

Monday
06.12.2021
hindustantimes.com.htpace
htschooltimes

NEW DELHI
■ VOL. XXVII NO. 289 ■ PRICE
₹2.50 ■ 8 PAGES.



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

WISE WORDS >>

A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people.



Hindustan Times

FIRST VOICE. LAST WORD.



homes, vehicles submerged in ash

INDONESIA'S SEMERU VOLCANIC ERUPTION KILLS 14

>P4



season ender

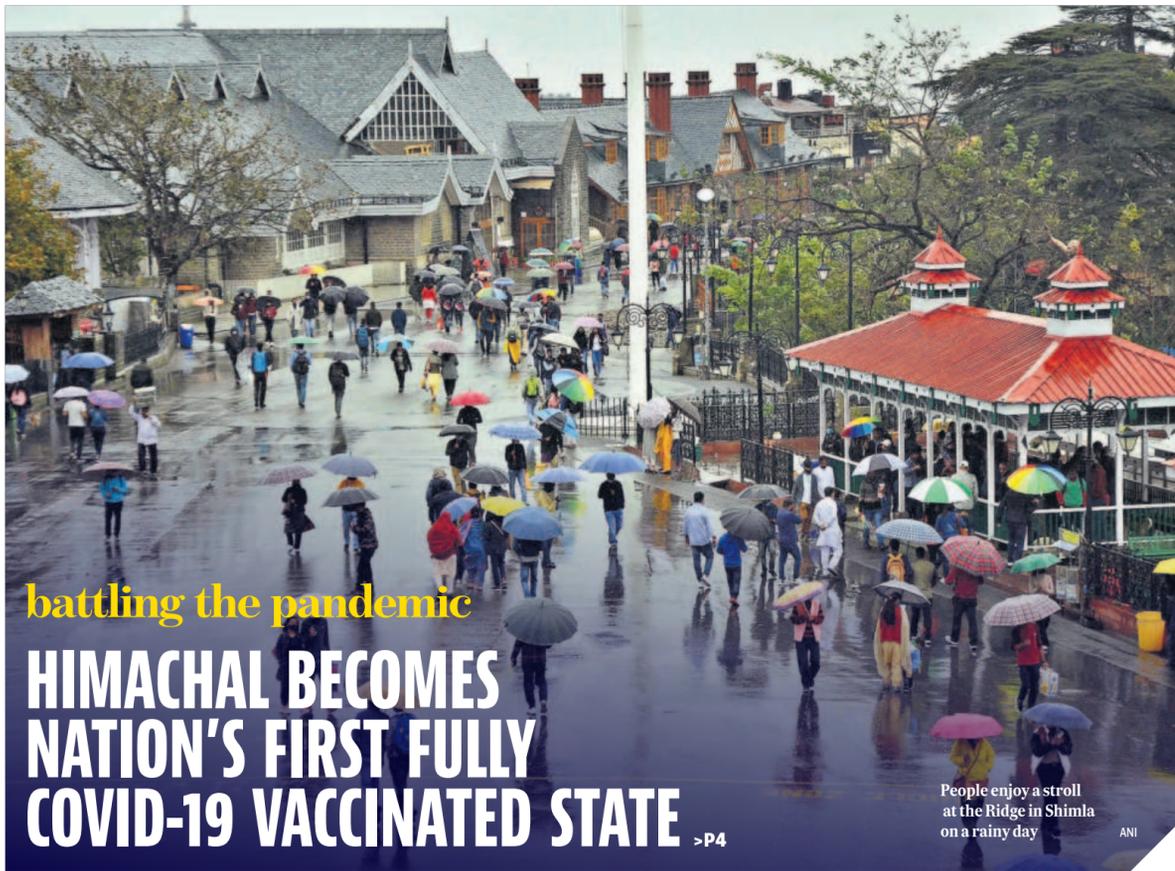
SINDHU LOSES BWF WORLD TOUR FINAL

>P8

mirror on past

LOOKING BACK AT THIS WEEK THAT YEAR

It's time once again to check out the major events that made news during the second week of December in the years gone by. >P3



battling the pandemic

HIMACHAL BECOMES NATION'S FIRST FULLY COVID-19 VACCINATED STATE

>P4

People enjoy a stroll at the Ridge in Shimla on a rainy day

ANI

india-nz 2nd test

ASHWIN TURNS IT ON, STEERS INDIA CLOSER TO WIN

>P8



Ravichandran Ashwin

AFP

NATION

Tanzania returnee is Delhi's 1st Omicron case, surveillance up; nationwide tally rises to 17

NEW DELHI: A 37-year-old man who arrived in Delhi from Tanzania has tested positive for the Omicron, making it the first case of the new Covid-19 variant in the national capital.

Meanwhile, the nationwide tally of those who tested positive for Omicron jumped to at least 17 at the time of going to press. These included nine cases in Rajasthan and seven in Maharashtra.

The patient who tested positive for Omicron in Delhi, currently admitted to the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital, has mild symptoms, hospital officials said. "So far, 17 Covid-19 patients and six of their contacts have been admitted to the Lok Nayak Hospital. The Omicron variant has been found in one of the 12 samples sent for genome sequencing so far, according to a preliminary report," Delhi's Health Minister Satyendar Jain said. "The patient is an Indian and had returned from Tanzania. He was admitted to the hospital on December 2 with mild symptoms - sore throat, fever and body ache," medical director Suresh Kumar said.



Delhi's first patient who has tested positive for Omicron has been admitted to the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital in Delhi on Sunday

The Delhi health minister said banning international flights is the most effective way to contain the spread of the Omicron variant. "It is being reported that the gestational period in case of Omicron could be more than other variants. This means an infected person may go undetected at the airport... All the cases have come from affected foreign countries," he said.

Jain said that there is a 99% chance that the mask can "save people from all Covid-19 variants, be it Alpha, Beta, Delta or Omicron".

Half of India's adult population fully vaxxed against Covid

NEW DELHI: Over 50% of India's eligible adult population is now fully vaccinated against Covid-19, Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Sunday as the cumulative vaccine doses administered in the country exceeded 127.61 crore.

According to Union health ministry officials, over 84.8% of the adult population in India has been administered the first dose.

"Congratulations India. It is a moment of great pride as over 50% of the eligible population is now fully vaccinated. We will win the battle against Covid-19 together," Mandaviya said in a tweet.

With the administration of 1,04,18,707 vaccine doses in a span of 24 hours, the total Covid-19 vaccine doses given in the country has exceeded 127.61 crore. India saw a single-day rise of 2,796 fatalities with Bihar carrying out a reconciliation exercise of its Covid data, pushing the country's death toll to 4,73,326, while 8,895 new infections were reported, according to the ministry data.

Cyclone Jawad: Heavy rains lash parts of Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: Heavy rains lashed parts of Odisha on Sunday as remnants of cyclone Jawad, which has weakened into a deep depression, neared the coast, officials said.

The system moved north-northeastwards at 20 kmph in the last six hours and is over west-central Bay of Bengal, 90 km from Gopalpur, 120 km from Puri and 210 km from Paradip, the weather office said in its 11.30 am bulletin.

It is likely to move north-northeastwards, weaken further into depression and reach the Odisha coast near Puri around afternoon, it said.

It is likely to continue to move north-northeastwards along Odisha coast towards West Bengal coast and weaken into a well-marked low-pressure area around midnight, it added.

Rainfall was reported from most districts of the state, the weather office said.

Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur received heavy to very heavy rainfall. Rainfall will continue till Sunday evening.

CITY LIGHTS

Delhi's air quality in very poor category

NEW DELHI: The air quality index in the national capital on Sunday stood in the very poor category, according to the real-time data of the Central Pollution Control Board. Delhi recorded an AQI of 305. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered good, 51 and 100 satisfactory, 101 and 200 moderate, 201 and 300 poor, 301 and 400 very poor, and 401 and 500 severe. Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 11.4°C, two notches above the season's normal on Sunday, according to the India Meteorological Department. The relative humidity recorded at 8.30 am was 95% while the maximum temperature is likely to be around 25°C, they said. The weather office has predicted partly cloudy sky and very light rain towards Sunday evening or night.



