



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

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STUDENT EDITION

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WEB EDITION

## CAP ONLINE CLASSES AT 2-3 HRS: HRD norms

Releasing the "Pragyata" guidelines for online classes, the Union HRD ministry has recommended a cap on daily sessions and their durations for different levels of school students. The ministry framed the guidelines, following concerns raised by the parents on schools conducting online classes, like regular schools,

### EDUCATION

thereby increasing children's exposure to digital screens manifold, since the

closure of schools from March 16, 2020, after the Covid-19 outbreak. The guidelines highlighted that "it is important to have presentations, which are easily readable, slides must follow certain rules, like not more than five bullet points, maximise use of infographics, graphs, charts and avoid tables as much as possible".

### THE GUIDELINES

➔ According to the guidelines, the duration for online classes for pre-primary students should not be more than 30 minutes; for classes I to VIII, two online sessions of up to 45 minutes each are suggested; for classes IX to XII, three should be four sessions of 30-45 minutes durations

➔ It has also made specific recommendations based on the accessibility of digital resources across households – right from those with access

to 4G connections with laptop, smartphone and TV to those with no digital device

➔ The HRD ministry has recommended eight steps of online or digital learning – plan, review, arrange, guide, talk, assign, track and appreciate. These steps guide the planning and implementation of digital education step by step with examples

➔ The guidelines also talk of the

need of assessment, concerns while planning online and digital education, like duration, screen time, inclusiveness, balanced online and offline activities, level-wise modalities of intervention, including resource curation, level-wise delivery; physical, mental health and well-being during digital education

➔ The guidelines also urge parents, teachers and schools to take precautions on cyber safety and ethical practices



Photo: Getty Images

## Perseverance rover to search for life on Mars

NASA's most advanced Mars rover Perseverance will be launched from Earth on July 30, on a mission to seek signs of ancient microbial life, on what was once a river delta three-

### INTO THE FUTURE

and-a-half billion years ago. The inter-planetary voyage will last six months.



Three countries – United States, China and the United Arab Emirates – are sending unmanned spacecraft to the Red planet in quick succession, in the most sweeping effort to seek signs of ancient microscopic life, while scouting out the place for future astronauts

➔ Should the SUV-sized vehicle touch down unscathed, it will start collecting and storing rock and soil samples, to be retrieved by a future mission and brought back to Earth in 2031

➔ Perseverance follows in the tracks of four rovers before it, which was first launched in the late 1990s

➔ Together with satellite and surface probes, they have transformed our understanding of Mars, showing that the Red Planet wasn't always a cold and barren place ➔ Instead, it had the ingredients for life as we know it: water, organic compounds and a favourable climate

### TIME TO TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ON MARS

1 Which is the only country on the planet to have successfully landed robots on Mars?

a) USA b) Russia c) China

2 Which rover confirmed the presence of complex organic molecules on the Red planet?

a) Pathfinder b) Curiosity c) Spirit

3 On which crater of Mars will Perseverance land on February 18 2021?

a) Jezero Crater b) Aniak c) Yuty

Answer: 1A; 2 B; 3A

### ENVIRONMENT

## Climate change will cause more extreme wet, dry seasons: Study

The world can expect more rainfall as the climate changes. It can also expect more water to evaporate, complicating efforts to manage reservoirs and irrigate crops in a growing world, warns a new study. Examining the magnitude and variability of precipitation and evaporation and how much water will be available during the wettest and driest months of the year, researchers found that dry seasons will become drier and wet seasons will become wetter.



➔ Most of the Eastern US, including all of South Carolina, has high precipitation that is well distributed throughout the year, researchers found. The region and others like it can expect greater precipitation and evaporation in both wet and dry seasons, according to the study. ➔ The greatest concern for such regions will be more flooding. The regions that will be hardest hit by climate change are the ones that already get slammed with rain during wet seasons and struggle with drought during dry seasons. They include, much of India and its neighbours – Bangladesh and Myanmar, along with an inland swath of Brazil, Africa, and northern Australia

### CORONA UPDATE

## YOU'D RATHER GET A CORONAVIRUS VACCINE THROUGH YOUR NOSE

Of the 150-plus coronavirus vaccines in development around the world, the lion's share will rely on a needle prick to make their way into the body.

