Raisi told China's Minister of National Defense Wei Fenghe that Tehran sees its ties with Beijing as strategic. Closer cooperation would serve to confront what the Iranian president described have stalled. "Confronting unilateralism and creating stability and order is possible through cooperation of independent and like-minded powers," Raisi was quoted as saying. Wei in turn said improving ties between Iran and China would provide security, "particularly in the current critical and tense situation." Wei also met with him to visit China, as well as with other Iranian military officials. The official IRNA news agency quoted Ashtinai as assailing U.S. military presence in the Middle East and elsewhere, claiming that "whenever the U.S. has had military presence, it has created waves of insecurity, instability, rifts, pessimism, war, destruction and displacement."

Tech Edu Institutes Shut Down

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In view of prevailing heatwave conditions in the State, the Skill Development and Technical Education Department will remain suspended till May 2, 2022, sources said. However, other activities such as examination, evaluation, administrative work, research work, etc. will continue as usual, the sources said. Notably, the State Go-



CONTINUED ON: P-7

Tripathy boosts Mission Shakti

Balangir(KCN): Principal Advisor to Chief Minister and tices, Mr.Tripathy said, "the WSHG members are well powering them". It may be pertinent here to mention that



Chairman WODC Asit Tripathy on his two day visit to Balangir district today interacted with the members of block level federation of Mission Shakti group engaged in management and housekeeping of Harishankar Panthaniwas. After looking into the management practices, Mr.Tripathy said, "the WSHG members are well powering them". It may be pertinent here to mention that Panthaniwas through WSHG "is truly a win-win arrangement" from the viewpoints of tourism, tourists, and women empowerment. Mr.Tripathy is also scheduled to visit agri-business farms, inaugurate new OMFED Parlor, and lay foundation stone of new gallery at Gandhi Stadium. After looking into field potentialities, Sri Tripathy will discuss with local entrepreneurs for promoting the agri-business, and food processing units in fishery, horticulture, live-stock and cash crop sectors. Balangir Collector, Chanchal Rana, Sub-Collector, Patnagarh, Bijayananda Sethi along with district level officers of concerned departments were present on the occasion.

Harishankar is a popular tourist point. A large number of tourists, nature lovers, and picnickers visit the place in most part of the year. Panthaniwas caters to their need. Better management of Panthaniwas gives them good experience. As such, management of the

The love in the lovers

Two drunken eyes
Lost in the hindrance of pride
Hurdled up to the past
Broken glass, and passing smiles
Two lovers
Who shape each other's lips
Crayons of love and skins
Pictured into the dark
They say they've loved too much
To unlove this part
But-
What if I tell you
Hope's lit in the cave
Where you kissed
Sprouting flowers
First droplet of your smile
Seized to be the moment
I describe
I'm the void
You avoid
Sparkly eyes, shiny cries
Clipped your backseat
Where you held rain in the first week
Of love and monsters
Who don't look at me



Shreeta Sikruti Kuanr

Like you do
I wish you come back home
Wrapped in paper roll
With a hundred signs
To live again
Through the breaths of each other
Summoned by brightness and flowers
Unhooked by past and lonely towers.

Rat and I
Mr. Sadyant Satapathy

I am afraid of the rats
at first sight
Because they come
out at night
I go to my room and
close the door tight
They are very ugly,
So I don't want to
fight
But if I run out of my
house in fright
How will I overcome
terror and prove my might!

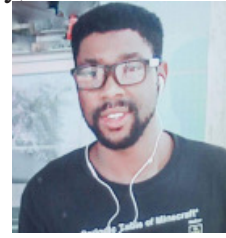


Std-III A
Mother's Public School, Puri

"Just a normal day"

T.s_Theddy.

Stray bullets and bleeding men,
Leftover crimes and running stomachs,
Love and broken hearts,
Curses and blessings,
And this is just a normal day,
In the world I see,
Dreams and fantasies,
Reality and revelations,
Wars and broken bones,
Peace and treaties,
Homicides and suicides,
Murder and disorder,
And this is just a normal day,
In the world I live,
Trust and betrayal,
The good and the bad,
The blood on roses,
Tears on joy,
Judgement and mystery,
Concoctions and prescriptions,
Thanksgiving and regrets,
Prayers and blasphemy,
And this is just a normal day,
In the world I know,
"EXCERPT"



Quotation of the Day



11 different types of Painting that every Artist should know

Over the course of history, the way artists have painted—and the mediums they use—has evolved. New technology and changing tastes mean that the paints used by artists have continued to diversify. But how do you know which is the right type of paint for you? Many of us are familiar with water-



color, oil, and acrylic paint, but there's so much more out there for artists to explore. While some types of painting, like fresco and tempera, aren't practiced quite as frequently, others are seeing a resurgence. For instance, a renewed interest in hand lettering and sign painting has made enamel paint trendier than ever.

As an artist, how can you decide on the right type of paint for your artwork? Having a good grasp on the characteristics of each paint and the aesthetic they provide will help you narrow down your choices. Some painting techniques are easy for artists of all levels to pick up, while others may require more advanced technical skill.

Learn more about different kinds of paint to see what works best for you. Who knows? You just might be inspired to try a new type of painting.

Discover more about 11 types of painting that help artists express their creativity.

OIL



For centuries, artists have been using oil paint to create their masterpieces. This slow drying medium is made from color pigments suspended in oil. Due to its long drying time, artists can take their time producing work. Oil paint is often used to create wonderful textured effects thanks to its thick consistency. Though it can be messy to work with and requires care when working with mediums that contain toxic elements, it's still beloved by artists for the rich colors it produces. So, it should come as no surprise that it's one of the most popular types of painting.

Learn how to pick the right type of oil paint in our handy guide.

ACRYLIC



There are a wide array of acrylic paints in terms of texture and drying time. This water-soluble paint dries quickly, is non-toxic, and cost-effective, often making it a go-to choice for painters of all skill levels. Over time it holds up better than oil paint, as it's not prone to cracking or yellowing. There are innumerable acrylic paint techniques and by combining the paint with different mediums, artists have flexibility in the final look. Though acrylic is water resistant when completely dry on the canvas, its water-soluble nature when damp makes for easy cleanup.

Learn more about the difference between acrylic paint and oil paint, as well as the best acrylic paint for artists of all levels.

WATERCOLOR

Typically painted on paper, watercolors are made from pigments suspended in a water-based solution. Known for the transparent layers they create, watercolor paint remains soluble even when dry. This means that artists can make some corrections even when the painting is dry, but this also means that finished work must be protected carefully. There are many watercolor techniques that artists use to create different styles of art, from realistic por-

traits to washed out landscapes. Although paper is the most common support, watercolors can also be used on surfaces like fabric, wood, leather, and vellum. Looking for watercolors? Check our guide to the best watercolor sets.