Smog and haze near the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi on Sunday

DMRC plans to install more anti-smog guns

NEW DELHI: With the national capital battling high pollution levels, the Delhi Metro has planned to install more anti-smog guns at its project sites, officials said on Sunday.

As part of the various measures adopted to combat pollution at its construction sites, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has already pressed into service 14 anti-smog guns which throw fine mist at regular intervals to check dust pollution emanating from construction work. These anti-smog guns (ASGs) were installed over a period of time in the past.

Construction activities have been halted at the moment in the national capital as per instruction of authorities in view of the increasing level of pollution in Delhi and neighbouring cities.

Not in favour of cut-off based admission: DU VC

NEW DELHI: The current cut-off based admission system puts students from the boards where the marking is "strict" at a disadvantage, Delhi University Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh said here and expressed the hope that this would change in a year. Singh said he has constituted a committee to look into the admission data and the recommendations of the panel will be deliberated upon in the coming Academic Council meeting on Dec 10. "We have many options for admission - to continue with the existing system, the second could be normalisation of marks of various boards, third could be an entrance test and the fourth can be giving 50% weightage to entrance test and 50% to (board) marks. Let the academic council and executive council take a call," he said.

SCHOOL EVENT

MSS, RAJENDRA NAGAR, ORGANISES IDS ACTIVITIES

As part of International Dimension in Schools (IDS) Activity No. 4, Manav Sthali School (MSS), New Rajendra Nagar, organised a variety of activities for the students of classes 6 to 8 on a virtual platform. IDS is a programme that recognises and celebrates exemplary practices of internationalism in schools. Aiming to make the students global citizens, the IDS is embedded in the schools' curriculum to foster respect and tolerance for culture, traditions and cuisines of different countries. More on p2



WORD POWER

Conjecture

Kuhn-jek-cher (Noun/verb)

Meaning: An opinion or conclusion formed on the basis of incomplete information.

Origin: Late Middle English from Old French, or from Latin conjectura, from conicere 'put together in thought', from con- 'together' + jacere 'throw'.

Synonyms: guesswork, hunch, hypothesis, inference, supposition, conclusion, fancy, guess

Antonyms: proof, reality, truth, certainty, fact

Usage: I am only making a conjecture based on website flight information.

WORLD

Omicron variant spreads in US, Europe and Australia

WASHINGTON: New York announced three more cases of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus on Saturday, bringing the number of state cases linked to the new variant to eight. Ten people aboard a Norwegian Cruise Line ship approaching New Orleans have tested positive for Covid-19. Five people in Sydney, Australia's largest city, have contracted the Omicron variant locally. Meanwhile, Australia's Parliament House will be closed to the public for the foreseeable future after a political staffer for Greens leader Adam Bandt tested positive for the coronavirus. France on Saturday said more than 50,000 people had tested positive in the past 24 hours, as Covid-19 cases rocketed despite millions receiving a vaccine booster shot. Britain's government tightened travel restrictions amid concerns about the spread of the Omicron, saying that all travellers arriving in England will need to take a Covid-19 test.

Biden and Putin set to talk about Ukraine in video call on Dec 7

MOSCOW: US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin will hold a video call on Tuesday, with the two leaders set to discuss the tense situation in Ukraine. "Biden will underscore US concerns with Russian military activities on the border with Ukraine and reaffirm the United States' support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said in a statement.

France's Republicans pick a woman as prez candidate

PARIS: Valerie Pécresse, the head of the Paris region and a former conservative minister, has been chosen to run in 2022 France's presidential race as The Republicans party candidate, a decision that could significantly shape April's election. She received 61% of the votes in the party's primary while contender Eric Ciotti, a hardline lawmaker, got 39%. About 140,000 registered members of The Republicans were eligible to participate.

SCHOOL REPORTS

MSS, Rajendra Nagar, organises IDS activities

As part of International Dimension in Schools (IDS) Activity No. 4, Manav Sthali School (MSS), New Rajendra Nagar, organised a variety of activities for the students of Classes 6 to 8 on a virtual platform.

IDS is a programme that recognises and celebrates exemplary practices of internationalism in schools. Aiming to make the students global citizens, the IDS is embedded in the schools' curriculum to foster respect and tolerance for culture, traditions and cuisines of different countries.

During the event, the students took part in many activities plays and enacted roles of various famous personalities from India, Egypt, Greece and France.

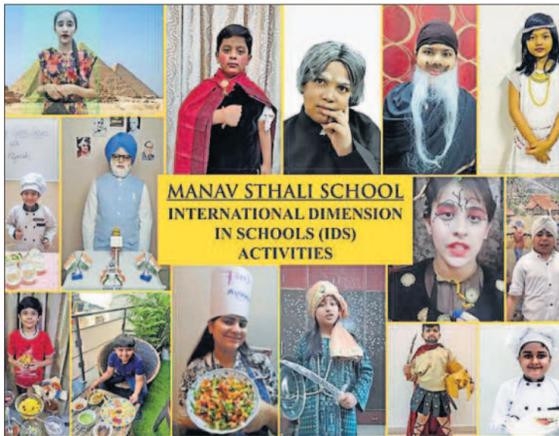
While the students of Classes 6 and 7 role-played famous freedom fighters and sports personalities of India and Egypt, those of Class 8 brought forward the famous actors and designers of France and Greece. It seemed all of those great personalities had come live on the virtual platform.

The students of International Primary Wing explored Greece in their way and found a beautiful connect in its cuisine. They portrayed themselves as Greece's different famous personalities who were experts in their respective fields and are still remembered today.

The students enthusiastically prepared the delicious Greek food items and shared the recipes with all those who were present on that occasion. With proper instructions and apt guidance, they students prepared the Greek salad and hummus-stuffed pita bread.

On the day of the activity, the little children dressed up as chefs and thoroughly enjoyed activity working without fire. As part of an integrated learning process, they also attempted the multiple-choice questions worksheet thereafter.

The students also dressed up as famous ancient kings of Greece. They



During the event, the students took part in many activities and also played the roles of various famous personalities from India, Egypt, Greece and France

THE STUDENTS OF CLASS 5 PORTRAYED THEMSELVES AS FAMOUS AUTHORS OF GREECE. THEY IMPERSONATED THEMSELVES AS PLATO, HOMER, SAPPHO, ALKI ZEI AND HERODOTUS.

portrayed themselves as Alexander the Great, Demosthenes and Leonidas, king of Sparta.

Girls dressed up as Cleopatra, one of the famous queens of Greece. They spoke their lines and every student gained knowledge about various kings who ruled Greece. It was a marvellous sight to look at the young children performed the characters of those famous people.

The students of Classes 3 and 4 enacted as Famous Mathematicians of Greece.

After conducting research work they performed their respective roles.

They depicted themselves as Archimedes, Pythagoras, Euclid, Aristotle, Hippocrates, etc. They spoke about their famous works and their contribution in the field of mathematics and science.

The students of Class 5 portrayed themselves as famous authors of Greece. They impersonated themselves as Homer, Sappho, Plato, Herodotus and Alki Zei. All the students spoke their part and got to know something new.

They also spoke about the famous works of those great people. The IDS activity was an endeavour to enable the children to develop an international and global perspective by studying and analysing various aspects from different countries to nurture global citizenship.

The parents were extremely happy and thankful as these activities brought out the hidden talents of the children, making them confident and proud.

MSS believes in imparting holistic education to its students.

Apeejay School, Pitampura, celebrates appreciation day

Apeejay School, Pitampura, celebrated its Annual Appreciation Day with amid great enthusiasm to commemorate the milestone reached by its arduous students.