Most vaccines throughout history have been jabbed into the upper arm, often to great success. But when protecting people against pathogens that invade the airway, like the coronavirus, an intra-muscular shot isn't necessarily the best strategy, some experts say.



### HOW IT WORKS

➔ Many microbes, including the coronavirus, enter the body through the mucosa – wet, squishy tissues that line the nose, mouth, lungs and digestive tract – triggering a unique immune response from cells and molecules there. Intra-muscular vaccines generally do a poor job of eliciting this mucosal response, and must instead rely on immune cells mobilised from elsewhere in the body flocking to the site of infection.

➔ Given the rapid spread of the coronavirus, some say, it makes sense to develop vaccines for the airway

### NEWS IN BRIEF

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

## SONU SOOD TO WRITE A BOOK ON HIS EXPERIENCES WITH THE MIGRANTS

Actor Sonu Sood is all set to come up with a book recounting his experience of helping the migrant workers reach their hometowns during the Covid lockdown. The book will be published by Penguin India.

“The past three and half months have been a kind of a life-changing experience for me, living with the migrants for 16 to 18 hours a day and sharing their pain. When I go to see them off as they begin their journey back home, my heart is filled with joy and relief. Seeing the smiles on their faces, the tears of happiness in their eyes has been the most special experience of my life, and I pledged that I'll keep on working to send them back to their homes until the last migrant reaches his village, to his loved ones



## MEGHAN URGES GIRLS TO DROWN OUT ONLINE 'NOISE' WITH POSITIVITY

### CELEB TALK

Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, has urged girls and women from around the world to drown out "painfully loud" negative online chatter with positivity. Addressing 40,000 teen girls and young women via video at the UN Foundation's 2020 Girl Up Leadership Summit, Meghan said that the generation she was speaking to, grew up with digital technology and knew online media better than anyone. "You understand that our online world has the power to affirm and support as much as it does to harm," she said.

There will always be negative voices, and sometimes those voices can appear to be out-sized; sometimes they can appear to be painfully loud. Your gut will tell you what's right and what's wrong. The hardest part is to chase your convictions with action

## MUKESH AMBANI IS THE 6TH RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD

Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), became the world's sixth-richest person – surpassing Alphabet co-founder Larry Page – after his real-time net worth rose by \$2.17 billion to \$72.4 billion. Apart from being the richest Indian and Asian, Ambani, 63, is now all set to join the exclusive club of the world's top five richest people.

### IN THE NEWS

Ambani's net worth of \$72.4 billion is higher than the combined net worth of India's next five billionaires – Azim Premji (\$16.9 bn), Shiv Nadar (\$15.8 bn), Gautam Adani (\$12.6 bn), Radhakrishnan Damani (\$11.8 bn) and Cyrus Poonawala (\$11.8 bn). Of late, Ambani, who owns 42% of RIL, has benefited from a flurry of investment into Jio Platforms Ltd



# MAKE GRATITUDE A HABIT TO BECOME MENTALLY STRONG

In a recent article, Amy Morin, a psychotherapist, TEDx speaker and author of '13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do', has written that practising gratitude is the 'simplest and fastest way to build mental strength.' In fact, according to [www.positivepsychology.com](http://www.positivepsychology.com), when we express (and receive) gratitude, our brain releases dopamine and serotonin, the two crucial neurotransmitters responsible for our emotions, and they make us feel 'good'. They enhance our mood immediately, making us feel happy from inside.



Photo: Getty Images

### BENEFITS

➔ According to Laurie Santos, a cognitive scientist, gratitude affects our interpersonal relationships. Multiple studies suggest that if you express gratitude to the people you care about, you can end up boosting those relationships.

