



Haryana orders closure of schools due to cold

CHANDIGARH
Government and private schools in Haryana will remain closed on Thursday due to intense cold, according to an official statement. Day temperatures have been hovering between 11 and 15 degrees Celsius at most places in the State. PTI

Migrant worker thrown out of moving train

CHANDIGARH
Four persons were arrested by the Government Railway Police in Vriddachalam on Tuesday for killing a migrant labourer by throwing him out of a moving train following an argument. The accused were identified as Jiththan Giri, Anil Kumar, Sukdev Kadaiyaa and Sottu Badaik, all hailing from Rourkela in Odisha. The accused were produced before a local court in Panruti and remanded in judicial custody.

Army officer, civilian killed in firing in Uri

SRINAGAR
An Army officer and a civilian were killed as Pakistan violated ceasefire agreement and opened fire along the Line of Control in north Kashmir's Uri sector in Baramulla on Wednesday. An official said the Junior Commissioned Officer and a woman were hit by bullets and splinters and civilian areas were shelled with mortars in the attack.

Allow us to quit without notice period: AI pilots

NEW DELHI
Flagging concerns over unpaid dues, the Indian Commercial Pilots' Association, an Air India pilots' union representing nearly 800 pilots, has urged the government to allow its members to quit the debt-laden carrier without serving the notice period. The union has warned that they are in no position to work amid uncertainty over the airline's future.

Study warns of growing cancer burden across India

Fastest epidemiological transition recorded in Kerala, lowest in U.P.

SHYAMA RAJAGOPAL
KOCHI

A study tracing the growing burden of cancer in India states that most of the increase in cancer incidences are attributable to its epidemiological transition and improvement in the use of cancer diagnostics.

The country's cancer burden will continue to increase as a result of the ongoing ageing of India and improving access to cancer diagnostics in rural India, said Mohandas K. Mallath of the Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata, and Robert Smith from Kings College, London, in a recent paper: *History of Growing burden of Cancer in India: From Antiquity to 21st century*.

The paper was published in the *Journal of Global Oncology* which is promoted by the American Society of Clin-

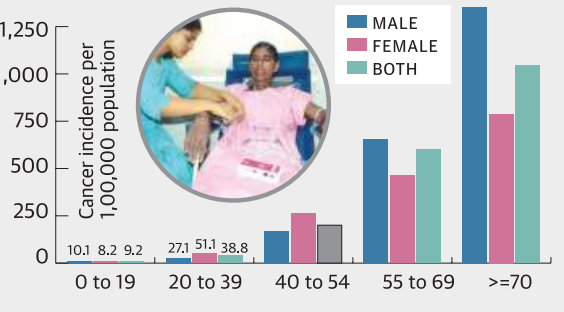
ical Oncology. The study has stated that while cancer-like diseases were documented since antiquity, recording of cancer in India began in the 19th century when the Western practices of biopsy and pathological examination came to India during the colonial British regime.

Cancer is primarily a disease of older people, hence, as life expectancy went up, cancer incidences too went up, said Dr. Mallath, a senior consultant of Digestive Oncology. Maximum increases will occur in the most populous and least developed States, where the facilities for cancer diagnostics and treatment are inadequate.

According to Dr. Mallath, the present study offers lessons for planning cancer care in States as well as other countries experiencing epi-

Killer cells

While cancer incidence among women aged between 20 and 54 was higher than in men, the trend reversed for patients aged 55 and above in 2018



demiological transition. In India the fastest epidemiological transition happened in Kerala, whereas Uttar Pradesh remained in the slowest group, he said.

Kerala vs U.P.

A direct comparison of the demographic and social variables, available health care facilities and leading causes of mortality in these two

States shows how the low incidences of infectious diseases in Kerala has given rise to more cancer compared to U.P., which is still battling high mortality from communicable diseases.

The types of cancers in India are also undergoing a transition, similar to a report from Japan five decades ago. There has been a decline of cancers caused by infec-

CBI probes Yamuna Expressway scam in U.P.

Land allegedly bought at twice the rate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has taken over the probe into an alleged ₹126-crore scam in the acquisition of land in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura for the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA). Its former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) P.C. Gupta and 20 others are accused in the case.

Over 57 hectares of land has been acquired in the seven villages of Mathura for ₹85.49 crore.

An internal probe revealed that months ahead of the acquisition, the associates and relatives of YEIDA officials had purchased the land parcels from villagers. Sham companies were also used to buy the land.



Over 57 hectares of land has been acquired in seven villages of Mathura.

It is alleged that as part of a conspiracy, the land was acquired for YEIDA projects at more than two times the authorised rates.

The case was initially registered at the Kasna police station in Uttar Pradesh on June 3, 2018, after an internal inquiry was conducted into the allegations of financial irregularities.

