

INDIA STATES TIMES NEWS DESK

NATIONAL

- India has reported 72,330 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, which is the maximum number of new cases reported in a day in nearly six months.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today tweeted that the order slashing the interest rates on small savings schemes like PPF has been withdrawn.
- The free trade agreement (FTA) signed between India and Mauritius on February 22 comes into effect on April 1, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said.
- Chandigarh MP Kirron Kher is suffering from blood cancer and is undergoing treatment at Mumbai's Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, Chandigarh BJP President Arun Sood, in a press conference, revealed.
- Rajasthan government has extended the night curfew timings by one hour in eight cities.
- The Maharashtra government on Wednesday reduced the prices of RT-PCR test for coronavirus to ₹500 at collection centres and ₹600 at quarantine centres or isolation centres and drive through sample collection kiosks.
- The voting has begun for the second phase of Assembly elections in Assam and West Bengal.
- The Union Health Ministry has asked the states and Union Territories to keep COVID-19 vaccine wastage below 1% and advised them to avoid over-stocking or under-stocking of vaccines.
- Every Indian aged 45 or above will now be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine as the third phase of the vaccination drive begins from today.
- The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Wednesday announced a march to Parliament in the first fortnight of May. The SKM is the umbrella body of 40 protesting farmers' unions.
- The Customs officials have recovered 436 grams of gold worth ₹20 lakh from a passenger intercepted at the Jaipur International Airport.
- Mumbai reported 5,394 fresh COVID-19 cases and 15 more deaths on Wednesday, according to data issued by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.
- Bharatiya Janata Party's Nandigram candidate Suvendu Adhikari urged people to "come out in large numbers to cast their votes as the whole country is looking at Nandigram".
- A BJP delegation met Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) commissioner Vikram Kumar, and demanded an increase in testing and vaccination in the city.
- The central government on Wednesday extended the last date for linking of Aadhaar number with PAN from March 31, 2021, to June 30, 2021, in view of the difficulties arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic.





- Adani Group on Wednesday said it condemns "violations of fundamental rights of all people" on the ongoing violence in Myanmar in which over 500 people have been killed.

INTERNATIONAL

- As many as 1.5 crore doses of Johnson & Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine were destroyed after workers at a factory in US' Baltimore mixed ingredients from the coronavirus vaccines of J&J and AstraZeneca.
- NASA has shared nighttime images of traffic jam in Suez Canal which was caused after a huge container ship got stuck.
- French President Emmanuel Macron has announced that a 'limited lockdown' will be imposed across the nation and schools would be closed for three weeks.
- A shooting at a Southern California office building has killed four people, including a child before police shot and wounded the suspect.
- The 50-year-old owner of a Chinese takeaway joint in the United Kingdom is telling customers who post negative reviews to "take their business somewhere else".
- Asahi Group's Carlton and United Breweries is offering Australian households free beer in exchange for excess solar power to help reach its target of 100% renewable power by 2025.
- COVID-19 was the third-leading cause of death in the US last year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.
- European Medicines Agency (EMA) Director Emer Cooke said, "There is no evidence that would support restricting the use of this [Oxford-AstraZeneca] vaccine in any population".
- Boeing CEO Dave Calhoun has said its European rival Airbus stands to gain market share in case Boeing was locked out of China as a result of the US-China trade tension.
- Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has contradicted Meghan Markle's claim that she married Prince Harry days before the official ceremony at Windsor Castle in 2018.
- Britain's Queen Elizabeth carried out her first face-to-face engagement this year two days after the country's strict COVID-19 lockdown was eased.
- The Swiss army will reportedly allow its female members to wear women's underwear for the first time to boost recruitment.