➔ That's not all! Harvard Health Publications reports that "gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. In fact, the simple act of writing down things that you are grateful has a range of benefits, including better sleep, suggests Greater Good Science Center of UC Berkeley

### HOW TO PRACTISE GRATITUDE THROUGH SIMPLE WAYS

1 **START A GRATITUDE JOURNAL:** Sonja Lyubomirsky, author of 'The How of Happiness' suggests that journaling is more effective, if you first make the conscious decision to become happier and more grateful. So make a decision, then write a gratitude journal, in which you log in the things/people you are thankful for.

2 Send small tokens, thank you notes or letters of gratitude to the people, who are important in your life; tell them why they are special to you

3 **CREATE A COLLAGE:** Morin suggests that looking at pictures of people/things that you are thankful for, will serve as a great visual reminder of the good things in your life

4 **CREATE A RITUAL WITH YOUR FAMILY:** Creating a unique ritual with your family can help you ensure that you practise it daily, feels Morin

5 Just say a heartfelt 'thanks' to express your appreciation to avoid expressing only in your head. Appreciate the people around you, and thank them

Show gratitude towards your parents, peers, elders and every other living being. Don't forget to share your experiences at [toinei175@gmail.com](mailto:toinei175@gmail.com) or [timesmailnie175@gmail.com](mailto:timesmailnie175@gmail.com)



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### THE BATCH THAT WAS SUMMONED BY A VOODOO DOLL!



**S NIVETHITHA RAJALAKSHMI**,  
Stanes Anglo Indian Higher  
Secondary School,  
Coimbatore

Batch of 2020 is the talk of the town! Everybody from kids to elders show sympathy for us as we didn't celebrate our last moments of school life. It is indeed a ritual to celebrate the last year of school but COVID-19 had other plans. Our journey of 14 years ended unnoticeably. It happened so quickly that many of us have not yet come to the realisation that our school lives have ended. Also, we the students of batch 2020, are facing the biggest identity crisis of our lives – not knowing if we are still school students or pass outs!

### 2020 - MOST PROACTIVE AND RESILIENT BATCH, EVER!



**SHAMONA KOSHY**  
PSBLLA, Bengaluru

### UNEXPECTED... BUT TURNED OUT FINE

The events of my senior year have definitely been unexpected and different than what I thought it would be. But in the end, ALL IS WELL!

**SEEJAL PADHI**, Academy of  
Health and Medical Sciences,  
New Jersey, US

### BATCH FROM HELL AND BACK...

Our batch has seen many hardships: switching to the old boards system from CCE and our Math paper leaking in the 10th; and the pandemic in the 12th. Could you ask for more?



**PAVIT SOHAL**, St John's High School,  
Chandigarh

The pandemic is unfortunate and most of us saw a dip in our percentage. In that regard the year was a curse. But in view of the world around us in murky water, we can only consider ourselves fortunate to have been spared from the risky business of papers.

### NO PROM! IMAGINE THAT...

There has been no prom, no graduation ceremony, virtual classes and all the clubs and organisations have been cancelled. However, it has been very relaxing with the lack of work and I have more leisure time.

**SHEETAL PADHI**  
Bridgewater Raritan High School,  
New Jersey, US

### AS A BATCH GLOBALLY WE WOULD HAVE MASTERED MANY TRADES... I HAVE!

For us, the batch of 2020, it is the year that was supposed to decide the course of our lives where we would step out from the comfort zone of our school and graduate to college. We were nervous yet excited. Suddenly life seems to have come to a halt. I strongly feel that my worries and apprehensions are insignificant in front of such a huge global challenge. And on the brighter side, I have had all time in the world, what with my entrance exams postponed, the pressure has evaporated. I have played innumerable card games, quibbled with my brothers over board games and even tried to learn cooking – a feat I had previously deemed impossible. Celebrating birthdays online is fun too.