The reverberating and magnificent event was presided over by Apeejay Stya and Svrn Group co-promoter Aditya Berlia. The chief guest for the event was Directorate of Education director Himanshu Gupta (IAS) while internationally renowned kathak exponents Nalini and Kamalini were the guests of honour. Also present on that occasion were a galaxy of dignitaries and distinguished members of the Apeejay Education Society.

The event commenced with the virtual lighting of the lamp, followed by the chanting of a divine mantra dedicated to Mother Earth. School principal Veena Goel welcomed the guests. She also addressed the gathering and presented the school report which gave a glimpse of major events and achievements of the institute.

The principal spoke at length about the plethora of activities that the school organised even in the times of the Covid-19 pandemic and the accolades won by the students. She applauded the incredible work done by the entire staff in teaching and learning through the digital platform.

Goel also spoke about many feats such as the institute being ranked no.1 among the top CBSE schools as per the Times School Survey.

The highlight of the cultural programme was a musical dance drama titled 'Behta Hai Pal Jeetain Hain Chal'. An affirmation of self-belief and hope, that play motivated people to move on in spite of the hurdles.

Overall, the event was an amalgamation of dances, songs and acts giving a message that there is so much to learn from everything and everyone. The school choir and orchestra enthralled all with their lively and vibrant songs. The rich display of colour, music and dance left the audience spellbound.

Gupta, in his address congratulated the school principal for the achievements of the academic year and said that the school has done exceptionally good work, which clearly shows the institute's adaptability. Nalini also appreciated the programme and encouraged the students to stay connected to their culture through art.

Addressing the gathering, Berlia applauded the school for its achievements despite all the challenges and added it was possible only because of the extreme hard work of parents, teachers, students and the staff.

The vote of thanks was proposed by vice-principal Renuka Kamal. The event culminated with the school song sung by the school choir. This year's annual function proved to be a mesmerising visual treat that enthralled every spectator connected virtually to the show.



This year's annual function proved to be a mesmerising visual treat for all

ESSENCE OF LIFE

'HARD WORK ALWAYS PAYS AND EARNS US SUCCESS, IT NEVER GOES UNREWARDED'



It is only with hard work we can achieve our objectives, get success and live graciously, writes Priyanka Verma, Class II, DAV Public School, Sector 14, Faridabad

Somebody has rightly said, "A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work." Success is the fruit of hard work. Hard work is a prerequisite for any success. The hard work is when we become sincere, devoted and resolute for the achievement of our desires.

It is only with hard work we can accomplish our objectives, get success and live graciously. The work is the essence of life. When we start working hard, we observe changes in our life. We become more disciplined and focused on our work.

Hard work always pays and never goes unrewarded. A farmer ploughs his fields, sows seeds, and irrigates his crop. After labouring hard, he gets a harvest. Without hard work, nothing grows but weeds. Man has to work hard to achieve success. Always remember -- today's pain is tomorrow's pride.

COVID SAMARITAN

'I and my family helped needy people fight deadly disease'

As the Covid-19 pandemic rapidly sweeps across the world, it is generating a considerable degree of fear, worry and concern in the population at large and among certain groups in particular, such as older people, health care providers and those who are suffering from health problems.

It has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide, destroyed job opportunities and placed millions of livelihood at risk.

People faced many challenges -- unavailability of beds in hospitals, ventilators and oxygen cylinders. In addition, people were also afraid of losing their jobs because of lockdown. During that period, my family and I helped many people in this pandemic. We helped our house helps, needy people and all the helpers in our society financially as they are the real Covid heroes. Had they not provided their services, societies would have faced a lot of problems such as outbreak of many other diseases.

My parents and I also helped people by searching for beds and free ventilators for their family members who were infected with the Covid-19. We also helped them by arranging ambulances for them.

My cousins were also infected with this deadly disease so we helped them by giving them food, medicines and all the required things. We also helped our neighbours, who were



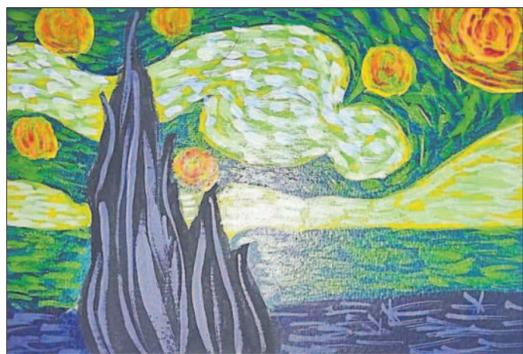
I helped my mom in the household chores when the house helps weren't there, writes Shiven Khanna, Class 9C, DPS, Sector 45, Gurugram

infected with this disease, in the same manner. Many people in our locality were feeling helpless and were pan-stricken because of the situation in their homes. We gave them emotional support. At home, I helped my mom in the household chores when the house helps weren't there.

In these tough times, everyone was advised to stay at home and take precautions. But as children, it was very difficult for us to stay at home and not meet our friends. So we used to meet virtually. In our free time, we would spend time with our family members and play board games. It is a very difficult time for us. I pray to God to end this pandemic.

ARTIST'S CORNER

The budding artists among the schoolchildren utilised their time during the Covid-19 lockdown period by expressing their thoughts on canvas in a creative manner. Here is one of those artworks...



Sumaiya Hasan, Class 8, FatherAngel School, Noida

MIND GAMES

SUDOKU

			3		5		8	9
			2			6		
		1		6				
4							9	
			8			3		
	3	9			7			5
7		8			1		6	
		3					1	
4			6	8				2

SCRAMBLE

Solve the four anagrams and move one letter to each square to form four ordinary words

AOTER
KRTOS
ERTUPT
ATUZHP

	*		*
*		*	
*		*	
*		*	

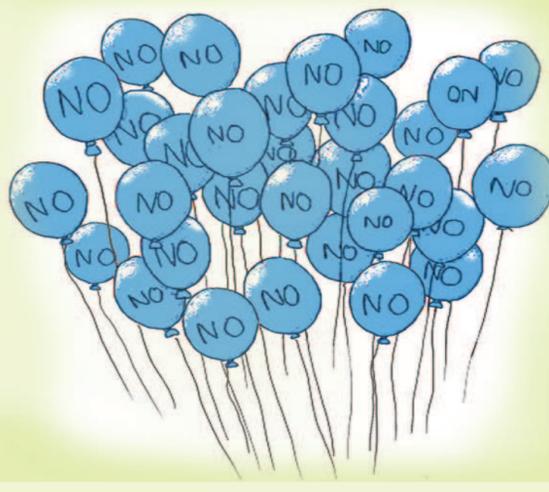
Now arrange the letters marked with an asterisk (*) to form the answer to the riddle or to fill in the missing words as indicated.

Jesters do often prove ___ - William Shakespeare (8)

Answer: Jesters do often prove prophets - William Shakespeare

ODD ONE OUT

ONE OF THE BALLOONS DOES NOT BELONG TO THIS GROUP. WHICH ONE?



Amrita Bharati Features

MATHDOKU

7+	10x		4+	10x
	5+			
1		2		
4+	1-		24x	
		15x		

Place numbers into the puzzle cells so that each row and column contains each of the digits from 1 to 5. No number is to be repeated in any row or column. Each bold-out lined cells contain a hint of a number and one of the mathematical symbols + x - /. The number is the result of the operation represented by the symbol to the digits contained.

'WONDERFUL' SHOW



A cast of giant characters from Lewis Carroll's 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' is displayed in an annual light show at Antwerp zoo in Antwerp, Belgium, on Friday

REUTERS

Solutions

4	1	5	6	8	9	7	2	3
9	6	3	7	4	2	1	5	8
7	2	8	5	3	1	9	6	4
6	3	9	4	2	7	8	1	5
1	5	2	8	9	6	3	4	7
8	4	7	1	5	3	2	9	6
3	8	1	9	6	4	5	7	2
5	9	6	4	2	7	8	6	3
2	7	6	3	1	5	4	8	9

INDOJK SOLUTIONS

2	1	3	5	4
1	5	4	2	3
5	4	1	3	2
4	3	2	1	5
3	2	5	4	1

MATHDOKU SOLUTION

SCRAMBLE Solution Words: Ote, stork, putter, hutzepa

LOOKING BACK AT THIS WEEK THAT YEAR

5 December

6 December

7 December

8 December

9 December

10 December

11 December

1995



ED Nixon and Rosa Parks, on right in the photo above, lead the Montgomery bus boycott, a political and social protest against the policy of racial segregation on the public transit system of Montgomery, Alabama.