Groups call for ban on surgeries on intersex minors

The demand comes months after Tamil Nadu banned normative surgeries on infants and children

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Intersex individuals and rights organisations have sought a national ban on unnecessary medical surgeries conducted on children with intersex traits and appealed to the Union government to protect their human rights.

The demand for a nationwide ban comes months after the Tamil Nadu government banned normative surgeries on infants and children except in life-threatening situations after a historic judgment of the Madras High Court on April 22.

If adopted nationally, India could become one of the third country after Malta and Taiwan, to have a legal regime which protects the rights of intersex children.

The demand for a nationwide legislation emerged at the first national conference

on intersex human rights organised by Srishti Madurai in partnership with Intersex Asia on Sunday in New Delhi.

While the term intersex is confused with transgender, the two in-fact have very different meanings.

Individuals who identify as transgender or transexual have a gender that is different from the one traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth, while intersex refers to people born with biological or physical characteristics that are more diverse than stereotypical male or female bodies.

Lack of understanding

"You can self-determine your gender identity and sexual orientation, but not your sexual characteristics. That is why there is a need to regulate sex normalising surgery

tions, such as cervical, stomach, and penile cancer, and an increase in cancers associated with energy intake, physical activity imbalance and ageing, such as breast, colorectal and prostate cancers.

Cancer transitions can influence the requirements for site-specialized cancer surgeons, the study says. For example Kerala will need more breast oncologists and U.P. will need more gynecological oncologists, said Dr. Mallath.

The association of tobacco chewing with cancer were published over a century ago. But the habit is now estimated to cause a fifth of all cancers in India, the study says.

Out-of-pocket expenditure is three times higher for private inpatient cancer care in India. Approximately 40% of cancer costs are met through borrowing and contributions from friends and relatives.

No evidence of cancer in Indus Valley sites

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

Evidence of cancer in early humans were found in a review of 154 paleopathological studies dating back to 1.8 million years in historic Egyptian and German sites.

However, the study, "History of Growing Burden of Cancer in India from Antiquity to 21st century", published recently in the *Journal of Global Oncology*, states that no comprehensive historical review could be gathered scanning through voluminous data on medical literature from pre-historic times.

Dr. Mohandas Mallath, the co-author of the study states that no paleo-oncology reports of cancer have been recorded at the Indus

Valley civilization or Deccan Chalcolithic sites except for mention of some benign osteomas. Fewer samples and poor preservation were some of the limitations of these studies, he said.

The study says, there are references to cancer-like symptoms in many ancient texts including the 'Atharva Veda' and two ancient medical systems, Ayurveda and Siddha, which have been in use for more than 2,500 years. These texts mention the use of surgery and herbal medications for these diseases. The ancient medical classics of India have devoted little attention to cancer-like illnesses, suggesting a low prevalence of cancer in those times perhaps, said Dr. Mallath.



Being aware: While the term 'intersex' is confused with 'transgender', they have different meanings. ■ S. MAHINSHA

ies for intersex children. Parents often subject their infants and children to these surgeries and the Madras High Court has once again underlined that the consent of the parents is not the same as that of their children," says Gopi Shankar, Executive

Director of Srishti Madurai and co-founder of Intersex Asia.

"Often parents do not understand the nature of the condition exhibited by a child and under pressure from the society want to assign a gender ... Therefore,

there is no straightjacket medical solution available — some variations may require hormonal treatment, others may require a surgical intervention and sometimes it may be advisable to wait until puberty. There is a need to educate parents, activists and medical practitioners to ensure intersex is not treated as a medical disorder but as a sex characteristic," says Dr. Anuradha Udumudi, a senior medical geneticist.

She added that there is no data available to determine whether sex normalising surgeries have helped individuals.

The World Health Organisation and the United Nations Human Rights Council have called upon Member States to end invasive and irreversible medical surgeries and other medical treatment on intersex children.