JESSICA STEWART

traits to washed out landscapes. Although paper is the most common support, watercolors can also be used on surfaces like fabric, wood, leather, and vellum.

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GOUACHE

"Young Woman in a Rocking Chair, study for the painting 'The Last Evening' by Jacques Joseph Tissot, about 1873. Brush with gouache and watercolor, over graphite. (Photo: Getty Museum)

While gouache is similar to watercolor in that it can be re-wetted, this type of paint dries matte and is a heavier paint due to the chalk that's incorporated into it. Gouache also has characteristics similar to acrylic in that it's an opaque paint. It's often used together with watercolor, and since it's water soluble, it requires a varnish over the top to seal the finished painting. A newer variation is acrylic gouache, which uses an acrylic-based binder that allows the paint to become water resistant when dry. Blick sells a wide variety of professional and student grade gouache.

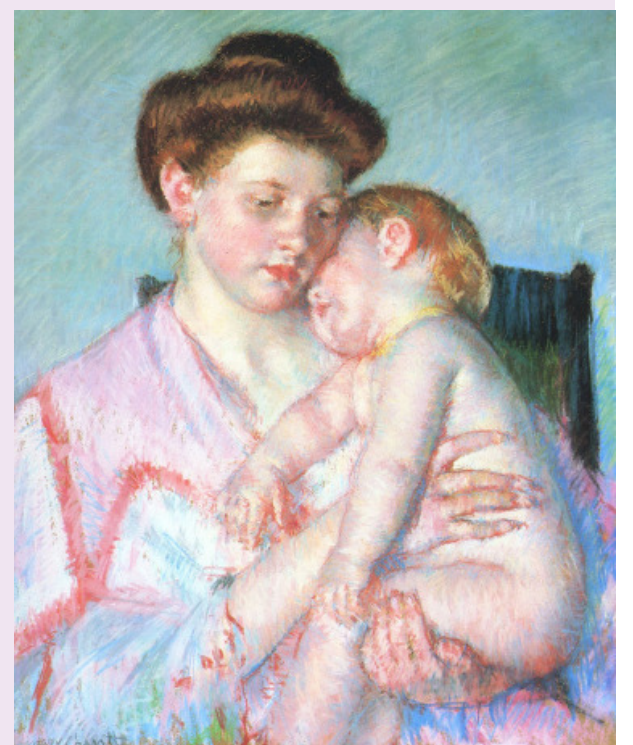
PASTEL

Sometimes known as "dry painting," the use of pastels has been popular since the 16th century. Their stick form and lack of drying time make them an easy and portable solution for artists. The most popular pastels—known as



soft pastels—have chalk incorporated into them, but oil pastels with a waxy consistency are also available. Colors are typically blended straight onto the support and if you're looking for a watercolor type effect, there are also water-soluble pastels. These paintings are fragile, as the pigment can lift from the surface,

so should be framed under glass.



Learn more about how to paint with pastels.

ENCAUSTIC

This complex technique dates back to ancient Egypt and involves adding pigment to hot beeswax. The resulting paste is then typically applied to prepared wood, though canvas can also be used. Special tools are then used to shape and sculpt the liquid prior to cooling.

Contemporary artists often use heat guns to extend the workability of the paint. Though encaustic—or hot wax painting—can be difficult to master, it is possible to create complex paintings full of dimension and

color.

Jessica Stewart is a Contributing Writer and Digital Media Specialist for My Modern Met, as well as a curator and art historian. Since 2020, she is also one of the co-hosts of the My Modern Met Top Artist Podcast. She earned her MA in Renaissance Studies from University College London and now lives in Rome, Italy. She cultivated expertise in street art which led to the purchase of her photographic archive by the Treccani Italian Encyclopedia in 2014. When she's not spending time with her three dogs, she also manages the studio of a successful street artist. In 2013, she authored the book 'Street Art Stories Roma' and most recently contributed to 'Crossroads: A Glimpse Into the Life of Alice Pasquini'. You can follow her adventures online at @romephotoblog.

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Please Contact- 8338870595

Best Film Award in the 'Livelihood and Sustainable Technologies' category for the short film 'Sani' at the "11th CMC Vatavaran Film Festival & Awards"

Bombay (KCN, nologies' category at maker Shyam special interest in tional awards. mother of Odisha. Director Dr. S K Das The river is closely



The short film "Sani - The Son of River" was awarded Best Film in the 'Livelihood and Sustainable Technologies' category at the 11th CMC Vatavaran Film Festival and Awards.



Mahanadi" produced under the banner of Sani Films on 23 April

Rao, directors of the festival, etc. S K Das was given a prize of Rs 50,000, trophy and certificate. For which he expressed his gratitude to all the people of the festival committee and the jury.

Dr. Sweta Kumar Das (S K Das) pursued a career in

says, "The short film associated with the



ner of 'Social Image Production' and directed by Dr. S K Das was presented with the Best Indian Film in 'Living and Sustainable Technologies' category at the 11th National and International Film Festival in Chandigarh on 23 April 2022. This year a total of 21 National and International Films were Awarded in 10 categories. It was judged by many veterans like film Odisha Administrative Service after completing MA, M.Phil and PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has a disaster management and current social superstition. The short film 'Mask' directed by him won many national and international awards. Mahanadi river and the livelihood of fishermen in Odisha. This film is made in Odia language. River Mahanadi is considered as the people. It is shown in this movie how the fishermen community have to face the water dispute between the two states."

Mohanlal, Akshay Kumar to launch trailers of 'Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham'



The highly anticipated trailer of Priyadarshan's 'Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham' will be launched by Mohanlal and Akshay Kumar on March 6 on their Facebook and Twitter pages at 5 pm. While Mohanlal will launch the Malayalam trailer, Akshay will release the Hindi version. ALSO READ | Mohanlal is 'Marakkar', but what about others in Priyadarshan's star-studded period drama? Ever since the first footage was shown at the Aashirvad event a few months ago, followed by the launch of the teasers, film buffs have been waiting to take a look at a more elaborate trailer. The film's promotions are going on in full swing and the makers recently the Tamil poster featuring Mohanlal, Manju Warrier, Keerthy Suresh, Arjun Sarja, and Prabhu. Marakkar is set to have a grand release on around 5000 screens worldwide on March 26. The big-budget period epic also stars Suniel Shetty, Pranav Mohanlal, Kalyani Priyadarshan, Fazil, and Madhu among others. It is bankrolled by Aashirvad Cinemas, Confident Group, and Moonshot Entertainments.

The Pandemic Crushed the Flu— What Happens When It Returns?