1971 Pakistani forces are defeated as India cedes Gazipur to Bangladesh. The Battle of Gazipur was a military engagement during the Bangladesh liberation war.

2016

Jayaram Jayalithaa, politician and actress who was the six-time Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, passes away. Since 1989, she was the general secretary of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), whose cadre revered her as 'Amma' (Mother).



2017

The International Olympic Committee bans Russia from competing at the 2018 Winter Olympics for doping at the 2014 Winter Olympics.



1917

An explosion near Halifax, Nova Scotia kills more than 1,900 people after SS Mont-Blanc, a French ship laden with high explosives, collided with the Norwegian vessel SS Iwo.

1928

The government of Colombia sends military forces to suppress a month-long strike by fruit plantation workers, resulting in number of deaths. The protesters demanded dignified working conditions.

1956

BR Ambedkar, jurist, economist, and social reformer who fought economic and social discrimination, passes away. He was the chairman of the drafting committee of India's Constitution.

1982

The Irish National Liberation Army bombs a pub in Ballykelly, Northern Ireland, killing 11 British soldiers and six civilians. The conflict began when Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association tried to end discrimination against the Catholic, nationalist minority by the Protestant, unionist government and local authorities.

1992

The 16th-century Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is demolished, sparking riots in which over 1,500 people were estimated to have lost lives.



1949

December 7th is marked as the Armed Forces Flag Day to commemorate and honour India's soldiers, sailors and airmen.

1972



Apollo 17, Nasa's last moon mission in the Apollo series, is launched. The crew takes the photograph known as The Blue Marble as they leave the Earth.

1988

The Armenian earthquake, with a surface wave magnitude of 6.8, shakes the northern part of the country, killing 25,000-50,000 and injuring 31,000-130,000.

2015

The JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) probe Akatsuki successfully enters orbit around Venus five years after the first attempt.

1980

UK, USA – John Lennon, founder, vocalist and rhythm guitarist of the Beatles is shot dead in New York City by a fan, Mark David Chapman who said he was incensed by Lennon's lifestyle and public statements.



2010



With the second launch of the Falcon 9 partially reusable two-stage orbit medium-lift rocket and the first launch of the Dragon, SpaceX becomes the first private company to successfully launch, orbit and recover a spacecraft.

2013

Metallica, an American heavy metal band performs a show in Antarctica, making them the first band to perform on all seven continents.

1940

During World War II, British and Indian troops under the command of Major-General Richard O'Connor attack Italian forces near Sidi Barrani in Egypt.

1946

The Constituent Assembly meets for the first time to write the Constitution of India. The Constitution was adopted on 26 November, 1949, and became effective on January 26, 1950.

1948

The Genocide Convention is adopted. It was the first legal instrument to codify genocide as a crime and the first human rights treaty unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly.

1979

The eradication of the smallpox virus is certified, making it the first of only two diseases that have been driven to extinction (rinderpest in 2011 being the other).

1878

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, independence activist, is born. He was India's last Governor-General and the first India-born person to hold the post. He founded the Swatantra Party and was among the first Bharat Ratna recipients.

1901

The first Nobel Prize ceremony is held in Stockholm on the fifth death anniversary of Alfred Nobel, Swedish chemist, inventor and businessman who bequeathed his fortune to establish the Nobel Prize.



1996

The new Constitution of South Africa is promulgated by Nelson Mandela, anti-apartheid revolutionary and political leader who became South Africa's first president.

2013

Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wadiyar, royal, politician, and fashion designer, who was a Member of Parliament from Mysore constituency, passes away.

1901

Guglielmo Marconi transmits the first transatlantic radio signal from Poldhu, Cornwall, England to Saint John's, Newfoundland. Marconi, inventor and electrical engineer, received the 1909 Nobel Prize in Physics.



1946

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (Unicef) is established. It is a United Nations agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.

1978

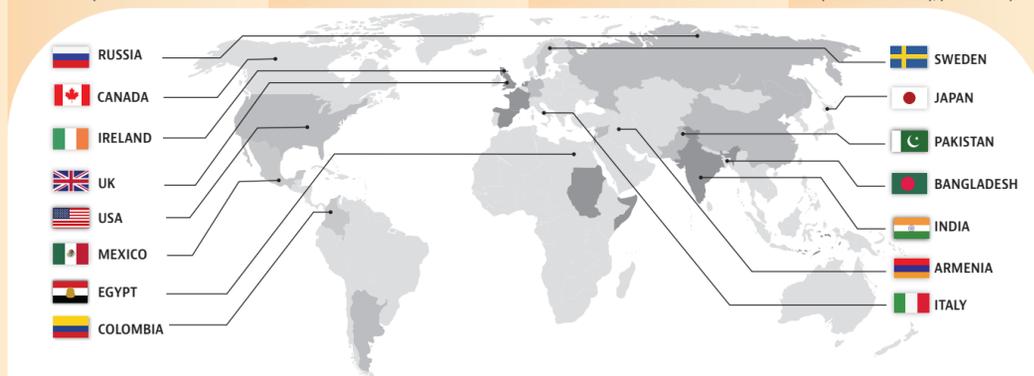
The Lufthansa heist is committed at New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport. An estimated \$5.875 million was stolen, with \$5 million in cash and \$875,000 in jewelry, making it the largest cash robbery committed in America at the time.

1997

The Kyoto Protocol opens for signature. The Kyoto Protocol was an international treaty which extended the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that commits state parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

2006

Felipe Calderon, the President of Mexico, launches a military-led offensive to put down the drug cartel violence in the state of Michoacan. This effort is often regarded as the first event in the Mexican Drug War.



Hindustan Times FIRST VOICE. LAST WORD.

THE AIR WE BREATHE CAN COST YOU MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE

As the air quality in the Capital has started deteriorating - Stay Prepared and Stay Ahead with HT's special series - Air We Breathe

Log on to www.hindustantimes.com to know more



AIR WE BREATHE



HIMALAYAN FEAT

HP becomes first state to fully vaccinate 100% of its eligible population

Press Trust of India

SHIMLA: Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in the country to achieve the target of vaccinating 100% of its eligible population with both doses of Covid-19 vaccination, Union sports and information and broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday

"Himachal Pradesh has become the first state to achieve the target of vaccinating its eligible population with both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine. I am grateful to the chief minister, the Union health minister, citizens of Himachal Pradesh, frontline workers and Covid warriors who all came forward during the times of crisis for the vaccination and did the work of making Himachal number one in vaccination," said Thakur.

Thakur was at AIIMS Bilaspur for felicitating the Covid warriors for their contribution to the vaccination programme.

"Small State, Himachal leading from the front in the fight against Covid-19. State did not let the difficulties of terrain hamper its Covid treatment strategy and vaccination drive #HimachalFullyVaccinated," said a tweet from MyGov Himachal.

Thakur pointed out that the vaccine wastage in the state had been almost zero per cent.



People take a stroll at the Ridge in Shimla, on Friday PTI

Indonesia's Semeru volcanic eruption kills 14; dozens injured

Reuters

SUMBERWULUH, INDONESIA: The eruption of Indonesia's Semeru volcano has killed at least 14 people and injured dozens, the disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) said on Sunday, as search teams looked for victims in a landscape covered in deep layers of ash.

Semeru, the tallest mountain on Java island, threw up towers of ash and hot clouds on Saturday that blanketed nearby villages in East Java province and sent people fleeing in panic.

