MADURAI

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Covid positive patient with oxygen support on his way to get admitted at a Hospital in Bengaluru on Friday | VINOD KUMAR T

Karnataka and Kerala extend lockdown till 30

Active cases decrease in districts, triple lockdown will continue in Malappuram

In view of public

health and the suggestions of the

experts, the Covid

restrictions have

been extended.

and we expect

people's

cooperation in

adhering to the

lockdown rules

BS Yediyurappa,

Chief Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

THE Kerala government on Friday announced a one week extension of the state-wide lockdown till May 30, to contain the spread of the COV-ID-19 pandemic.

The state has been under lockdown since May 8 after weekend restrictions and lockdown-like curbs imposed earlier failed to create any desired impact in terms of the daily caseload of the infected persons.

On May 16, the lockdown was extended to May

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also announced the withdrawal of "triple lockdown" measures being implemented in three districts--Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Thrissur from May 16.

However, the "triple lockdown" will be continued in Malappuram district.

Briefing the media, Vijayan said the average Test Positivity Rate for the last

three days was 23.3 per cent. "While the TPR is more in Malappuram, it is decreasing in other districts. Active cases are declining in all districts." Noting that the virus was still

spreading, the CM said the number of active cases and TPR has fallen below 25 per cent in the districts where triple lockdown was imposed, except in Malappuram.

"Therefore, the triple lockdown will be exempted in Er-

nakulam, Thrissur and Thiruvananthapuram districts from tomorrow morning (May

It will continue in Malappuram while the regular lockdown will continue in all other districts", he said.

'Please follow SOP'

Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Friday announced extension of lockdown from May 24 to June 7 for a period of 14 days to contain the spread of coronavirus in the State.

The stringent restrictions are already in effect from May 10 and was supposed to end on May 24. However, due to the new order, they would end on the morning of June 7.

"We have taken some decisions regarding the lockdown after discussing them with our senior Ministers, chief secretary and other officials," the Chief

Minister told reporters.

"Heeding to the suggestions of experts, we have decided to extend the stringent restriction from May 24 to June 7," he said.

"In view of public health and the suggestions of the experts, the restrictions have been extended, and we expect people's cooperation, Yediyurappa said.

The Karnataka government had put restrictions since April 7 but imposed strict restrictions from May 10.

Debate him, don't silence him, tweets Tharoor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@Kasaragod

LAWMAKERS from Kerala have condemned the Kasaragod-based Central University of Kerala's decision to suspend political science assistant professor Gilbert Sebastian, who criticised the Centre's vaccine policy and called the RSS-BJP a proto-fascist organisation during his class.

Student organisations, barring the complainant ABVP, have demanded the university to revoke the suspension order.

Debate him, don't silence him, said Congress Lok Sabha member from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor.

Writing on Twitter and Facebook, Tharoor said he had expressed concern about the dwindling space for dissent on campuses when discussing the National Education Policy.

Kasaragod Lok Sabha member and Congress leader Rajmohan Unnithan wrote to Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' seeking his intervention to revoke the suspension of Dr Sebastian. "The teacher has all

the qualifications and merits to teach. Proto-fascism is a technical term and he used it in his class to describe and elaborate on certain political situations. Such a witch-hunting is a transgression into the academic freedom of the university pro-

fession," Unnithan said. C H Kunhambu, CPM MLA from Udma, where the university is situated, said suspending teachers for giving lectures would instil fear in the minds of young thinkers and also teachers. In his letter to Vice-

Chancellor Prof H Venkateshwarlu, he said: "The university should revoke the suspension and upfreedom and create a fearless, healthy and uncensored space for

During his online class on 'Fascism and Nazism' on April

education.'

19, Dr Sebastian of the Department of International Relations and Politics, said: "The RSS and its affiliate organisations, together called as the Sangh Parivar meaning the

Sangh family (including the BJP) in India can also be considered proto-fascist". Protofascist movements are those influenced by classical fascist organisations.

In the class, he said Spain under General Franco, Portugal under Salazar, Argentina under Juan Peron, Chile under Pinochet, the apartheid regime hold the academic in South Africa, and the Hutu ultranationalist and supremacist movement of Rwanda in the early 1990s could be considered proto-fascist, and posed a question whether India under Narendra Modi since 2014 was

In the same class, the assistant professor also criticised the government for exporting vaccines at a time when the country's vaccine needs were not

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met. "That shows their patriotism," he said.

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) — the students' wing of the RSS has threatened mass protest if the Vice-Chancellor did not take action against the faculty member.

A Vinod Karuvarakundu, a member of the National Monitoring Committee on Education (SCs, STs, Persons with Special Needs and Minority Education) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, also wrote a complaint to the Vice-Chancellor. In his letter, he alleged Dr Sebastain tried to "instil hatred and poison" in the minds of the first-semester MA students against the democratically elected government headed by Narendra Modi.

