

INDIA STATES TIMES NEWS DESK

NATIONAL

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing the India International Science Festival, said India's tech industry is at the "forefront of solving global problems but India wants to do more".
- NITI Aayog Member (Health) VK Paul, during a press briefing on Tuesday, said the new mutation of coronavirus strain detected in the UK is a "super-spreader" with 70% increased transmissibility rate.
- Praising the medical fraternity in their fight against coronavirus, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said, "Post COVID-19 crisis, the world has understood that the real 'Superman' and 'Wonder Woman' are our doctors, nurses and paramedical staff."
- Delhi Home Minister Satyendar Jain on Tuesday said that necessary instructions have been issued to the Home Department to withdraw all FIRs and complaints lodged during lockdown against migrant labourers.
- Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) CEO Videh Jaipuria has said, "We have a storage capacity of 27 lakh vaccines at any given point for Delhi Airport."
- The air quality in the national capital remained in "severe" category as overall air quality index (AQI) stood at 404 in Delhi on Wednesday morning.
- Around 20 passengers from UK tested positive for COVID-19 in India. Punjab Minister OP Soni said seven passengers and a flight crew member tested positive in the state, while a Gujarat civic official said four passengers, including a British national, tested COVID-19 positive in Ahmedabad.
- Two people have died in gas leakage at IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited) plant in Uttar Pradesh's Phulpur, Prayagraj DM Bhanu Chandra Goswami said.
- The Uttar Pradesh agriculture and horticulture departments, along with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, are planning to develop a five-kilometre radius along both sides of the Ganga as an organic farming belt.
- The CBI has arrested a 35-year-old Srinagar resident for allegedly running online child sexual abuse racket along with his US-based wife.
- The Ministry of Railways on Tuesday said that at the Indian Army's request, it ran Rajdhani Express to its maximum speed and reached Barkakana station (Ranchi Division) 17 minutes before so that 100 Army jawans could get extra time to board. "
- The Telangana government on Tuesday slashed RT-PCR rates from ₹850 to ₹500. The rates for samples collected from home for RT-PCR testing have also been reduced from ₹1,200 to ₹750.

- Area commander of banned outfit People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI) Punai Oraon was killed in an encounter in Jharkhand
- Telangana Health Department is in the process of tracing all 355 passengers from the UK who had arrived in Telangana since December 15.

INTERNATIONAL

- The spread of new coronavirus strain can be prevented using the same interventions that also work for the viruses that are circulating around, said Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO technical lead for COVID-19.
- COVID-19 has reached every continent on Earth as at least 58 people tested positive in Antarctica. Chile's army announced 36 people at General Bernardo O'Higgins Riquelme Antarctic base tested positive, and later, Health Minister for Chile's Biobio region said there are 21 infections involving people aboard Chilean navy's Sergeant Aldea vessel.
- Someone died from COVID-19 every 33 seconds in the US in its deadliest week last week, according to a Reuters analysis of state and county reports.
- Twitter has informed President-elect Joe Biden's team that he won't inherit Donald Trump's 33 million followers on the official President of the United States Twitter account, @POTUS, when he assumes the presidency.
- Jupiter and Saturn came closer than any time in 397 years on Monday night in the event dubbed 'Great Conjunction'. The two planets were at their closest separation at 0.1° apart.
- Speaking about the conflict between Ethiopia's federal government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), an eyewitness said that people had been "slaughtered" like chickens and their corpses abandoned to be "eaten by hyenas".
- Singapore has received its first shipment of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine, making it the first country in Asia to do so. The country had approved the vaccine last week.
- At least five countries have suspended flights from South Africa after a new variant of coronavirus was recently discovered in the country.
- UK PM Boris Johnson's India visit might not be possible due to new COVID-19 strain, "particularly if this level of infection and spread continues", Dr Chaand Nagpaul, Chair of British Medical Association's Council said.
- Antarctica has recorded its first cases of COVID-19, becoming the world's last continent to get affected by the pandemic, according to reports.