The eruption severed a strategic bridge connecting two areas in the nearby district of Lumajang with the city of Malang and wrecked buildings, authorities said.

A BNPB official said in a news conference late on Sunday that 14 people had been killed. Fifty-six were injured and 1,300 have been evacuated.

Most injuries were burns, authori-

ties said. In the Sumberwuluh area, thick, grey ash coated damaged houses, while volunteers tried to turn away motorists who wanted to go back to their homes near Semeru, a Reuters witness said.

In a barren landscape covered in ash, homes were almost completely submerged, and a truck had only the top of the driver's cab visible. Some villagers fleeing their homes managed to bring livestock with them, but a dead cow was left lying on its side on the ground. Grey fallen trees lie on roads, the witness said.

Other obstacles include heavy rocks and hot volcanic sediment that is limiting movement, a local disaster mitigation agency official said.

Taufiq Ismail Marzuqi, a Lumajang resident and volunteer, told Reuters that rescue efforts are "very dire" because of the severed bridge and volunteers lacking experience.

In a video he recorded, police and military officials tried to excavate bodies with their bare hands.

BNPB will rebuild the wrecked homes, and heavy equipment, including excavators and bulldozers, is being deployed, its chief said.

Thoriqul Haq, a local official in Lumajang, said earlier that sand miners had been trapped around their work sites.

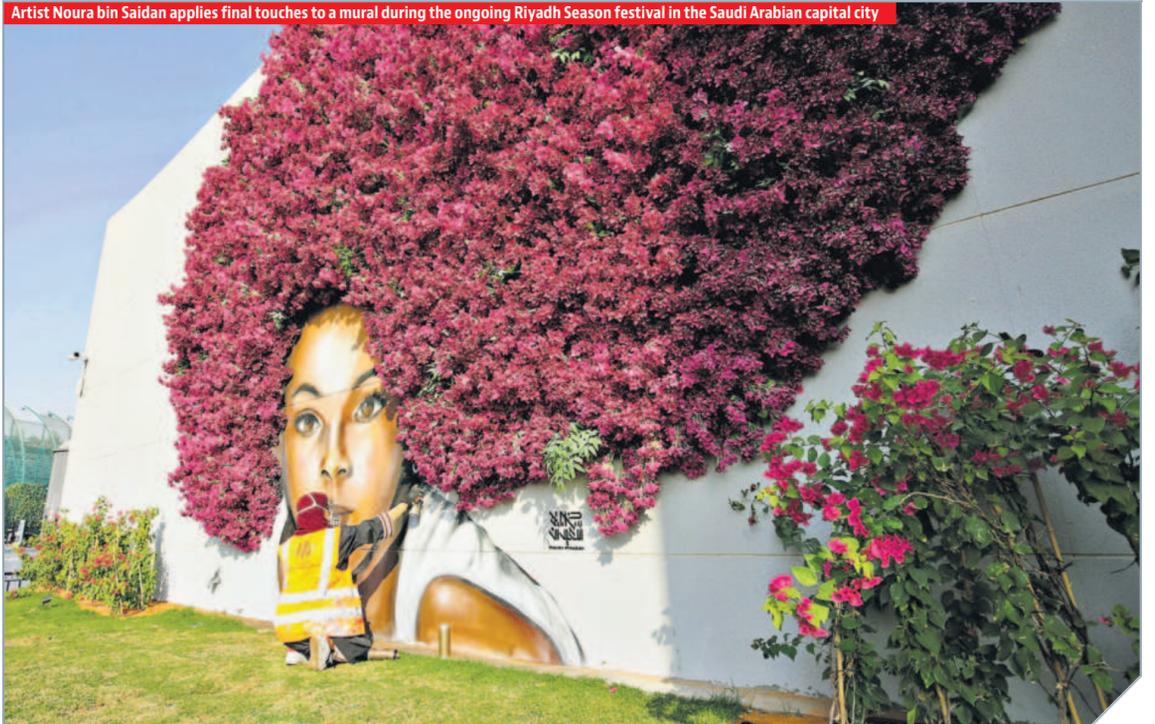
Ten people trapped after Indonesia's Semeru volcano erupted have been evacuated to safety, BNPB said.

Indonesia President Joko Widodo has ordered authorities to find and treat victims, the state secretary said.



An area is seen covered in volcanic ash at the Sumber Wuluh village in Lumajang, Indonesia, after the Semeru volcano erupted on Sunday. AFP

Artist Noura bin Saidan applies final touches to a mural during the ongoing Riyadh Season festival in the Saudi Arabian capital city



The artist stands on a huge self-operated crane as she works on a mural creation of Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum



A close-up of the artist at work



It took bin Saidan 21 days to complete 16 murals, such as that of Egyptian singer Abdel Hafez, below, for the festival



ART TAKEN TO NEW HEIGHTS

Artist Noura bin Saidan has showcased her creative flair at the ongoing Riyadh Season festival in the Saudi Arabian capital city. As many as 16 large-scale pieces murals made by bin Saidan, celebrating famous figures from the Middle East such as Egyptian singers Umm Kulthum and Abdel Halim Hafez are on view as part of the festival. An interesting part of the artist's latest venture is that in the process of making these murals, she also learnt how to operate a crane to reach the heights required to paint the walls. The artist says she strives to explore new avenues that help her grow.

REUTERS

HT CHRONICLE December 6 >> from the archives of the Hindustan Times

The Hindustan Times

ESTABLISHED IN 1924

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh passes

We regret to announce the death of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, the Sage of Pondicherry, at 1-30 a.m. yesterday at Pondicherry. He was 78 years old.

The Aurobindo Ashram and the entire town was in gloom on account of the passing, away of the sage. He had been indifferent health keeping for the past fortnight, but the end was sudden and quite unexpected.

Sri Aurobindo gave his last darshan to his disciples and devotees on November 24-the day

he went in complete spiritual retirement.

Thousands of Pondicherry citizens, young and old, besides the ashramites have been standing in long queues in front of the Ashram to have the last darshan of the sage.

His body is lying in state on a cot in the same room in the first floor of the Ashram where he expired and where he had been in retirement since 1927.

All activities of the Ashram have been suspended for 12 days,

and educational institutions in Pondicherry were closed for the day in his memory.

Sri Aurobindo's body lay in state, and by 6 p.m. more than 60,000 people had filed past it in queues in absolute silence. A few attendants of Sri Aurobindo were squatting with their heads bent in the room where the body was lying in state.



Sikandar's record haul at Kotla

By P. C. Nigam

NEW DELHI, Dec. 5 — Two career-best performances by medium pacers, Sikandar Bakht and Kapil Dev, were the high spots of a sensational day's cricket in the second Test between India and Pakistan at the Ferozeshah Kotla ground here today. On a none-too responsive pitch these two lionhearted bowlers accounted for ten of the 15 wickets that fell during the day for only 182 runs.

Sikandar's record haul at Kotla

New Delhi—Two career best performances by medium pacers, Sikandar Bakht and Kapil Dev, were the high spots of a sensational day's cricket in the second Test between India and Pakistan at the Ferozeshah Kotla ground here today. On a none-too responsive pitch these two lionhearted bowlers accounted for ten of the 15 wickets that fell during the day for only 182 runs.

Of the two, 22-year-old Sikandar Bakht's achievement was more remarkable as he captured eight wickets in a non-stop marathon spell of 20.1 overs for 69 runs. He thus not only bettered his own previous best at 4 for 68 against New Zealand at Napier in the 1978-79 series but also put Pakistan in a strong position of forcing a decision in this match. Wiry Sikandar Bakht who was

dropped in the first Test at Bangalore, rose to the occasion when Pakistan were in a tight noose. From overnight score of 217 for 4, they were shot out for a surprisingly low score of 273 in their first innings 23 minutes before lunch. Their worries aggravated further when they had the misfortune of losing the services of ace-seamer Imran Khan after he had bowled only 7.3 overs.