During the annual flu season, many people experience the usual symptoms: a runny nose, sneezing, body aches, and fever. Flu can also be deadly. In the United States alone, influenza vi-



ruses cause hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and tens of thousands of fatalities each year. During the pandemic, however, a drastic change occurred: there was a precipitous drop in infections with influenza and other respiratory viruses—and in some parts of the world, some of these pathogens are nowhere to be found.

“It’s really dramatic how the flu disappeared this year,” says Ellen Foxman, an immunologist at Yale University. At Yale-New Haven Hospital, where Foxman works, there were around 3,000 confirmed flu cases in the first three months of 2020, Foxman tells *The Scientist*. “This year, from the first of January until now, there’s zero.”

Mask wearing, social distancing, and other restrictions implemented to stave off SARS-CoV-2 are thought to be the primary culprits in the decline in other respiratory pathogens in circulation. As such measures are lifted, though, scientists are expecting the missing viruses to return—and are pondering what will happen when that occurs.

Scientists suspect that the lack of exposure to influenza over the course of this pandemic means that people’s immune systems are now more vulnerable than usual to infection. At the same time, not being able to circulate has led to a striking reduction in the genetic diversity of circulating influenza viruses, which are constantly undergoing mutations—but it’s not yet clear what implica-

tions this has for human health.

“I think everyone appreciated not having colds and flus this year,” Foxman says. “It would be really nice to keep that going. The question is, what is it going to take?”

Vanishing act
Many scientists expected the strict measures put in place during this pandemic would lead to a reduction in infections from other respiratory viruses, and indeed, signs that influenza was being kept at bay began emerging early in the pandemic. Last April, Ben Cowling, an infectious diseases epidemiologist at Hong Kong University, and his colleagues used surveillance and hospitalization data to estimate that in Hong Kong, flu transmission within the general community declined by 44 percent after measures to limit SARS-CoV-2’s spread were implemented last January. A few months later, Rachel Baker, an epidemiologist at Princeton University, published a similar study based on data from the US on outbreaks of seasonal influenza as well as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a pathogen that circulates in infants and young children, sometimes causing severe illness. She and her colleagues examined surveillance data collected in the US between 2016 and March 2020, the month during which the US government declared COVID-19 a national emergency. Their work revealed that by the end of March, RSV transmission had fallen by an estimated 20 percent, and that even though the 2019–2020 flu season was more severe than average, after the state of emergency was announced—and measures to control SARS-CoV-2’s spread were put in place in many states—influenza outbreaks, too, showed signs of subsiding. Similar trends have

emerged elsewhere as well. In Australia, for example, investigators reported that compared to similar periods during pre-COVID years, RSV and influenza infections in children dropped by more than 98 percent between April and August 2020.

As those early studies predicted, the spread of influenza and RSV was significantly stymied over the course of the pandemic, to the point where, as Foxman notes, some hospitals have seen almost no cases this year.

“To have us completely miss the flu and the RSV season is unprecedented,” Baker says. Such a drop-off has not been seen in recent history. The closest example might be the 1918 influenza pandemic, during which public health interventions appeared to drive a change in the seasonality of measles in London due to an estimated 38 percent reduction in contacts among susceptible and infected individuals, according to recent research.

Why did distancing measures stop influenza and RSV, while COVID-19 continued to spread? Scott Hensley, a viral immunologist at the University of Pennsylvania, says one reason is that there was a large susceptible population to COVID-19—because SARS-CoV-2 was a new virus—whereas for viruses such as influenza, populations have higher levels of immunity, because many people have had prior infections. Another possibility, Hensley adds, is that SARS-CoV-2 is simply more transmissible, though he notes that the relative transmissibility of these viruses has yet to be tested.

“All the measures that have been put in place to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2 have effectively limited the spread of influenza and other airborne viruses,” Hensley says. “As we start relaxing

some of the social distancing and restrictions, it’s expected that these viruses will return.” A diversity bottleneck

A key question that scientists have now is what those viruses will look like when they return.

During the pandemic, not only have flu case numbers plummeted in parts of the world, but influenza viruses has also become significantly less diverse—so much so that some variants of the virus may have disappeared. “What we’ve seen is a major collapse in the genetic diversity of [flu] viruses,” Hensley says.

A key question that scientists have now is what those viruses will look like when they return.

There are four types of influenza viruses: A, B, C, and D. The viruses responsible for seasonal flus fall into types A and B. Type A viruses are split into subtypes named for the identity of two of its surface proteins, hemagglutinin (H) and neuraminidase (N)—H1N1, for example. Type B viruses, by contrast, are divided into two lineages, B/Victoria and B/Yamagata. Both subtypes and lineages can be further divided into clades and subclades based on their genetics.

“In the past 18 months, the B/Yamagata lineage has disappeared,” says Cowling. In addition, among the clades of H3N2 viruses—of which of around half a dozen usually circulate each season—there now appear to be only two major clades, according to Hensley. “Very few flu viruses have been able to make it out of the COVID pandemic unscathed.”

It’s not yet clear why some subgroups of these viruses survived, while others have gone off the map, but Hensley says that there are a few potential explanations. “Some people have specu-

Diana Kwon

lated that those viruses were just sort of in the right place at the right time,” he tells *The Scientist*. Alternatively, “maybe the viruses that have squeaked by during the pandemic have something special about them—maybe they are able to evade human immunity more effectively or transmit more effectively.” Scientists are also wondering: Are these lost variants of the influenza virus really gone, or are they just biding their time, waiting to spread? John McCauley, the director of the World Influenza Centre at the Francis Crick Institute in the UK, notes that the viruses that appear to have disappeared could still be in circulation at low levels somewhere in the world. Viral infections tend to spread exponentially—so even if the rate of transmission of a virus currently appears slow, numbers could rapidly increase later on. Scientists don’t know how quickly one of these currently undetectable flu variants could take over, “but it’s starting from a lower base [number of infections] than would be normal,” McCauley adds.

Thus, the significant drop in the diversity of the influenza virus may just be temporary. If there is a severe flu season, Cowley says, then “that would give the opportunity for the virus to evolve—and maybe develop some diversity—again.” There are already signs that some of these viruses are beginning to return. Although there have not yet been large outbreaks of flu in places where levels dropped drastically over the past year and a half, some areas are already seeing surges in RSV. “We’ve seen RSV come back in many countries now—flu hasn’t come back, so there’s a bit of a puzzle there,” Baker says. One possible explanation for this is that

RSV has returned because it circulates mostly in young children, and while some kids are going back to daycare, many adults are still working from home. Another is the fact that seasonal patterns in transmission are stronger for flu than for RSV, and it’s no longer flu season in the Northern Hemisphere.

“It’s an unprecedented time in flu history,” Hensley says. “But influenza viruses have this uncanny ability to change and adapt, and I would expect that once life sort of gets back to normal, we’ll see flu get back to normal as well.”

