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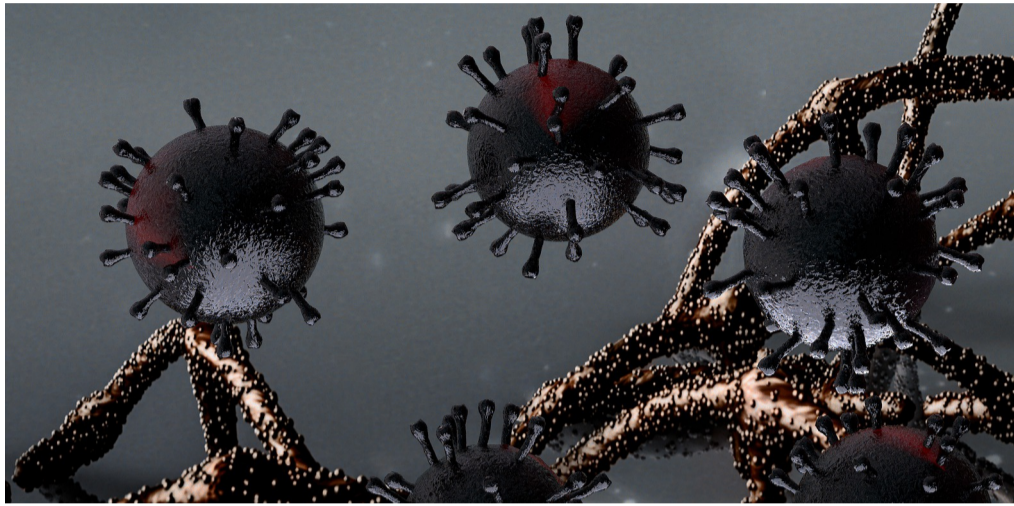
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Docs warn of more Covid-19 mutations

Arakkal Shada Amina

DUBAI (UAE): The two new variants of Covid-19 reported in Maharashtra, Kerala, and Telangana in India on Tuesday, February 23, were not the end of the disease, and multiple strains and mutations of the virus that is behind it may be expected, medical professionals told The Beacon.

"The major problems occurring due to Covid-19 infections are not due to the aggressiveness of the viral particle or the strains, it is mostly due to the body's uncontrolled immune reaction," said Prasanth Ariyannur, MD, Senior Researcher and Laboratory in-charge of Molecular



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Diagnostics at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences at Kochi in Kerala.

"The rapid and intense immune reaction in our body wrecks the system and could become lethal, but from a

virus point of view, death is not a favourable system," he explained.

The human body also works in its own way to prevent such infections, right from the first time.

"Once you have acquired an infection, your body creates memory cells that will remain in your bloodstream. These cells initiate antibody production in response to subsequent exposure to the

same infectious agent," said Dr Rahima Sahala, a resident medical professional at Baptist Hospital in Bengaluru.

"While the antibodies measured quantitatively in one's blood would decrease over time, the memory cells that exist in our bloodstream have the potential to trigger antibody production when required," she explained.

"However, it's unclear how long these memory cells shall remain in a human body. They should be studied in times to come," she said.

Ariyannur, meanwhile, said: "As an orchestrator of immune cells, the best we can do is to keep our systems healthy and safe with proper food, vitamins, rest, and exercise."

Kerala women hail state's anti-abuse campaign

Athul Krishna

KERELA: Kerala women have welcomed the move by the state's Women and Child Development Department (WCD) to launch a campaign against the inequalities and abuses faced by them.

They said they were happy that the government was finally doing something for further development of the condition of women in the state.

The official tagline of the campaign is Ini Venda Vittu Veezcha, which translates to "no need for compromise anymore."

"The campaign is highly relevant and a much-needed one for the society we live in. I'm very happy to see the government finally doing something about it," said Henna M Akbar, an architecture student from Thrissur.