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COOLING OFF

Children take respite from the scorching sun under the shady trees in Visakhapatnam on Friday | G SATYANARAYANA

Despite lockdown, ICUs see

DONITA JOSE @ Hyderabad

TEN days have passed since the state came under lockdown but there seems to be no let up in the number of serious cases coming to government hospitals.

Though the medical bulletins record a nearly 22 per cent drop in daily cases between caseload of May 12 and May 20, the rush in government hospitals is still the same, with several even losing lives without getting a bed at the entrance of the

"On Thursday night one 56 year old male patient had to be shifted to Fever Hospital since the family was not able to afford treatment in a private hospital where they had been for over 10 days. His oxygen saturation was being maintained at around 85% on

the ventilator. However some delay and confusion occurred in the shifting from Private hospital to Fever Hospital and the saturation fell to 45%, forcing the family to shift the patient to Gandhi Hospital," said Sai Charan Chikkulla.

At Gandhi Hospital, the family alleged they waited for over one hour inside the ambulance but got no help due to the rush.

emergency ward where no doctors or nurses attended to him. After making alot of hue and cry, the nurse checked the patient and said he was dead. Even after pronouncing death, no one came to speak to the family on what should be done. This is the condition of Gandhi Hospital just a day after CM KCR's visit," said Srikanth Renikunta, who helped the family.

no decrease in admissions

hospital.

"The son took his father to the

Pinarayi Vijayan takes over Minority Welfare portfolio

SOVI VIDYADHARAN @ T'Puram

IN a deft move aimed at winning over the Christian community that has been crying foul over 'imbalance' in disbursal of minority welfare funds, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has taken over the minority welfare portfolio.

The ministry had traditionally been helmed by a representative of the Muslim community during the LDF rule or by a Muslim League member when the UDF

epaper.newindianexpress.com

Minister V Abdurahiman was widely tipped to handle the portfolio along with Wakf and Hajj pilgrimage. But Pinarayi saw the swearing-in of a new cabinet and fresh allocation of portfolios as the right time to also reach out to the Christian community that was peeved at losing out a major chunk of the minority welfare funds.

The change of guard has been welcomed by the Kerala Catholic Bishops Conference (KCBC), the rites.

"It was a long-pending demand of a major section among the minority communities that the chief minister should handle the minority welfare portfolio. We welcome the new decision and express our gratitude to the chief minister," KCBC spokesperson Fr Jacob Palackapilly said.

However, Pinarayi clarified that he took over the portfolio due to the general opinion that it was bet-

apex body of various Catholic terif the department was handled by the chief minister himself.

> Asked about the Muslim League's opposition towards the move, Pinarayi said portfolio allocation was not that party's prerogative.

> The LDF had already begun attempts to assuage Church leaders in the run-up to the local body elections by appointing a commission led by Justice (Retd) J B Koshy to study the backwardness faced by Christians in the state.

OWNERS BOOKED TOO

MAN BOOKED FOR KILLING NEIGHBOUR'S DOG

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Virudhunagar

ONE 34-year-old man was booked by the Appanaickenpatti police for allegedly killing his neighbour's dog for biting his daughter. His neighbour — a couple — was also

booked for failing to con-

trol the dog. According to police, one Senthilraja (34) and his father Veluchamy of Kalaperumalpatti allegedly attacked a dog belonging to one Devi (28) of the same village and killed it. She later found that her dog had reportedly bitten Senthilraja's daughter. Based on her

complaint, an FIR was registered under Section 429 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and an investigation is underway. Similarly, Senthilraja com-

plained that his five-year-old daughter was bitten by the dog owned by Vasantharaja and Devi and sought action against the

couple. The girl was on her way to a shop to buy chocolate when the dog allegedly bit her. She was taken to a hospital after she arrived house with bite injuries. Based on his complaint, Devi and Vasantharaja were booked under Sections 289, 337 of IPC.

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For Manappuram Finance Ltd

EXPRESS READ

Dalit freedom movement urges government not to cancel Directorate of Education post

Madurai: Tamil Nadu Dalit Freedom Movement urged the Tamil Nadu Government to not remove the post of Directorate of School Education in the State. In a press statement, Tamil Nadu Dalit Freedom Movement State General Secretary Karupiah said that for 100 years, School Education was under the system of Directorate of School Education. "Due to pressure from the Central government, AIADMK created the post of 'Commissioner of School Education' and appointed an IAS officer to implement New Education Policy. The present DMK government is also implementing the same principle, going against the Tamil Nadu's policy of social justice," he said.

HMs association welcomes govt's reform to bring in **Commissioner of School Education's post**

Madurai: Tamil Nadu Higher Secondary School Headmasters/Headmistress Association welcomed the government's reform to continue the post of Director of School Education as Commissioner of School Education. In a press statement, Association Deputy President and District Spokesperson Christopher welcomed the continuation of the post of 'Commissioner of School Education' and said that many cases were pending in courts due to officials' lethargic attitude in the Directorate of School Education. He said that if they were functioning under an IAS officer, the works would be completed sooner.