Weakened defenses? After almost two years of having to fend off few to no infections with influenza and other respiratory viruses, some scientists are worried that the lack of infections may have led to a decrease in immunity to some of these pathogens. “There’s never been a time in recent history where the human population was as immunologically naive as it is here in 2021,” Hensley says.

I would expect that once life sort of gets back to normal, we’ll see flu get back to normal as well.

—Scott Hensley, University of Pennsylvania
Cowling and his colleagues found signs that this was happening in Hong Kong: after prolonged school closures, colds caused by rhinoviruses exploded upon return to the classroom, despite a requirement for students and staff to wear masks at all times and strict distancing measures such as limits on group activities. “We were kind of surprised, because we didn’t think that anything could spread” under those conditions, Cowling says. Because the schools had been closed, “we think that led to a loss of immunity, and so there were even more infections than ever before.”

Most of the worry regarding the lowering

of immune defenses is related to the adaptive immune system, which remembers prior infections and launches specific responses to pathogens. “When you see [a virus] again, it sort of tickles the memories so that those memory responses are easier to trigger,” Foxman explains. “There’s a concern that it’s been a while since we’ve seen most of the common respiratory viruses going around, and so our memory responses might be worse.”

Foxman adds that the innate immune system—which launches rapid, non-specific responses to fight off pathogens—may have also been affected. “We haven’t had either the boosting of adaptive immunity or the normal level of innate immunity you just get from getting infections all the time, especially for kids,” Foxman tells *The Scientist*. “Both are reasons why people are worried about the respiratory viruses being worse this year.”

Studies from Foxman’s group and others suggest that when common cold viruses are circulating, they may provide protection against other viruses, such as SARS-CoV-2. While more research is needed to establish whether this phenomenon is real, researchers have documented several instances, in both humans and animals, when infection with one virus appeared to reduce the chances of getting infected with another. “Once a cell in your airway gets infected, it triggers these defenses and tells all the cells around to switch on your antiviral program,” Foxman says. “So common cold triggers these defenses pretty fast. Then those are still on to protect against the viruses that are better at blocking those defenses.”

In addition to the possible reduction in immune defenses among older children and adults, there is also now an extra year’s worth of ba-

bles who have never been exposed to some of these viruses, Foxman says. Kids are thought to be vectors that spread viruses to other members of society—so more immune-naive youngsters may mean that there’s more potential for the pathogens to spread and for the infants themselves to fall ill.

The good news is that while our immune defenses to influenza may be lowered, there is a way to boost them: with vaccines. The best way to prevent flu’s worst effects, including death, is by getting vaccinated, Foxman says.

Many unknowns remain about what this prolonged period of reduced activity has meant for influenza and other viruses that many of us have been able to evade during the pandemic. But one thing is clear: the public health interventions designed to stave off respiratory pathogens worked. The question now is to what extent we should continue implementing some of those measures, Baker says. Keeping some of these rules in place at the population level will likely be difficult, but “at the individual level, wearing a cloth mask in dense public transit areas, on airplanes, or in the supermarket is a good way to at least help minimize your risk of getting the flu during flu season,” she adds. “I think maybe some of those measures, now we know that they work, will linger in society, and hopefully that will have a positive impact on the future burden of influenza.”

Diana is a freelance science journalist who covers the life sciences, health, and academic life. She’s a regular contributor to *The Scientist* and her work has appeared in several other publications, including *Scientific American*, *Knowable*, and *Quanta*. Diana was a former intern at *The Scientist* and she holds a master’s degree in neuroscience from McGill University. She’s currently based in Berlin, Germany.

Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee asks Education Minister to announce summer vacation in schools, colleges from May 2



KOLKATA: In the wake of the prevailing heat wave conditions, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday urged the state education minister to announce the onset of summer va-

cation in schools and colleges from May 2. She stated that the move would also protect children from chances of contracting COVID-19, if there was a surge in infections in Bengal, as was the case in

some other states. "I will urge education minister Bratya Basu to announce May 2 as the date for the onset of summer vacations in schools, colleges and universities. Ask the private schools to implement

this, too," Banerjee said during an administrative review meeting at the state secretariat. She said that her office has received reports of several incidents falling ill due to the scorching heat.

4G Boost in Red Zone

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved a Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) project for upgrading 2G mobile services to 4G at security sites in LWE areas. The project envisages upgrading 2,343 left Wing Extremism Phase-I sites from 2G to 4G mobile services at an estimated cost of Rs.1,884.59 crore (Excluding taxes and levies). This includes O&M for five years.

However, BSNL will maintain the sites for another five years at its own cost. The work will be awarded to BSNL because these sites belong to BSNL. The Cabinet also approved funding of operations and maintenance cost of LWE Phase-I 2G sites by BSNL for an extended period beyond the contractual period of five years at an estimated cost of Rs.541.80 crore. The extension will be up to 12 months from the date of approval by the Cabinet or com-

missioning of 4G sites, whichever is earlier. Government chose BSNL for a prestigious project to indigenous 4G telecom equipment so as to achieve self-reliance in the telecom gear segment to fulfil domestic market needs apart from exporting to other markets. This 4G equipment will be deployed in this project also. The upgradation will enable better internet and data services in these LSW areas. It meets the require-

ments of Ministry of Home Affairs and the state governments. It shall also fulfil the communication needs of the security personnel deployed in these areas. The proposal is in line with the goal of providing mobile connectivity in rural areas. In addition, delivery of various e-governance services, banking services, tele-medicine; tele-education etc. through mobile broadband shall be possible in these areas.

Now, Haryana announces Yoga break for govt employees

CHANDIGARH: Following the Centre's footsteps, the Haryana government has issued an advisory to all its departments, boards, and corporation besides field offices to promote yoga by giving Yoga Break (Y-Break) for 15 to 20 minutes daily in workplaces to refresh and de-stress employees.

A letter written by Additional Secretary (Health),



Haryana to all the administrative secretaries, heads of department, divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, managing directors, and chief administrators of boards and corporations and registration of universities, says: "I have been directed to communicate with all the departments, boards and corporations to include the concept of Yoga Break (Y-Break) in working hours of government offices. The Y-Break Protocol is a Yoga protocol consisting of very few useful yoga practises devised to de-stress, re-fresh, and re-focus on work to increase the productivity of individuals at the workplace. The concept of Y-Break is relevant to working professionals all over the world. It has been carefully developed by eminent experts and is a well-tested protocol." The letter further reads, "The module was launched in January 2020 on a pilot project basis in six major metro cities in coordination with different stake-holders. A total of fifteen day trial was conducted by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga in collaboration with six leading yoga institutes in the country wherein total 717 participants from different private and government bodies participated

and the trial was a huge success. Y-Break was formally launched on September 1, 2021, in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi in presence of five central ministers as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav."

