

Italian glacier turns pink due to global warming-linked algae



In a first for Italy, pink snow is observed on parts of the Presena glacier, in the north of the country. The phenomenon is caused by algae that develops when snow melts, simultaneously colouring the ice a darker colour. In a vicious circle, the algae in turn increases the rate at which the snow melts by accelerating the absorption of radiation. Biagio Di Mauro, a researcher from the National Research Council is investigating the phenomenon.

Drunk people can't socially distance, British police



A car tries to drive along a street filled with people drinking in the Soho area of London

Climate change 'fuelling deadly India lightning strikes'



Around 215 people - farmers, rural labourers and cattle graziers - have now died from strikes in the country's poorest state Patna | India

Lightning strikes killed 147 people in the north Indian state of Bihar over the last 10 days, officials said yesterday, warning of more extreme weather conditions to come, driven by climate change. Around 215 people -- farmers, rural labourers and cattle graziers -- have now died from strikes in the country's poorest state since late March, authorities said. "I was informed by weather experts, scientists and officials that rising temperatures due to climate change is the main cause behind the increasing lightning strikes," Bihar's Dis-

aster Management Minister Lakshmeshwar Rai said. Twenty-five people died on Saturday, he said. The Indian Meteorological Department has warned of more lightning in the next 48 hours. Lightning strikes during the annual monsoon that runs from June to September are fairly common in India. But officials said this year's toll in Bihar has already surpassed the total number of deaths recorded annually for the state over the past few years, even though the monsoon season has just started. Last year, 170 people were

killed in lightning strikes during the monsoon period. Bihar agrometeorologist Abdus Sattar said the lightning and thunder was caused by large-scale instability in the atmosphere, fuelled by temperature rises and excessive moisture. State authorities rolled out a mobile phone app they said helps predict possible lightning strikes. But many poor farmers do not own smartphones. In neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, just over 200 people have been struck and killed by lightning since April, according to officials.

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More than 2,300 people were killed by lightning in India in 2018 according to the National Crime Records Bureau, the most recent figures available.

The monsoon is crucial to replenishing water supplies in South Asia, but also causes widespread death and destruction across the region each year.

India to reopen Taj Mahal

Reuters | New Delhi

Visitors to the Taj Mahal will have to wear masks at all times, keep their distance and not touch its glistening marble surfaces when India's 17th-century monument to love reopens today after a three-month COVID-19 shutdown. Only 5,000 tourists will be allowed in a day, split into two groups, a far cry from peak levels of 80,000 a day who would

The health ministry yesterday reported a record single-day spike of 24,850 new cases and more than 600 deaths, pushing the overall case tally to 673,165, closing in on Russia, the third-most affected country globally.

swarm the mausoleum built in the northern city of Agra by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan

for his wife, in a 22-year effort. "All centrally protected monuments & sites shall be bound by the protocols like sanitization, social distancing & other health protocols," the federal tourism ministry said in a tweet. Authorities are reopening the Taj and other monuments, such as New Delhi's historic Red Fort, just as India's coronavirus infections are rising at the fastest pace in three months.

- **Pubs and restaurants were allowed to start seating clients and barbers could get their clippers out for the first time since March.**
- **Johnson said Friday that it would not have made much of a difference either way**

AFP | London

Britain's police said Sunday that revellers who packed London's Soho district the night pubs finally reopened made it "crystal clear" that drunk people cannot socially distance. England's hospitality sector sprung back to life after a three-month coronavirus hiatus on what the media dubbed as either "Super Saturday" or "Independence Day". Pubs and restaurants were allowed to start seating clients and barbers could get their clippers out for the first time since March. But Prime Minister Boris Johnson faced queries about why he decided to schedule the grand reopening for a Saturday instead of a potentially less chaotic Monday. Johnson said Friday that it would not have made much of a difference either way. But the head of Britain's police federation said he ended up dealing with "naked men, happy drunks, angry drunks, fights and more angry drunks" while on shift. "What was crystal clear is that drunk people can't/won't socially distance," John Apter told London radio. He said his own police department in the southern city of Southampton "managed to cope". "I know other areas have had issues with officers being assaulted," Apter said. A scan of police reports from Saturday night showed a similar level of mischief-making across England. Officers in the southwestern Devon and Cornwall region had logged up nearly 1,000 reports

of "drink-related disorder and anti-social behaviour" by late Saturday. There were also reports of illegal raves in London and the northeast that resulted in mass arrests as well as disorder in the north Midlands. Pubs in Wales and Scotland will partially reopen by mid-July while those in Ireland have had table service since Friday. **Government on defensive** Britain's lockdown lasted longer and ended later than in most European countries because of a soaring death toll that is now the world's third highest. The official fatality figure is around 44,000 and one in which COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate is higher than 50,000. Either measure makes Britain's toll Europe's worst. A safe reopening that averts the need for second lockdowns over large areas is seen as vital to Johnson's long-term success. Health Secretary Matt Hancock defended the government's decision-making and played down any immediate

safety concerns. "From what I've seen, although there's some pictures to the contrary, very, very largely people have acted responsibly," Hancock told Sky News. "So overall I'm pleased with what happened yesterday. It was really good to see people out and about and largely, very largely social distancing." Johnson's government re-shuttered stores in the central city of Leicester last week because of a local infections spike. The outbreak has been traced to local food and garment producers that reportedly failed to observe social distancing measures and violated other rules. The National Crime Agency launched an investigation after The Sunday Times reported one of the factories operated a sweatshop that paid illegally low wages. The agency said officers had "attended a number of business premises in Leicester area to assess concerns of modern slavery and human trafficking". No charges have been brought to date.



Revellers danced in the street the night pubs finally reopened



The government played down any immediate safety concerns