The campaign brings out a series of illustrations carrying messages against issues like domestic abuse, inequalities in the working sector, and moral policing.

Anjali Ram, a journalism student from Palakkad, said, "Campaigns like these are necessary in a society where inequalities and difficulties faced by women are on the rise. Campaigns on social media is very effective and important, especially in the current scenario."

Ishant Sharma joins elite list of 100-Test India bowlers

Alwin Benjamin Soji

Ishant Sharma became the fourth Indian bowler to play 100 Test matches as the Boys in Blue played the third Test against England on Wednesday, February 24, at the Narendra Modi Stadium (formerly the Sardar Patel Stadium) in Ahmedabad.

Sharma joined the elite list of Indian bowlers consisting of Anil Kumble (132), Kapil Dev (131), and Harbhajan Singh (103) who have played 100 Test matches for India.

The 32-year-old pacer from Delhi made his Test debut against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on May 25, 2007.

Captain Virat Kohli praised the bowler's achievement by saying, "I couldn't be happier for him. Playing 100 Test matches as a fast bowler is no mean feat. Especially in our conditions, where things get so difficult. But he persevered, he kept working hard. That's been his essence from Day One."

England were bowled out for 112, with Axar Patel taking six wickets. However, it was Sharma who got the ball rolling by taking the first English wicket.

WB teachers vaccinated for election

Megha Bhattacharjee

WEST BENGAL: Government school teachers in West Bengal are getting a higher priority in the administration of Covid-19 vaccinations as the state gears up for Assembly elections later this year. The teachers are conscripted for polling work.

"I was vaccinated on Tuesday, February 23. Our school reopened on February 12. We are dealing with a total of 600-700 students every single day. Apart from



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that we are having to visit the District Education Office constantly for official work.

Most importantly, most of us have election duty from next month, so it is extremely

important for school staff like us to get vaccinated at the earliest," said Mithu Dutta Karar, principal of Bator Shikshayatan For Girls High School.

"I think right after the healthcare workers we have been prioritised for vaccination, and I believe it is rightly so," said Pradhan Bagchi, another government-school teacher. "We are coming in contact with children every single day and the election process can put a lot of people at risk of Covid-19 if we aren't vaccinated."

Karnataka gets its first Vistadome tourist coach

Sudarshini

The Bengaluru-Mangaluru train route is set to become much more travel-friendly, with South Western Railway (SWR) all set to deploy the first Vistadome tourist coach it got from the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai.

The date of operation has not been finalised, as SWR is awaiting permission from the zonal headquarters.

SWR expects three more such coaches on its hands by mid-April.

The rates for travelling in

this coach will be finalised by the Centre and are expected to be on a par with the AC chair cars of Shatabdi Express.

This new coach is GPS-enabled with Wi-Fi, and has glass rooftops, through which passengers may view the scenic Western Ghats.

It also has 40 reclining chairs that can rotate 180 degrees to face the direction in which the train is moving.

It also has other modern amenities like microwave ovens, LED lights and a refrigerator, which are yet to be tested on ground.

Technical glitch halts NSE trading

Vandana Nampoothiri

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) halted all trading segments on Wednesday due to a technical glitch.

NSE informed the masses through a tweet that "all the segments have been closed at 11:40."

It added: "NSE has multiple telecom links with two service providers to ensure redundancy. We have received communication from both the telecom service providers that there are issues with their links due to which there is an impact on NSE system."



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The exchange also said the issue would be solved as soon as possible.

The NSE Nifty50 was at 14,820.45 at the time of the halt.

"NSE halted trading and No news on re-opening. To avoid systemic issues NSE must consider 2 options: 1. In case the are unable to reopen before 3:30, they should

extend time for orderly closure of open positions. 2. If no extension, then all trades must be annulled."

tweeted Jimeet Modi, CEO of Samco India.

This is not the first time NSE faced such a situation. In June 2020, NSE suffered a similar technical glitch, but trade was not completely halted.