**VEDIKA GUPTA**, Jayshree Periwai  
High School, Jaipur

### WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THIS YEAR WITH MIXED FEELINGS

For a class 12 student, 2020 was supposed to be a transition year after years of hard work and patience. Ideally by July 2020, we had envisioned ourselves in our dream college, but instead we were left hanging with an indefinite status. On the brighter side, students preparing for entrance exams have got more time to revise intensive portions. Batch of 2020 has mixed feelings about the situation. But nothing we cannot manage.



**MAITREYI ARWARI**, B K Birla  
Public School, Kalyan, Mumbai

### BATCH OF 2020... MADE US ALL BRAVE WARRIORS

We are united globally. I see this year as a boon. The batch where all students embraced the unprecedented time with innovative measures. This year was and still is full of challenges blended with our adaptation and the zeal to survive. This batch of students, with great rigour, energy and ambition faced the challenge and did a good job too. As Generation Y, we have tackled the untoward situation in a valiant way keeping health and safety as our first priority. After all, 'jaan hai toh jahan hai'. This year has helped us to learn and understand how to cope with difficult situations. As brave warriors, we students have withstood whatever came our way. But we did not let adversity deter us from learning a lot about how to sustain and manage ourselves.

**BHAVYA SOOD**, AGDAV, Model  
Town, New Delhi

### LESSON FOR OUR BATCH - HEALTH BEFORE REPORT CARD

I was disappointed after hearing that I will not be able to appear for two board exams. But as days went by, I realised my health and safety is of greater importance. Even though the reality is not honey-sweet, I am not heartbroken with the marking scheme that CBSE chose. The 2020 batch did learn a great lesson – your health comes before your report card.



**SRIJITA CHAKRABORTY**, BDM  
International



## Warriors of 2020

The Batch of 2020 will be recognised as a cohort that has had to face unique challenges, with unparalleled resilience and grace. As they go on their next adventure, we know they will provide some inspiration to make the world a better place... Times NIE spoke with students from India and the US to know more...



decisions and we welcomed what came our way. This batch will surely be remembered for the grace and humility we have all shown in accepting our grades and performance. And I speak for all students across the globe who passed out from school this year. We are going to make the most of it and always be that batch which proved to the world that when calamity strikes, the brave get stronger.

### BATCH THAT LEARNT THE WORTH OF FREEDOM AND SANITATION

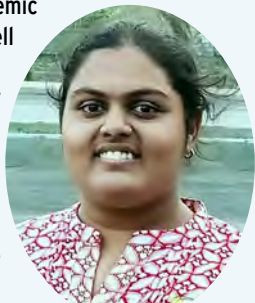
The batch of 2020 seems to be the most unlucky. We were deprived of the fun that comes with the end of our schooling years. We were also desperately waiting for the holidays between our last exam and result day, but all went down the drain. Some students did not even get the chance to take their last exam and prove their true potential. Yet 2020 has had its share of excitement. We got to spend time with our families which we couldn't have in the usual scenario. We also got to know the worth of freedom and sanitation – two extremely important things that make our life.



**VANI DEV PHARASI**, Doon  
International School,  
Dalanwala

### 2020 GOT THIS BATCH TOGETHER!

The class 12 batch of 2019-20 were attempting the Boards when the pandemic hit the world and all hell broke loose. Did we complain? No. We waited for our government to take tough



**KALYANI SREEJITH**, KV  
Pangode, Thiruvananthapuram

## Understanding the Report Card: Five Tips for Parents



### GRADES DON'T NECESSARILY REFLECT WORK

1 A bad grade doesn't necessarily mean your child isn't working hard, and a good grade doesn't mean your child is working harder. If your child works diligently on his/her homework and studies consistently, but doesn't test well, that information isn't reflected in bad grades. Additionally, getting A's because material is too easy puts your child at an academic disadvantage. Communicate with your child and instructor to find out the story behind the grades, and how to make sure your child is better prepared.