Jayalalithaa dead, Tamil Nadu mourns

Chennai - Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa passed away on Monday night after a 75-day battle for life at Apollo hospital, bringing to an end an iconic journey of the film star-turned-politician who straddled public life in the southern state for over three decades.

Jayalalithaa, 68, who was admitted to hospital on September 22 with complaints of fever and dehydration, developed complications after she suffered chest congestion, lung infection and heart malfunction. She suffered a cardiac arrest on Sunday and was readmitted to the hospital's critical care unit. There was hectic activity inside and outside the hospital premises for over an hour on Monday before the convoy carrying the late chief minister's mortal remains rolled out well past midnight.

Most of the senior doctors left the building as did Jayalalithaa's



adviser Sheela Balakrishnan, who had camped in an adjacent room right through the late CM's hospitalisation.

In a statement after midnight, the hospital explained the sequence from the AIADMK chief's hospitalisation, her condition at the time of admission, the complications she suffered and the various lines of treatment administered.

WATCH OUT THIS SPACE FOR QUIZ ON FRIDAYS

The quiz will be based on HT archives. Send in your answers at htpcedelhi@hindustantimes.com

PYTHAGOREANS IN ANCIENT GREECE BELIEVED REALITY IS FUNDAMENTALLY MATHEMATICAL

Pythagoras' revenge: Humans didn't invent mathematics, it's what the world is made of

Many people think that mathematics is a human invention. But from hexagonal honeycombs to the size of the gaps in the rings of Saturn and number of peas in a pod, mathematics can be found in abundance in nature

Press Trust of India

SYDNEY: Many people think that mathematics is a human invention. To this way of thinking, mathematics is like a language: it may describe real things in the world, but it doesn't "exist" outside the minds of the people who use it.

But the Pythagorean school of thought in ancient Greece held a different view. Its proponents believed reality is fundamentally mathematical.

More than 2,000 years later, philosophers and physicists are starting to take this idea seriously.

As I argue in a new paper, mathematics is an essential component of nature that gives structure to the physical world.

Honeybees and hexagons

Bees in hives produce hexagonal honeycomb. Why? According to the "honeycomb conjecture" in mathematics, hexagons are the most efficient shape for tiling the plane. If you want to fully cover a surface using tiles of a uniform shape and size, while keeping the total length of the perimeter to a minimum, hexagons are the shape to use.

Charles Darwin reasoned that bees have evolved to use this shape because it produces the largest cells to store honey for the smallest input of energy to produce wax.

The honeycomb conjecture was first proposed in ancient times, but was only proved in 1999 by mathematician Thomas Hales.

Cicadas and prime numbers

Here's another example. There are two subspecies of North American

periodical cicadas that live most of their lives in the ground. Then, every 13 or 17 years (depending on the subspecies), the cicadas emerge in great swarms for a period of around two weeks.

Why is it 13 and 17 years? Why not 12 and 14? Or 16 and 18? One explanation appeals to the fact that 13 and 17 are prime numbers.

Imagine the cicadas have a range of predators that also spend most of their lives in the ground. The cicadas need to come out of the ground when their predators are lying dormant.

Suppose there are predators with life cycles of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 years.

What is the best way to avoid them all? Well, compare a 13-year life cycle and a 12-year life cycle. When a cicada with a 12-year life cycle comes out of the ground, the 2-year, 3-year and 4-year predators will also be out of the ground, because 2, 3 and 4 all divide evenly into 12.

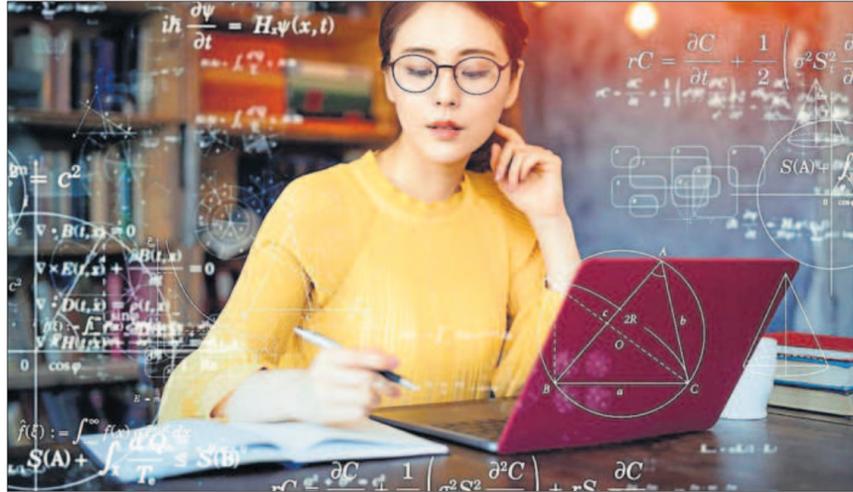
When a cicada with a 13-year life cycle comes out of the ground, none of its predators will be out of the ground, because none of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 divides evenly into 13. The same is true for 17.

It seems these cicadas have evolved to exploit basic facts about numbers.

Creation or discovery?

Once we start looking, it is easy to find other examples. From the shape of soap films, to gear design in engines, to the location and size of the gaps in the rings of Saturn, mathematics is everywhere.

If mathematics explains so many things we see around us, then it is unlikely that mathematics is some-



Mathematics is an essential component of nature that gives structure to the physical world.

SHUTTERSTOCK

thing we've created. The alternative is that mathematical facts are discovered: not just by humans, but by insects, soap bubbles, combustion engines and planets.

What did Plato think?

But if we are discovering something, what is it? The ancient Greek philosopher Plato had an answer. He thought mathematics describes objects that really exist.

For Plato, these objects included numbers and geometric shapes. Today, we might add more complicated mathematical objects such as groups, categories, functions, fields and rings to the list.

Plato also maintained that mathematical objects exist outside of space and time. But such a view only deepens the mystery of how mathematics explains anything.

Explanation involves showing how one thing in the world depends on another. If mathematical objects exist in a realm apart from the world we live in, they don't seem capable of

relating to anything physical.

Enter Pythagoreanism

The ancient Pythagoreans agreed with Plato that mathematics describes a world of objects. But, unlike Plato, they didn't think mathematical objects exist beyond space and time.

Instead, they believed physical reality is made of mathematical objects in the same way matter is made of atoms.

If reality is made of mathematical objects, it's easy to see how mathematical objects might play a role in explaining the world around us.

In the past decade, two physicists have mounted significant defences of the Pythagorean position: Swedish-US cosmologist Max Tegmark and Australian physicist-philosopher Jane McDonnell.

Tegmark argues reality just is one big mathematical object. If that seems weird, think about the idea that reality is a simulation. A simulation is a computer program, which is

a kind of mathematical object.

McDonnell's view is more radical. She thinks reality is made of mathematical objects and minds. Mathematics is how the Universe, which is conscious, comes to know itself.

I defend a different view: the world has two parts, mathematics and matter. Mathematics gives matter its form, and matter gives mathematics its substance. Mathematical objects provide a structural framework for the physical world.

The future of mathematics

It makes sense that Pythagoreanism is being rediscovered in physics.

In the past century physics has become more and more mathematical, turning to seemingly abstract fields of inquiry such as group theory and differential geometry in an effort to explain the physical world.

As the boundary between physics and mathematics blurs, it becomes harder to say which parts of the world are physical and which are mathematical.

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PLUNGES ANTARCTICA INTO DARKNESS

SANTIAGO: A total solar eclipse plunged Antarctica from summer into darkness early Saturday in a rare astronomical spectacle witnessed by a handful of scientists and thrill-seekers — and countless penguins.

"The visibility was excellent," said Raul Cordero of the University of Santiago de Chile (USACH), who was on site to witness "totality" at 1.16 pm (IST), with the "ring of fire" phase lasting just over 40 seconds.

