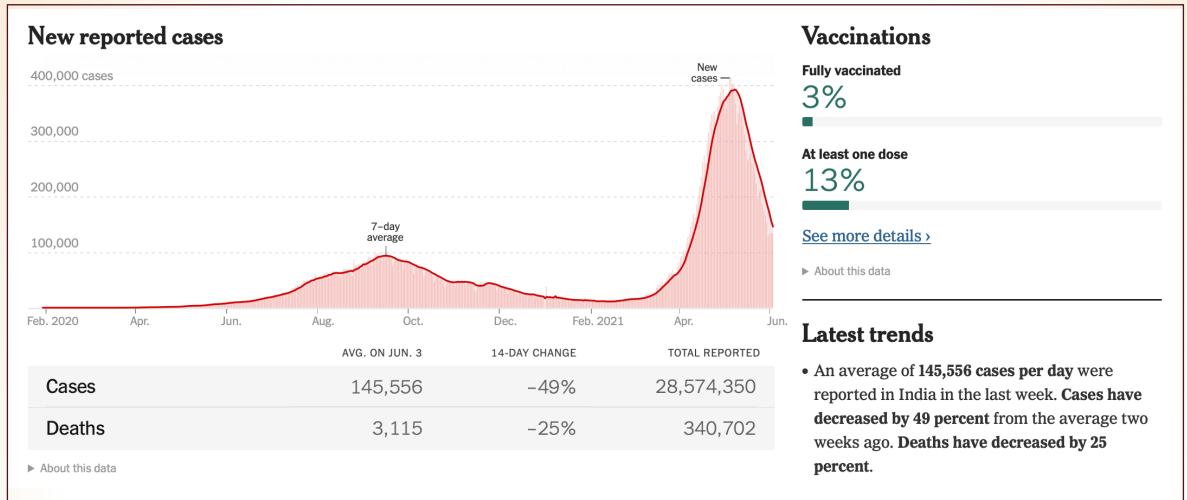




**IREF Campus Update** At this time, the only students on campus at IREF are the IREF Nursing Students. All other schools have been closed by the Indian Government with no timetable for a return. IREF teachers are communicating with students via phone to provide tutoring. The health and safety of the children are our priority at this time.



COVID cases are still high in India as the country averages over 140,000 positive covid cases per day. But these numbers are much less than the 400,000 daily cases during the first week of May.

Last month, we requested prayer for Lydia (a teacher at IREF's nursing school and the niece of Emmanuel Rebba) as she was hospitalized with COVID. We are pleased to share that she has made a full recovery and has returned to work at the Nursing School. IREF pastor Devasahayam, and IREF's worship director Vijay were also sick with COVID last month and they are doing much better. Please continue to pray for the nation of India. Everyone in India has been affected by this pandemic.

## India Rural Evangelical Fellowship

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## IREF Losses

On April 17th, we received the very sad news that a second brother of Emmanuel Rebba, Francis Rebba, had died from Covid-19. Francis was fully engaged with the work of IREF as a passionate evangelist, going from village to village preaching the Gospel, right up until the unexpected end of his life. Francis lost his wife only 6 years into their marriage in the mid 1980s and brought up their daughter, Lydia, on his own from when she was only four years old. He was dearly-loved by all those who visited India from the UK and USA; he frequently translated for many team members in clinics and crusades, and showed great love and kindness to all whom he ministered to. We will all miss him sorely.

On May 1st, two weeks after the sudden passing of Francis, Emmanuel's eldest brother - Heyer Paul also died from Covid-19. Heyer Paul was a retired college professor at Andhra Christian College. In the 1990s, he became very active in coordinating travel for the US and UK teams from Chennai to Repalle, and back. Heyer Paul had a boisterous personality that will be missed by many.

Please keep Emmanuel, Lydia and Heyer Paul's family; as well as the entire Rebba family in your prayers as they continue to grieve these recent losses.





## Sharing God's Faithfulness thru Covid-19



IREF has watched the 2nd wave of Covid spread at a rapid rate. More precautions were put in place, more emphasis on safety and health were announced throughout campus to staff, students and visitors on campus.

However, just days before Jr College and College examinations, the government postponed year end examinations. With no announcement of rescheduled dates for exams, students were sent home to their villages before a new lockdown was imposed in early May.

Recently, Vijay, IREF's worship director, fell ill only later to confirm that he and his family tested positive for Covid. Quickly, Vijay began quarantining at home with proper medicine in hand. In the midst of such a dire situation, Vijay's landlord demanded that he and his family vacate their home. Panicked and with no place to go, IREF housed Vijay and his family on campus in a safe location away from staff and students. Each day, IREF staff carefully brought them meals, supplies and other provisions during their time quarantining.

We are happy to share with you that Vijay and his family are all safe and have negated negative for COVID. His health and safety have been a continued prayer for us these past few weeks.

On June 6th, Vijay attended IREF's church and shared his testimony and what God had done over these few weeks. With many passing away around the IREF community, Vijay was overwhelmed with emotion thinking about

the fate of his family. The reality in India is that COVID is considered a death-sentence. Worry, anxiety and the fear of sleep (or not waking up) were an ever-constant presence for him. His thankfulness for his life, his family's health and God's answered prayer were felt in the pauses of his testimony. Vijay also explained the tears he and his daughter (who originally tested negative and was sent to stay with grandparents) shared as they reunited. For many people, these have been very different tears but for Vijay and his daughter, these were tears of indescribable joy, happiness and love.

Vijay is an important member of our IREF India staff who has been dedicated to the work that God is doing through the ministry of IREF. His down-to-earth personality and his all-around skills and abilities have greatly helped IREF in its work. While most are familiar with his work with IREF's choir and leading Sunday worship, he is also involved in the Child Sponsorship program, and during the 2020 lockdowns was instrumental in IREF painting and landscaping projects.

"This is exactly the time to show the love of Christ. Jesus demonstrated His love; it is only right to extend Christ's love to those in need such as Vijay and his family for such a time as this. If not now, how will others know what Jesus' love looks like?" said Dee Rebba in response to Vijay's testimony.



June 2021  
continued...

India Rural  
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### Prayer & Praise

- Please pray for the IREF students and staff who returned to their home villages. We anticipate that many of these young people are witnessing devastating losses within their families and communities. Pray for their health, safety and spiritual well being during this time.
- Please pray that the Indian church will boldly rise up. Pray that during these difficult days that their work is produced by faith, their labor is prompted by love, and their endurance is inspired by hope in Jesus Christ. Pray that the way in which they love during this crisis will be a model to all believers. Pray that the gospel will ring out from them throughout India and South Asia, and to the ends of the earth and that their faith will become known everywhere.
- In the rural villages of India, millions and millions have little access to good medical care and no means to self-quarantine. Families live in very close quarters, sometimes living together in only one room. There are reports of whole villages being infected. Many of these rural peoples—approximately 65% of India's population—are poor and live day-to-day under normal circumstances. These lockdown restrictions on work and movement, along with sickness, make an already difficult life feel desperately hopeless. Please pray for God to pour out His great mercy on each and every village in the remotest parts of India. May the knowledge of the glory of the Lord cover India as the waters cover the sea (from Habakkuk 2:14).