"Feedback on the protocol is very encouraging. With a view popularise it from a health angle, the mobile based version for easy access has been developed. Ministry of Ayush wishes to popularise it among health workers, officers, staff all over the country and draw their attention to its utility from health and productivity angles. This intervention can lead to a widespread store. The Department of Personnel and Training of the Government of India has issued directions to all central government ministries and departments to popularise Y Break among their workforce. The ministry has written to state governments to implement Y-Break app in their offices. As per the directions of the ministry and Haryana government all departments, boards and corporations are directed to issue directions for implementation of Yoga Break practice in their offices through the Y-Break app devised to de-stress, refresh and boost healthy living to increase the productivity of individuals," states the letter.

Confirming this development, Saket Kumar, Director-General, Ayush Haryana said that an advisory has been issued to all the departments in this regard and at a few places, this project has already started.

An officer on condition of anonymity said that only those yoga exercises have been included in this break which can be completed in 15 to 20 minutes. A few are those exercises that can be done while sitting on a chair and a few in a standing position. Feedback has come that many employees are under stress thus they are prone to blood pressure and diabetes thus the government has issued the advisory that from the head of the department till the junior most employee will do yoga for some time daily.

Youth, women want me to join politics: Gujarat Patidar leader Naresh Patel

AHMEDABAD: Influential Patidar leader Naresh Patel, who heads Shree Khodaldham Temple Trust, on Wednesday claimed that though the older generation is against him joining politics, youth and women want him to take the route.

Patel's comments have come days after Ramesh Tilala, a senior trustee, had opined that he should not join politics and continue with social work through Shree Khodaldham Temple Trust in Kavad village of Gujarat's Rajkot district.

"It is a fact that elderly people don't want me to join politics. Rameshbhai must be talking about their views. However, the younger generation and women strongly feel that I should take up

politics," Patel told reporters in Rajkot. Notably, a committee of Shree

asked about his plans. For some time now, there have been speculations that

Patel will remain by my side whenever I take a decision to join poli-



Khodaldham Trust (SKT) has already started a survey to find out what the community had to say about Patel's entry into politics.

Tilala had said that Patel will take a final decision based on the outcome of that survey.

"I will make an announcement soon about joining politics," said Patel when

Patel will join the Congress ahead of the Gujarat Assembly elections.

He even met poll strategist Prashant Kishor in New Delhi last Saturday.

Now, when Kishor himself has declined to join the Congress, there is still uncertainty about Patel's entry in the party.

"Prashant Kishor is my friend. I am con-

tics," Patel said.

The SKT headed by Patel manages the affairs of Shree Khodaldham temple dedicated to goddess Khodiyar, the patron deity of the Leuva Patel community, in Rajkot district.

The Patidars form about 11-12 per cent of the population in Gujarat and are an influential caste group whose votes can sway results in many constituencies.

Lakhimpur violence case: HC judge recuses himself from hearing Ashish Mishra's bail plea afresh

LUCKNOW: Justice Rajeev Singh of the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court on Wednesday recused himself from hearing the bail plea of Ashish Mishra, key accused in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case. The matter would next be listed after the nomination of a new judge for hearing the plea.

Ashish Mishra, son of MoS Ajai Mishra Teni, is facing a case of murder which he is accused of committing during a farmers' protest that had turned

violent in Lakhimpur Kheri on October 3, 2021. In the incident, Mishra had allegedly ploughed his SUV into the crowd of protesting farmers crushing four of them to death on the spot.

The High Court bench, comprising Justice Rajeev Singh, had granted bail to Ashish Mishra on February 10, 2022. Thereafter, the HC order granting bail to Mishra was challenged in the Supreme Court of India after an SLP was filed by the relatives of the de-

ceased farmers.

On April 18, the apex court had set aside the Allahabad HC order granting bail to Mishra and asked the accused to surrender within a week. The SC had even admonished the High Court for granting the bail to Mishra taking into account irrelevant considerations and denying the right of hearing to the victim. Cancelling the bail granted to Ashish Mishra, the apex court sent back his bail application to the High Court for a fresh decision on merits after

affording the right of hearing to the victim. Following the order of the apex court, Mishra surrendered on April 24 and was sent to jail. Accordingly, the bail petition was listed before the Lucknow Bench of the High Court on Wednesday. As it came up before Justice Rajeev Singh, who had earlier allowed Ashish's plea, he recused himself from hearing and directed the office to lay the file before the Chief Justice for a fresh nomination of judge.

Government shuts schools, anganwadis till April 30 in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR : With Odisha reeling under scorching heat, the State government on Monday suspended classes in all government, aided, private schools and anganwadis for five days from April 26 to 30. The announcement was made by the School and Mass Education (SME) department immediately after IMD's heatwave alert in parts of the State till April 29. However, with Plus II final year and Class X board exams commencing on April 28 and April 29 respectively, the department clarified that the exams will be held as per the schedule fixed by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha and Council of Higher Secondary Education. Meanwhile, a section of parents and students also demanded that the summer vacation planned for 10 days from June 6 to 16 be preponed to May for the safety of students and school staff. They also urged the State government to ensure all arrangements including provision of fan and drinking water in schools and examination centres in view of the prevailing heatwave. Meanwhile, the State Capital continued to reel under an unprecedented heat wave which threw life out of gear.

People stayed indoors as the city touched 32.2 degree at 8.30 am and 39.4 degree before noon. Business establishments said the customer flow has dropped during the daytime, especially after 1 pm. Auto-rickshaw drivers struggled as passenger footfall reduced significantly due to the sweltering heat conditions. "Passengers are avoiding travel from 10 am till the evening.

However, we have opened 15 water kiosks in the Capital for their convenience. Water is being supplied by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation," said Bhubaneswar Auto-rickshaw Mahasangha general secretary, Padman Kumar Samal. Heat wave also hit normal life across the State as 27 places recorded 40 degree Celsius and above. While Balangir was hottest at 44 degree, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 40.8 degree Celsius and 40.2 degree respectively during the period. Experts pointed out that rapid urbanisation and felling of trees are some of the major factors behind the rise in mercury levels in the recent years. As heat wave conditions are expected to continue in some parts till Friday, All Odisha Contractors' Association said the government should order a restriction on construction activities keeping in mind the health and safety of workers. Meanwhile, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning for a few parts in Odisha for next four days. Heat wave conditions are likely to prevail in Sonepur, Boudh, Angul and Balangir districts on Tuesday. "Maximum temperature is likely to increase further by 2 degree to 3 degree Celsius in interior districts within two days under influence of dry and warm north-westerly and westerly winds blowing towards Odisha," said Scientist of Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre Umasankar Das. The maximum temperature is expected to remain above normal by 3 to 5 degree in the State during the next four to five days, he added.

