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Kolkata HC's stay order upsets teachers

Sutapa Dhara

KOLKATA : The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) has been criticised by the teaching staff of government primary schools even as the two-judge bench of Calcutta HC on Thursday reversed the CBI enquiry ordered by the single bench into the alleged irregularity in the appointment of Group D staff. According to the WBBSE, all appointments were made based on the SSC's (Staff Selection Commission) recommendations. However, the commission filed an affidavit with the court noting that no recommendation letter was provided by the SSC after the panel of Group D personnel ended on 4 May 2019. The ruling was issued in response to a petition filed by several job applicants claiming that appointments were made after the panel for Group D staff positions in aided or sponsored secondary and upper secondary schools in the state had expired. Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay had ordered the CBI to conduct a preliminary investigation into the alleged irregularities and submit a report to court by December 21. "We believe in the High Court's decision, that there will be an end to the corruption and injustice of the educational system. However, we are disappointed by the latest reversal by the HC," said Bikas Sarkar, a primary school teacher in Marokhana Government School.

Africa's new COVID-19 variant raises concern

Shriangana Pyne

The heavily-mutated COVID-19 virus known as B.1.1.529, named by WHO as Alpha and Delta Variant, discovered in South Africa earlier this week is becoming a cause of concern. Medical professionals predict that this variant has the potential to cause a major outbreak again. This level of mutation has most likely come from a single patient who succumbed to the virus. It is considered to

SJC celebrates Ignatian year befittingly

Bincy Joseph

BENGALURU : Hundreds of students and faculty members of St Joseph's College celebrated the 500th anniversary of their founder, St Ignatius Loyola. The chief guest was Fr Maxim Dias, former Principal and Assistant Professor of Political Science, St Joseph's Evening College (Autonomous). This observance is a part of Ignatian year declared earlier by the Pope and is being observed from 21 May 2020 up to 31 July 2022 and this is in the memory of the wounding of the founder of Jesuits Society, St Ignatius Loyola at a battle in Pamplona in 1521. The event started with the prayer song followed by the lighting of the lamp. Fr Denzil E Lobo, Director, Department of IT, addressed the gathering



Eucharistic Celebration during the event

Bincy Joseph

with an insightful message. He explained the three kinds of 'cannonball moments' – small incidents of joy and despair, larger moments of life, Ignatian moments of recuperation. He also described in detail the remarkable contributions and sacrifices of Jesuits. The official logo and weblink

of the Ignatian year 2021-2022, designed by Spanish architect Ortiz Zaforas, was unveiled at the event. This logo is to be used in all activities and information. Fr Peter Bellessis, SJ, a special guest from Geneva, spoke about the collaboration of the college with Jesuit Worldwide

Learning (JWL) which offers BA programs in graphic designing. He said, "As a Jesuit, I experienced my cannonball moment while educating the refugees of Afghanistan, Myanmar, and places of Africa and offering them digital Jesuit web learning." The event was solemnized by

Holy Mass attended by Rector Fr Swebert D'Silva, Principal Fr Victor Lobo, St Joseph's College of Commerce Principal Fr. Charles Lasrado, and many other dignitaries. Jesuit Brother and an alumnus, Reuell, who led the choir during the Eucharistic celebration, said, "It is very difficult to enlighten Catholics about their religion in the present world. In midst of all pain, God comes to us and constantly works for us. It is time we deepen faith in God and do those small deeds in his glory. Remember, a cannonball released 500 years ago can still knock us down." On this auspicious occasion Principal, Dr Fr. Victor Lobo addressing the gathering also announced that the college will be conferred university status from the next academic year.

Medical students demand RGUHS to reschedule Annual Examination

Madhu Mita BS

BENGALURU: Medical students in Karnataka are upset over the examination dates scheduled by Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS). As per the circular issued by the university on Wednesday, exams are scheduled for February 2022. However, students say that time left is insufficient for preparations. They complain that online classes held until June were inadequate and most of the syllabus is yet to be covered. "At the starting of the year, we had a program which was mandatory for all final year MBBS students. Three



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days ago, they announced that the internal exams will be happening tomorrow. Now, final examination dates are preponed before which we have to complete three more postings which

are really hectic for us," said Kalleth, a final year MBBS student from Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences. Ravi, a doctor from Sri Chamaraja Hospital who is also a professor said,

"The postponement of examinations is not a solution. In the available time, the syllabus will be finished. The postponement of exams will lead to clashes with other PG and NEET exams as well."

Homeless people left without vaccination

Pushparaj C

BENGALURU : As India crosses the historic mark of administering 120 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses, the persons engaged in beggary are being left behind in the vaccination drive as vaccine hesitancy is still a dominant factor among the underprivileged. Rangasamy, a farmer from Chittoor was abandoned by his family members and is now a vagrant in Bengaluru. The farm crisis forced him to quit farming, leaving him penniless. He said, "Reddy, the head of the village died after he got vaccinated. I have seen vaccination taking lives, so I am afraid of it." Govind, another vagrant from Chittoor with dire health problems was forced to engage in beggary after he was abandoned by his son. "There are many of us who come from different states such as Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. We are scared to get vaccinated as we have no one to take care of us in case something unfortunate happens," he said. It was reported in June that only five per cent of homeless people in Bengaluru, residing in government-owned homeless centres are vaccinated. The remaining homeless persons are unaccounted for.

Domestic violence rate dips, reveals NHFS-5

Mythri C

BENGALURU : Women's shelters in Bengaluru have recorded a slight decrease in domestic violence cases reported which is in tune with the latest findings of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) 2019 - 2021. The NFHS-5 has identified the key indicators regarding women empowerment and other issues related to Indian family household. Rate

of domestic violence in women aged 18-49 years has decreased by 2 per cent over the recent years, and the rate of women with ten or more years of schooling has increased by 6 per cent reveals the survey. Lissi Gregori, who is currently running Navachethana, a women's shelter in Bengaluru says, "There has been a slight decrease in the number of women who come here as victims of domestic violence. However,

most of the women who report domestic violence are educated and are aged between 30 and 40." "Most of the women who come to us are thrown out of their homes and are victims of domestic violence," says Joby, who runs the Abhaysharama org. "Few of them are also suffering from mental illness as a result of the abuse. They have completed their degrees and are mostly from rural parts of Bengaluru." he added.