Solar eclipses occur when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, casting its shadow on Earth. For the eclipse to be total, the Sun, Moon and Earth must be directly aligned. Totality was visible only in Antarctica, experienced by a small number of scientists, experts and adventure tourists — who paid some \$40,000 for the privilege. Streamed live by Nasa from the Union Glacier camp in Antarctica, the eclipse began at 12.30 pm (IST) as the Moon began to move in front of the Sun, coming to an end at 1.36 pm (IST).

The Union Glacier camp is situated about 1,000 kms of the South Pole.

According to Nasa, a partial eclipse was also visible across parts of the southern hemisphere, including parts of Saint Helena, Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa, Chile, New Zealand and Australia. The last total solar eclipse in Antarctica occurred on November 23, 2003 and the next one will not be until 2039.

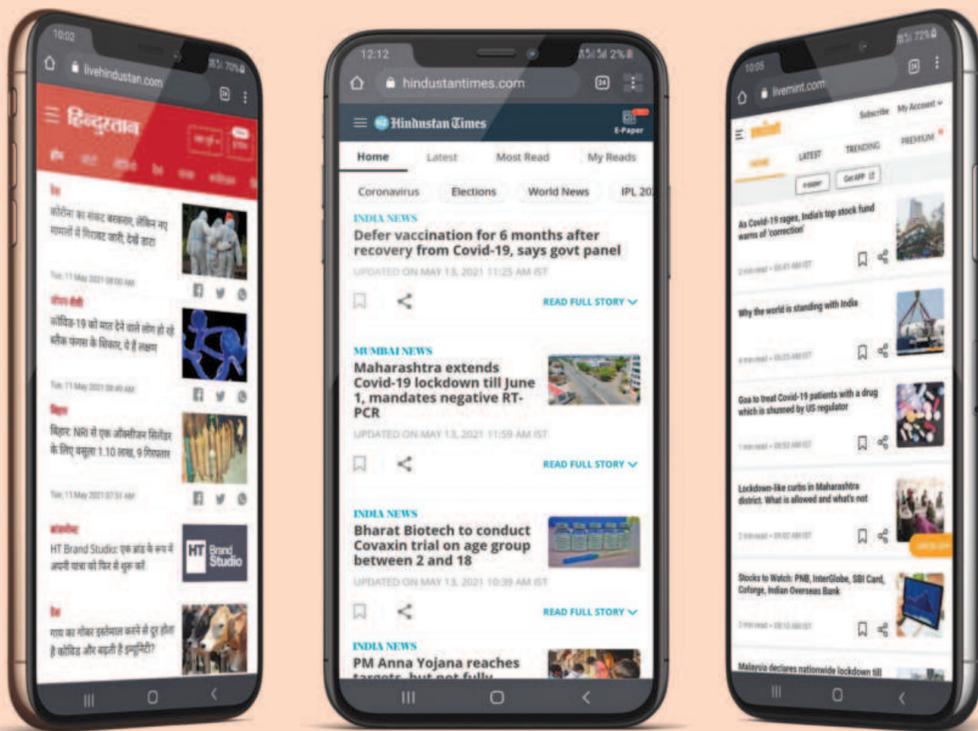
An annular solar eclipse — in which the Moon obscures all but an outer ring of the Sun — is set to sweep across North America in October 2023, followed by a total eclipse in April 2024.

AFP



Chilean and US scientists looking at a solar eclipse from the Union Glacier in Antarctica on Sunday

AFP



Over
275 Mn.
INDIANS

Turn to HT Media Group's digital, print & radio platforms for credible news & unlimited entertainment

हिन्दुस्तान Hindustan Times mint



Hindustan Times C{}ODE-A-TH{}ON

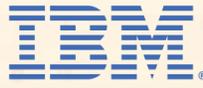
Learn. Participate. Win.

POWERED BY



Adaptive Learning Platform

CODING FOR CAUSE PARTNER



LEARN CODING & WIN BIG PRIZES

Participate and win in one of India's Biggest Coding Olympiads



More exciting prizes this year:

- 01 Laptops, Tablets & Smartwatches
- 02 Coverage in Hindustan Times

PARTNER - help alliance INDIA

Register now at www.htcodeathon.com to be part of HT Codeathon 2021



Scan the QR Code to register

*T&C

MEET THE NEW HEART OF YOUR CITY



The all-new HT city aims at bringing the best in entertainment and lifestyle straight to your doorstep and fingertips.



LA LIGA

Real Madrid extend lead to eight points

MADRID: Real Madrid secured a 2-0 win against Real Sociedad on Saturday after travelling north to San Sebastian as they moved eight points clear at the top of La Liga.

With striker Karim Benzema forced off after 17 minutes with a hamstring injury, it was once again Vinicius Jr who stood out by scoring his 10th goal of the season and driving the home side's defence crazy with his boldness and audacity.

Real's man of the hour, 21-year-old 'Vini' has been one of the standout players in Europe during this campaign and is two goals behind Benzema at the top of La Liga's

scoring charts.

Luka Jovic, who replaced the injured Benzema, enjoyed his best game as a Real Madrid player, assisting Vinicius for the first goal and scoring the second with a diving header.

It was Real Madrid's sixth consecutive league win and Real Sociedad's first home loss of the season. Real have 39 points, ahead of Sevilla on 31, Real Betis with 30 and Atletico Madrid on 29 with fifth-placed Sociedad. Sevilla, who beat visitors Villarreal 1-0, and Atleti, who lost 2-1 at home to Mallorca, have a game in hand on their rivals.

Real Madrid won a frenetic high-quality match with both teams trading punches like heavyweights in a title fight. Sociedad had spent the early part of the season on top of La Liga but were leapfrogged by Real Madrid two weeks ago. Both teams defended superbly, with the visitors a little more daring in attack. But Sociedad could have scored on at least three occasions only to hit a wall named Eder Militao. The Brazilian international defended superbly, winning every challenge.

Real Madrid improved in the second half, scoring their two goals inside 12 minutes after the break, and had another clear opportunity through Vinicius but the 21-year-old Brazilian failed to score when one-on-one with goalkeeper Alex Remiro.

"We made a complete game," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told reporters. "Ball control, defence, between lines, the positional game... What I like the most is that this team knows how to defend. I never doubted the men up front but the commitment shown in defence is very good."



Vinicius Junior.

AFP

HOCKEY

India finish fourth in Junior World Cup

BHUBANESWAR: Title hopes already shattered, defending champions India even failed to finish on the podium as they lost 1-3 to France in the bronze-medal play-off match of the FIH Junior Hockey World Cup on Sunday.

France skipper Timothee Clement slammed a hat-trick to stun the hosts once again and secure the bronze medal. Clement converted three penalty corners for France in the 26th, 34th and 47th minutes while India's lone goal was struck by Sudeep Chirmako in the 42nd minute.

It was the second consecutive flop show from the Indians after their superlative performance against Belgium in the quarter-finals. The third-

fourth place match was a chance for India to avenge their 4-5 defeat against France in their tournament opener, but it wasn't to be as the European side continued to dominate the hosts with a superb performance.

France were by far the better side on the pitch as they controlled the proceedings after a sedate first quarter and earned as many as 14 penalty corners as against India's just three.

India started on a bright note and exerted pressure on France defence in the first quarter, which resulted in a penalty corner as early as in the first minute of the game, but the hosts failed to utilise the chance. They continue to miss chances throughout.

BADMINTON

Sindhu settles for silver at World Tour Finals

BALI: PV Sindhu settled for a silver medal at the BWF World Tour Finals after going down weekly against Korean teen sensation An Seyoung in the summit clash, here on Sunday.

Sindhu, the reigning world champion and two-time Olympic medallist, could neither match the pace nor breach the defence of the world No 6 Korean, losing 16-21, 12-21 in the 40-minute lopsided clash. It was Sindhu's third successive loss—all straight games—to the Korean in as many meetings. With this victory, An Seyoung became the first ever South Korean woman to win the season-ending title. It was also her third straight title in Bali, following wins at the Indonesia Masters and Indonesia Open in the last two weeks.