Jankia Police Arrested Two Accused For Illegally Manufacturing Country Made Gun

Khordha(KCN): Two accused person who are illegally manufacture country made guns were arrested by Jankia police. As per the direction of SP, Khordha under the supervision of SDPO, Khordha, IIC, Jankia, PS, and his team including SI, Benudhar Ray, SI, Bhagyashree Behera, ASI, Sarat Kumar Paikaraya and other staffs of Jankia PS, conducted raid and apprehended the accused persons namely Dillip Kumar Das and Trilochan Behera and seized three nos of country made gun, fire arm, six number of live ammunition and other fire arm manufacturing tools and articles from their possession. On the written report of SI, Benudhar Ray, Jankia PS, case

no-153/22,U/S-294 /506/353/34 IPC /25(1)(a)25(1-B)(a)/27 Arms Act/4/5 E.S Act. and the investigation of the case is in progress. In a press meet at Sadar PS, Khordha, SP, Alekh Chandra Pahi said that the two accused persons are hard core and veterans criminal and involved in series of crimes. 26 numbers of case registered against Trilochan Behera and 13 number of case registered against the accused Dillip Kumar Das in different police station of Odisha. In the press meet SDPO, Khordha, Sushil Kumar Mishra, IIC, Khordha, Sadar PS, Anita Sahoo, IIC, Jankia Digbijaya Biswal were present.

India Data Portal Workshop on 'Using Open Data for Creating & Presenting News Stories'

Kolkata(KCN): India Data Portal (IDP) from the Bharti Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) at the Indian School of Business (ISB) held a Workshop on 'Using Open Data for Creating & Presenting News Stories' in Kolkata. The IDP is one-stop for over 60 datasets ranging from Food and Agriculture, Union Budget, Election, Rural Develop-

conducted by the IDP in collaboration with the GPC, where in media persons from Print, Digital and TV participated. The workshop focussed on using data in journalism, and how to present data through attractive visualisations using www.indiadataportal.com. The sessions covered familiarisation with the IDP, which hosts a wide range of pro-

It aims to be the digital data diary for journalists, one-point access for all kinds of data sourced from different govt ministries. It shall turn out to be a very useful resource for the media fraternity. The use of IDP helps journalists, researchers, public policymakers and academicians to access, interact with, and visualise data re-

Money Market, health and much more. Dr Ashwini Chhatre, Executive Director, BIPP, ISB: The portal provides easy access to complex data, dynamic Search Bar, Instant data-visualisations with a single click of a button, flexibility to select indicators for individual content requirement, datasets and indicators on the



ment, Socio-Economic, financial inclusion, NSSO, and Govt Schemes to name some. There are over 30 High-Frequency datasets that talk of the economic indicators like Inflation, Market, Company registration, MNREGA, Covid related, and employment to name a few. These datasets are sourced from the Government, cleaned, and neatly categorized to make data use easy for all. This is a free portal and people have the option to get visualisations or download the clean data and use it according to their requirements. A highly skilled team on the back end is working to add new datasets and update the present ones on the portal. The aim is to popularise the use of data to support news stories and promote fact-based news, policy-making and research. The workshop 'Using Open Data for Creating and Presenting News Stories' was

cessed and documented datasets from Central and state public agencies and government departments. It also covered high-frequency indicators launched during COVID19 to track the health of the Indian economy under the IndiaPulse@ISB initiative. The IDP is an initiative to enhance transparency in governance, and citizens' right to access and use public data related to significant aspects of policy making. The visualisation from Mission Antyodaya Dataset shows the availability of electricity supply for more than >12 hours in the rural sector across different districts in West Bengal. Availability of electricity for domestic use >12 hrs. <https://tinyurl.com/y2yvr37n>. Data has become very crucial in today's world, especially for journalists to write and provide fact-based information to their readers. India Data Portal is an effort in this direction.

lated to agriculture, financial inclusion and rural development, in six Indian languages - Hindi, Bengali, English, Marathi, Odia and Telugu. We plan to expand to other vernacular languages in the time to come. Dr Ashwini Chhatre, Executive Director, BIPP, ISB: The ideation behind building "India Data Portal" came from creating a one-stop open-access portal for journalists and simultaneously aiding the researchers, students, policymakers with the access, interaction, visualisation of the complex data related to agriculture and financial inclusion Food and Agriculture, Economy, Union Budget, Socio-Economic, Rural Development and General domain. The high frequency indicators track the economic recovery process in post-Covid-19 situation through high-frequency indicators in eight sectors - Industrial activity, GDP, CPI, Google Mobility, employment,

portal communicate with each other. By using mathematical operations, users can create their own indicators that can be visualized. Comparing Variables across Datasets is the unique character of India Data Portal which is tough to find anywhere else. India Data Portal provides this unique functionality of comparing variables across different datasets. Bharti Institute of Public Policy aims to lead education and research in the domain of public policy. The institute stands tall as one of India's eminent public-policy think tanks' engaging with eminent policy makers and providing them with critical, data driven evidence, research and analysis of relevant and critical concerns. The institute works on policy challenges across diverse domains, primarily Agriculture & Food, Environment, Education, Finance, Governance and Digital Identity.

Five bedded Kidney dialysis centre inaugurated at Barbil CHC

Barbil(KCN): To help all section of



places where this facilities are total infrastructure incurred approximate cost of Rs two crore out of which fifty one lakh spent towards construction of dialysis building. Thehaemodialysis will be carried out in all working days except Sunday as per information. Minakshi Mahanta MLA Champua inaugurated the centre in presence of Barbil Municipal Chairman Lakshman Mahanta, vice chairman Saraswoti Naik, District collector Asish Thakrey, CDMO, Keonjhar, Sub collector Champua Pratappritimay, executive officer, Barbil Municipality Abhisekh Panda, Barbil CHC medical officer Soubhagya Rasmi Samal and all other doctors, hospital staffs and people of Barbil.

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Public library dedicated for public use at Barbil

Barbil(KCN): A public library is dedicated for the people of Barbil today at Vikas Mahal campus. Though the library building was completed since two years back. But due to Covid pandemic the



library could not be inaugurated. Though this was informally inaugurated by the honourable Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Along with inauguration of dialysis centre the library is inaugurated by Minakshi Mahanta MLA Champua in presence of Barbil Municipal Chairman Lakshman Mahanta, vice chairman Saraswoti Naik, District collector Asish Thakrey, CDMO, Keonjhar, Sub collector Champua Pratappritimay, executive officer, Barbil Municipality Abhisekh Panda. The building is constructed at a cost of Rs 60 lakhs approx out of which Barbil Municipality 13lakhs and 47lakhs from DMF, Keonjhar. Collector Thakrey in an opinion to provide more useful books for the benefit people and student as well.