### GRADES ARE ABOUT PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

2 When discussing grades, it's important for kids to remember grades are theirs. No one gives them a good or bad grade, they are earned. Part of setting high expectations is expecting your child to take responsibility for their grades. This doesn't mean your child is in this alone, but it does mean that he or she needs to take ownership to seek that support from you and their teacher when extra help is needed.

### REACH BEYOND THAT A+

3 Parents love to see A's on their child's report card. In order to make sure that those straight A students achieve their highest potential, it's important to make sure they are being challenged. If children aren't challenged appropriately, they may become disengaged from academic pursuits and can become underachievers. Add if your child gets straight A's with little work, later in life he or she might be unprepared to accomplish tasks that actually do challenge their intellect.

### PARTNER WITH THE TEACHER TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED

4 Bad grades are a big deal, but not the end of the world. Remember grades are very stressful for kids. Overreacting can cause them to be even more anxious about school, and less able to openly communicate and engage with you. If your child does receive a bad grade, talk to them to find out where things went wrong. From there, work with your child's teacher to form a strategy for success. For example, if the class is simply too difficult, arrange for a student tutor or extra help from the teacher. If assignments aren't getting turned in, set aside time for homework each night and ensure your child sticks to the agreed time.

### NO SURPRISES

5 Report cards are an accrual of your child's academic performance through an entire semester. If you're staying engaged with your child's education, there should be no surprises when report cards are issued – especially if you had set aside time for your child to do homework and consistently discussed assignment and grades together.

Source: Expect More Arizona

### QUIZ TIME

## BYGONE BATTLE

**SURYAKUMARI DENNISON**, Teacher,  
Aavishkar Academy, Bengaluru

In Robert Southey's 'After Blenheim', an elderly narrator describes the consequences of an early 18th century conflict. Complete each of these statements on the poem (from 'Treasure Trove') by choosing correctly from the four options.

1 What object does Peterkin find while out playing?  
A. Skull B. Spade C. Sandal



D. Statue

2 How are Peterkin and Wilhelmine related to each other?  
A. Father and daughter  
B. Son and mother  
C. Brother and sister  
D. Husband and wife

3 What do we gather from the poem about Kaspar's occupation?

A. Cobbler  
B. Farmer  
C. Carpenter  
D. Fisherman

4 Which of Kaspar's family members fled during the battle?  
A. Son B. Uncle  
C. Father D. Grandfather

5 Who among these stately personages won the Battle of Blenheim?  
A. Earl B. Prince  
C. King D. Duke

**ANSWERS:** 1) A. Skull  
2) C. Brother and sister  
3) B. Farmer 4) C. Father  
5) D. Duke

### ACTIVITY FOR THE DAY

## HISTORY MYSTERY



### KHIRKI MOSQUE, Delhi

1 It is a mosque built by Khan-i-Jahan Juman Shah, the prime minister of Feroz Shah Tughlaq (1351–1388) of the Tughlaq Dynasty. The word 'Khirkhi' is an Urdu word, meaning 'window' and is also called 'The Mosque of Windows'. Khan-i-Jahan Juman Shah and Feroz Shah Tughlaq together planned and built several sites. Telangani in particular, was credited with building seven monuments with unique designs.

Can you name one city found by Feroz Shah Tughlaq?

Answer: Firozabad

Content and pics by 'History Diaries'. Co-founded by IIT-Delhi alumni, it is an initiative to make history interesting, engaging and relevant, transforming the way it is being taught in schools

### RAMA YANTRA Jantar Mantar, Delhi

2 Jantar Mantar is located in New Delhi. It consists of 13 architectural astronomy instruments. The site was built by Maharaja Jai Singh II of Jaipur.

**Rama Yantra:** Two large cylindrical structures with open top, used to measure the altitude of stars based on the latitude and the longitude on the earth. It consists of a pair of cylindrical structures, open to the sky, each with a pillar or pole at the centre. The pillar/post and walls are of equal height, which is also equal to the radius of the structure.

Can you name the Yantra that is basically a Sundial at Jantar Mantar? Answer: Samrat Yantra