Making her third final appearance in the year-end tournament, world No 7 Sindhu looked a pale shadow of the player who had claimed the title in



PV Sindhu.

AFP

2018 to become the only Indian to achieve the feat. "It was a good game. An Seyoung is a good player so I don't think it was going to be easy. I was prepared for a good match," Sindhu said after the title clash.

"From the beginning I should not have given her lead because in the end I came back covering few points. It is a bit sad but lot to learn. It has been a good three weeks in Bali. So lot of positives to take from here and it's time to go back, recover and get prepared for the world championships," added the 26-year-old.

SO CLOSE



Red Bull's Max Verstappen exits his car after hitting the wall during the qualifying for the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix at the Jeddah Corniche Circuit on Saturday. It cost him a chance of taking the pole position.

AFP

CRICKET



R Ashwin (second from right) took three for 27 as India reduced New Zealand to 140 for five in their second innings on Day Three of the second Test in Mumbai on Sunday.

PTI

Ashwin turns it on as India close in on win

Press Trust of India

sportm@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: India's middle-order worries going into South Africa series remained but that didn't deter Ravichandran Ashwin from turning the heat on as his three quick blows left New Zealand tottering at 140 for five in pursuit of an impossible 540 on Day Three of the second Test.

While Daryl Mitchell (60 off 92 balls) and Henry Nicholls (36 batting) added 73 runs for the fourth wicket, there is no denying that India in all likelihood will finish it early on Day Four with Ashwin (3/27) looking menacing with every passing over.

What will hurt New Zealand team most in this defeat is the fact that this is the game where one of its own—Ajaz Patel, equalled the world record and grabbed a match-haul of 14 wickets, something that no one has ever done against India in Tests.

The tall Mitchell at least tried to use his reach to counter Ashwin and also

attack Jayant Yadav and Axar Patel but looked more like the last man standing, trying to delay the inevitable before a rush of blood saw him holed out at deep extra cover. Tom Blundell had a suicidal run out going for a non-existent single.

But it was Ashwin, who again got the new ball and immediately got into the act by removing skipper Tom Latham with an angular delivery while Will Young was caught at forward short leg and Ross Taylor, who has been a walking wicket, failed miserably in his attempt to slog sweep the wily off-spinner. There was one over where Ashwin toyed with left-handed Nicholls who couldn't gauge which one would turn away like a classical off-break and the one that will straighten or come in with the angle.

But there will be some issues that would need coach Rahul Dravid's urgent attention. For India, even in what could be a facile victory, the wobbly middle-order would keep them worried going into the South

Africa series.

Ajinkya Rahane failed in the first Test and had to be dropped on pretext of a hamstring niggle. Cheteshwar Pujara had three bad innings and one where he looked better but that was after the pressure was released by the bowlers. Skipper Virat Kohli, whose primary aim of not enforcing follow-on was to get some batting time under his belt, also didn't look confident during his innings of 36 off 84 balls. India declared their second innings at 276 for seven after Axar hit four sixes and three fours in his 41 off 26 balls.

Their confidence already shattered, the New Zealand bowlers conceded as many as 25 fours and 11 sixes in the 70 overs they bowled in the second innings. In fact, all Indian batters save Wriddhiman Saha hit at least one six.

Kohli's idea of batting again was partially successful because Pujara did look good during his 47 and Mayank Agarwal (62, 108 balls) did his cause no harm by smashing another

half-century to top up his first innings score of 150.

The duo added 107 runs for the opening stand to add insult to New Zealand's injuries and it was compounded by another 82 runs that Shubman Gill (47) added with Kohli. Save a six that he hit off opposition's weakest link, Will Somerville, Kohli for the better part of his 84 balls didn't look convincing before playing on to a friendly left-arm spin from Rachin Ravindra, who also had three wickets.

Agarwal was looking good for his second hundred of the game but in his bid to hit another six off Patel he could not reach to the pitch of the delivery and Will Young comfortably took the catch at long-off.

For Pujara, this was the best chance to get a fifty and increase his confidence before the tour of South Africa. He survived a strong DRS appeal but then one delivery that was pitched slightly fuller and turned, got his outside edge and went to Taylor's safe hands in the slips.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Man City take top position with convincing victory over Watford

Reuters

sportm@hindustantimes.com

WATFORD: Reigning champions Manchester City claimed top spot in the Premier League for the first time this season as Bernardo Silva scored twice in a 3-1 victory at Watford on Saturday.

Raheem Sterling's early header paved the way to a comfortable win for Pep Guardiola's side who made the most of previous leaders Chelsea's 3-2 defeat at West Ham United.

Silva fired in from a tight angle in the 31st minute and put City in cruise control just past the hour mark when he curled a delightful effort into the top corner. In truth City's winning margin should have been bigger against a struggling Watford side who were given some late hope when Cucho Hernandez pulled a goal back.

City's fifth successive league win lifted them to 35 points from 15 games, one point ahead of Liverpool and two in front of Chelsea in what is shaping up to be a three-way title tussle.

The sight of Guardiola's City hitting the top in the run-up to Christmas will send shivers through their rivals. Once they climbed to the summit last season in January they marched off into the distance, although this time the form of Liverpool suggests they will not have things all their own way.

"It's still the beginning, we are not even halfway through and there is a lot of hard work to do," Silva, who is City's surprise leading league scorer with seven goals, said.

"It's always better to be top of the league than second, third or fourth, but it's so close—Liverpool are just



Bernardo Silva (right) netted twice in Manchester City's 3-1 win against Watford during their Premier League tie at Vicarage Road, Watford, on Saturday.

REUTERS

one point behind us, Chelsea are two points behind us. But we are in good form and we want to keep it that way."

It was only a fortnight ago that Claudio Ranieri's side put Manchester United to the sword at Vicarage Road. But they barely got a kick in the first half against City. Once Sterling was given the freedom of the penalty area to head in Phil Foden's cross after four minutes it always looked like being a long night for the hosts.

Jack Grealish could have had a hat-trick before halftime as he wasted several glorious chances but Silva soon

showed him how to find the back of the net. The Portuguese playmaker's astute pass set up a chance for Ilkay Gundogan whose shot was saved by Daniel Bachmann but as the ball came out Silva was alert to drill a low shot into the net from an acute angle.

His second was a thing of beauty. Taking a pass from Kyle Walker on the right, Silva cut inside Danny Rose and curled a shot into the top corner with almost nonchalant ease.

City switched off slightly to allow Hernandez to score after his shot came back off the post.

MILAN CLUBS DOMINATE IN ITALIAN LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse

sportm@hindustantimes.com

MILAN: A much-changed AC Milan saw off bottom side Salernitana 2-0 on Saturday to take top spot in Serie A as previous leaders Napoli lost 3-2 to Atalanta while Inter Milan cruised to victory at Roma.

Milan coach Stefano Pioli made six changes to his starting XI from the midweek victory at Genoa, with Tuesday's crucial Champions League match against Liverpool in mind.

But Franck Kessie and Alexis Saelemaekers both scored inside the first 20 minutes to ensure a straightforward victory for the hosts at the San Siro. Milan have given their bid for a first league title since 2011 a boost this week after bouncing back from two straight defeats with successive victories.

Pioli's men sit one point clear of reigning champions Inter, who beat Roma 3-0, and two ahead of Napoli. "I am satisfied with a good performance, a decent victory, because some assumed this could be taken for granted," Pioli told DAZN.

"It would've been better if we had scored more goals, especially considering how many chances we created."

The seven-time European champions have to beat already qualified Liverpool in their final group game in Milan next week to have a chance of reaching the last 16.

"We wanted to be in this position and now we can only try to give our best," Pioli said of the Liverpool game. We know Liverpool will inevitably cause us some issues, but the spaces can open up too, because they are certainly not unbeatable or impenetrable in defence."