WEATHER WATCH











RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)
Forecast for Thursday: Cold day conditions likely in many pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, north Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Dense fog likely over Jammu, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and Meghalaya.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	22.0	12.0	Kozhikode	.....	36.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	28.0	16.0	Kurnool	.....	31.0	20.0
Aizawl	19.0	6.0	Lucknow	.....	16.0	6.0
Allahabad	19.0	10.0	Madurai	.....	29.0	23.0
Bengaluru	25.0	19.0	Mangaluru	.....	37.0	24.0
Bhopal	26.0	13.0	Mumbai	.....	32.0	24.0
Bhubaneswar	28.0	15.0	Mysuru	.....	28.0	19.0
Chandigarh	10.0	7.0	New Delhi	.....	13.0	6.0
Chennai	0.1	30.0	Patna	.....	19.0	10.0
Coimbatore	27.0	23.0	Port Blair	.....	29.0	22.0
Dehradun	21.0	4.0	Puducherry	.....	16.0	28.0
Gangtok	11.0	6.0	Pune	.....	31.0	21.0
Goa	34.0	23.0	Raipur	.....	29.0	17.0
Guwahati	23.0	11.0	Ranchi	.....	19.0	12.0
Hubballi	30.0	20.0	Shillong	.....	15.0	5.0
Hyderabad	29.0	19.0	Shimla	.....	12.0	2.0
Imphal	22.0	4.0	Srinagar	.....	9.0	4.0
Jaipur	20.0	6.0	Thiruvananthapuram	.....	33.0	24.0
Kochi	33.0	25.0	Tiruchi	.....	27.0	22.0
Kohima	16.0	5.0	Vijayawada	.....	29.0	20.0
Kolkata	25.0	14.0	Visakhapatnam	.....	28.0	21.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing						Yesterday	
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	
Ahmedabad.....	70	27	050	.....	91	.....
Bengaluru.....	12	35	51	.....	61	.....
Chennai.....	21	33	62	.....	123	.....
Delhi.....	10	173	85	.....	403	.....
Hyderabad.....	15	39	35	.....	185	.....
Kolkata.....	10	105	49	.....	293	.....
Lucknow.....	76	1	68	.....	440	.....
Mumbai.....	7	47	45	.....	326	.....
Pune.....	83	32	107	.....	197	.....
Visakhapatnam.....	10	56	46	.....	199	.....

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 403 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Mysuru, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 44.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

IPC law on suicide is redundant, says expert

Now, a suicide attempt is a criminal offence under the law

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

A national strategy for suicide prevention is under discussion at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, said psychiatrist Lakshmi Vijayakumar, adding that it should remove confusion surrounding Article 309 of the IPC, according to which attempted suicide continues to be a criminal offence.

Dr. Vijayakumar, who is also a member of WHO's Network on Suicide Research and Prevention, said that after the Mental Healthcare Act (MCHA), 2017, the Section has become "redundant" but still remains in law books.

While Section 309 of the



Lakshmi Vijayakumar

IPC says that a suicide attempt is punishable with simple imprisonment, which may extend up to one year, Section 115 of the MCHA, 2017 states: "...any person who attempts to commit suicide shall be presumed, unless proved otherwise, to have severe

stress and shall not be tried and punished under the said Code (Section 309 of IPC)." Dr. Vijayakumar said the Article makes attempted suicide a medico-legal case and the golden hour of providing effective treatment to the person is wasted.

India continues to have the dubious distinction of recording the highest number, or 34% of all suicides in the world, said Dr. Vijaykumar.

She was speaking to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of a panel discussion on 'Decriminalization of Attempted Suicide: MCHA 2017 and the Ground Reality' organized by the Indian Psychiatric Society in Kolkata earlier this week.

Request for no water cut ahead of eclipse refused

Residents would face difficulties in performing ablutions, BJP corporator said

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) corporator's request to the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), urging the civic body to postpone its weekly water cut on grounds that citizens in her ward would need to perform rituals after the solar eclipse on December 26 has drawn condemnation from the anti-superstition outfit — the Maharashtra Andhashradhha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS).

Manjushri Khardekar on Wednesday said she would give a written request to Mayor Murlidhar Mohol in this regard.

Strict customs

"The eclipse coincides with the maintenance. Residents in my ward have complained



Religious beliefs cannot be the basis for such a request, the PMC said.

of difficulties they would face as they need to perform ablutions and clean houses after the eclipse," said Ms. Khardekar, adding that the residents were particular about the customs.

The PMC implements water cuts in several parts of the city every Thursday for carrying out essential maintenance and pipeline repair work.

Earlier, Ms. Khardekar's husband and BJP leader Sandeep Khardekar, too, had written to the PMC authorities, requesting them to postpone the water cut due to Hindu traditions.

However, the civic body officials have rejected the request, saying religious beliefs could not be the basis for halting repair work needed for better channeling of potable water.

Condemning the superstitious beliefs behind the corporator's request, Hamid Dabholkar of MANS said it was unfortunate that elected representatives were indulg-

ing in such demands instead of actively quelling them.

'Bizarre request'

"We learn all about eclipses in school and know that the ridiculous beliefs propagated by Hindu tradition about not eating or drinking allegedly contaminated water during the eclipse are mere myths. Unfortunately, these superstitions are still followed despite scientific awareness campaigns. Instead of ensuring water to citizens of her ward by permitting the civic authorities to carry out repair, the corporator is bizarrely urging a postponement," said Dr. Dabholkar.

The BJP heads the 162-member Municipal Corporation and enjoys an absolute majority in the body.