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India to take a considered view on cryptocurrencies: Sitharaman

WASHINGTON: Flagging concerns over likely misuse of crypto, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said India will take a considerate decision on

also be manipulated for money laundering or terror financing, the minister noted. So, these are some of the concerns, not just India, but many countries of the world

the launch of India's maiden digital currency as it would have various implications for the economy and monetary policy. The essential learning does not come from

or third quarter of FY24, subject to regulatory approvals. The transaction involves the amalgamation of HDFC and its two wholly-owned subsidiaries HDFC



regulation around the virtual currency. The decision on crypto will not be rushed through, she said in an interaction at Stanford University. "It will have to take its time... all of us to be sure that at least with the given available information, we're taking the discern decision. It can't be rushed through," she said. The minister clarified that the government is open to promote innovation and well-grounded progress made in the distributed ledger technologies, which are coming in the blockchain. "So, our intention is in no way to hurt this (innovation around crypto)... but (we need to) define for ourselves...." she said. Cryptocurrencies can

have and are also discussed in global, multilateral platforms, she added. India is planning to introduce central bank-backed digital currency or Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). Sitharaman, in her Budget speech on February 1, had announced that the digital rupee or CBDC would be issued by the RBI in the coming fiscal year. She had also announced that the government will levy a 30 per cent tax on gains made from any other private digital assets from April 1. Speaking about CBDC, Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar earlier this month said a nuanced and calibrated approach is essential for

global experience but basically comes from your own experience, he had said. On the merger of HDFC and HDFC Bank, Sitharaman said, it is a good step because India needs a lot more big banks to take care of growing needs for infra financing. Earlier this month, India's largest private lender HDFC Bank agreed to take over the biggest domestic mortgage lender in a deal valued at about USD 40 billion, creating a financial services titan in the largest deal in the country's corporate history. The proposed entity will have a combined asset base of around Rs 18 lakh crore. The merger is expected to be completed by the second

Holdings and HDFC Investments with HDFC Bank. HDFC, as the promoter of HDFC Bank, holds 21 per cent in the lender along with the two subsidiaries, which on the merger will be more than double the size of private sector peer ICICI Bank. With regard to the digital divide, Sitharaman said some steps have been taken to bridge it. Asked about the under-reporting of COVID death numbers, she said the data that the central government reported was compiled from states. The revision was due to changes made by the state governments, she said, adding some death that took place at home was updated later by states.

Labour Ministry to hold 'discussion' with Infy, IT union over non-compete clause

NEW DELHI: Responding to the IT employees union

complaint with the labour ministry against Infosys seeks



NITES' complaint against the non-compete clause added by Infosys in its offer letters, the Ministry of Labour and Employment on 22nd April issued a notice addressing the Infosys HR Head and the president of the Pune-based union to hold a joint discussion before the Chief Labour Commissioner on Thursday. The notice, seen by The New Indian Express, said, "It has been decided to hold a joint discussion on the issue before the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India at 3 pm on 28.04.2022."

ing the removal of the non-compete clause from the offer letter, which bans employees from working for the same customer in rival firms such as TCS, Accenture, IBM, Cognizant, and Wipro for six months after the termination of their employment. ALSO READ | High attrition rate: Freshers may see salary hike The union claimed to have received complaints from employees of the company. The company's contract states that for six months following the termination of employment, the employee won't accept a job offer from any customer with whom they had worked in a professional capacity. They are also barred from accepting any

offer from any named competitor of Infosys if it would involve them having to work with a customer with whom they had worked in the 12 months preceding the

termination of employment. The 'Named Competitor', according to the company contract, includes TCS, Accenture, IBM, Cognizant and Wipro

China, Russia, India in US property rights blacklist

Continued from page-1 made last year's blacklist -- while it attempts to fight off an invasion from Russia. The trade office also removed Saudi Arabia from its priority watch list, citing its crackdown on counterfeit and pirated goods, the creation of special intellectual property enforcement courts and other steps. To prepare the list, which was released Wednesday, the trade office reviewed the performance of more than 100 U.S. trading partners.

U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said that the report identifies countries "that are falling short" and promised that the Biden administration "will continue to engage with these trading partners to level the playing field for our workers and businesses."

Russia, it said, continues to lack "sufficient staffing, expertise, and the political will to effectively combat (intellectual property) violations and criminal enterprises."

In addition to the seven countries on the priority list, another 20 made the trade office's "watch list," meaning that the U.S. believes those countries need to step up property rights enforcement

Mamata hits out at Modi after virtual meeting, says interaction was 'one-sided and misleading'

Continued from page-1 better had the PM not spoken on fuel price hike in a Covid-19 meeting. It was his agenda. Today's interaction with the PM was completely one-sided and misleading. The facts shared by him are wrong. We have been providing a subsidy of Rs 1 on every litre of petrol and diesel for the last three years. We have spent Rs 1,500 crore on this," she said.

Mamata also said there was no scope for the chief ministers to speak in the meeting and that was why no one could counter the PM's statement.

Modi flagged higher fuel prices in opposition-ruled states like Maharashtra, West Bengal and Kerala.

"The Centre is not paying the state's dues. They don't give money and give dialogues," Mamata said.

At a time when a series of alleged rapes took place in Bengal in the recent past, Mamata claimed Bengal's law and order is good. "In Bengal, our law and order situation is good. But a different picture is being portrayed by a section of media. In my state, we lodge complaints. In MP, Gujarat, UP, they don't allow to lodge complaints," she said.

Referring to incidents in BJP-ruled states, the Bengal CM hit out saying, "When you talk about Bengal, look at UP where journalists were made naked. You sent fact-finding team to Bengal and we did the same. In Bengal, if your people come, we welcome them on red carpet. But our team was not allowed in BJP-ruled states. You have weakened the democracy and federal structure."

Tech Edu Institutes Shut Down

Continued from page-1 vernment has already closed down all anganwadi centres, schools, colleges and universities for a temporary period due to rise in day temperature.

According to Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre, heatwave conditions prevailed at isolated places over the districts of North Interior Odisha. Maximum temperature was above normal by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius at many places over districts of interior Odisha.

It was above normal by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius at a few places over the districts of coastal Odisha. Highest maximum temperature of 44.5 degrees Celsius was recorded at Boudh, among all representative stations of Odisha, the Met centre said.

The Met office advised people to take precautionary measures while going outside during day time between 11 AM to 3 PM.

Street cheers planned LIC IPO offer

MUMBAI: Street cheered the more realistic pricing of the imminent LIC IPO

Pru Life and MFSL. This is expected to be attractive for in-

inflation and the war in Europe. The Indian market at 17200.8 is down

band works out to Rs 6 lakh crore, while the embedded value is Rs 5.4 lakh crore. The government is offering to sell 22.13 crore shares or 3.5% of the outstanding shares, less than the earlier 31.62 crore shares or 5% of the equity at over Rs 2000 a piece, valuing the company then at Rs 13.5 -14 lakh crore and with a price to embedded value of 2.5 times. "The valuation is sensible and more realistic than in the past, and I think it will be a decent draw for investors

on that count," said independent market analyst Ambareesh Baliga. At the proposed current valuation, LIC will list at a discount to peers like SBI Life which enjoys a price to embedded value of 2.1 times on a one year forward basis (FY24), HDFC Life (2.6x) and ICICI Pru Life (1.2x). "No doubt the more reasonable valuation will be a draw, but over time investors would also be attracted to the counter by growth," said Siddharth Bhamre, research head at Religare

Broking. "Peers like SBI Life and HDFC Life are seeing market share rise while LIC has seen some erosion in share to around 63% from 66% over the past three years. Markets will look not just at value over time but growth." Offer for sale Issue size: 22.13 cr shares Issue opens: May 4 Price band: 902-949 Bid Lot size: 15 shares Discount for policy holders: 160 apiece Discount for retail and employees: 145



at Rs 902-949 a share, which pegs the price to embedded value — present value of future profits — at 1.1 times, cheaper than peers like SBI Life, HDFC Life, ICICI

investors, especially in the current market conditions marked by volatility due to rising interest rates across most developed and emerging markets amid skyrocketing

7.5% from its record high last October with FIIs having sold around Rs 1.4 lakh crore of Indian shares in FY22. The valuation of LIC at the upper

Kohli will emerge from this run of low scores: Bangar

PUNE: RCB head coach Sanjay Bangar reiterated that star batter Virat Kohli will

before. I've observed him from close quarters. He has the spirit and he'll emerge from

situations and his attitude is commendable. Yes, he's had a low run of scores but

of lose them in clusters and that's what is pulling the team back, and [we are]



soon "emerge" out of the lean phase he is experiencing at the moment and help his team win games going forward in the IPL.

Kohli's scores in his last five innings read 9, 0, 0, 12, and 1. The manner of his dismissals also shows that he is not in the best of form.

"Regarding Kohli's form, he's a great cricketer. He's experienced these highs and lows many times

this run of low scores. In the coming crucial games, he'll help us win," Bangar said at the post-match press conference after RCB's 29-run loss to Rajasthan Royals.

"We aren't talking about anything different (in practice), to be honest. The way he prepares, he always puts himself out of his comfort zone and prepares and that's his specialty."

"This is why he can emerge from tough

he is so mentally strong, he'll be able to put in better performance," he added.

Bangar has also worked closely with Kohli on the national team when he was the batting coach. The former India international also acknowledged the top-order's form is a concern.

"We've all seen that negotiating the new ball is a challenge for most of the teams. Whenever we lose early wickets, we sort

rightly [losing] games that we should have won. That's why we are not able to finish the job."

RCB captain Faf du Plessis also backed Kohli, who hasn't scored a hundred in any format for more than three years now, to make a strong comeback. RCB has won five games and lost four so far in the season. They currently occupy the fifth spot on the points table.

CSK misses opening gear, seeks batting spark



CHENNAI : When Chennai Super Kings won the 2021 Indian Premier League, at the centre of it all were two individuals — Faf du Plessis and Ruturaj Gaikwad — who scored a combined tally of 1,268 runs at the top of the batting order. While the franchise retained the latter as he is one of the promising young batters in the country, they could not get hold of Du Plessis in the auction, who was picked up by Royal Challengers Bangalore. That said, whether it would have made a difference, one can't say, as both of them have had just one good game for their respec-

tive franchises. However, CSK is the club that's got affected the most as Gaikwad has returned with just 138 runs while averaging 17.25 in eight games so far. And it shows in the results as they have lost six of those games and are almost on the verge of an early exit. A repeat of 2020.

The Maharashtra batsman has had just one good outing (73) where he has scored more than half of his total tally. Without his contribution, CSK, which had already lost their strike bowler in Deepak Chahar to injury, has struggled massively. The fact that Gaikwad hasn't

had any support from the other end hasn't helped either.

While it seemed like they were getting back on track after the win against Mumbai, all was not well against Punjab on Monday. Although Gaikwad made a 27-ball 30, wickets kept falling at the other end. Ambati Rayudu played a blinder and almost got them over the line, in the end, the cracks in the batting line-up just showed. "I think not getting a good start in the first six, we're not putting runs on the board. So we need to improve on that and come back strong," skipper Jadeja said after the latest set-

back.

When Chennai were in a similar position in 2020, former captain MS Dhoni said that they didn't see the spark in the youngsters to push them up and give them chances, referring to Gaikwad and N Jagadeesan, who's currently warming the bench. Ironically, it was Gaikwad who turned things around the next year — to the extent where they retained him — and helped them win their fourth title. Mathematically, CSK isn't totally out yet. They still have a chance to steer the ship. But a lot relies on whether Gaikwad can find that spark again.

Gujarat's Malayali leadership

KOCHI: For many emerging state teams, the Santosh Trophy is a formative platform where the members begin to create a future in football. While the Kerala and West Bengal teams are the traditional powerhouses in the national championship, many other teams treat it as an opportunity to experience competitive football. For instance, this year, Gujarat was on its way to the final round of the Santosh Trophy after a long gap of 37 years.

Interestingly, the captain of the Gujarat team was Ernakulam-native b. Sagar, who is a central defender by trade, was one of the senior professionals handpicked by the team management to lead a largely young side. The 29-year-old was a rock

at the back as they made their passage into the final round to be held in Malappuram.

While a semifinal

youngsters and I was called up to lead them. I took up the challenge because it was something new for me.



spot was too big a task for a largely inexperienced squad, Sagar put his experience to good use as Gujarat took on mighty teams like Karnataka, Manipur and Services who were in Group B.

"It was a big responsibility to lead the side. The team comprises mostly

As I hail from a football-crazy state like Kerala, it was a way for me to give back to the sport," said Sagar.

Sagar has been involved with many clubs in the past, like Air India Football Club, Delhi United etc. He even played in the Bhutan Super

League with Druk Stars FC before a stint at Ahmedabad-based I-League 2nd Division side Ara FC. It was during his time with Ara FC that he was spotted by Gujarat and received an invitation to play for the team, and subsequently captain them.

"I had received some calls from I-League sides before, but playing in the Santosh Trophy was an experience I always wanted. I had received a few calls to work in Kerala football in the past but could not participate as I was tied to another club at the time. I didn't want to pass up the opportunity this time. Leading Gujarat felt like a unique challenge. To play a Santosh Trophy championship and that too in Malappuram is an experience I will cherish forever," he concluded.



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