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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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RBI scales down printing of Rs 2000 note to minimum: Govt source

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI):

The printing of Rs 2000 banknote, introduced post-demonetisation in November 2016, has been reduced to the "minimum" by the Reserve Bank, a top finance ministry official said Thursday. Soon after the sudden decision to ban old Rs 500/1000 currency notes by the government, the Reserve Bank had come out with the Rs 2000 currency note along with a new look Rs 500 note as part of its massive re-monetisation exercise.

The senior official said the RBI and the government from time to time decides on the quantum of currency to be printed on the basis of money in circulation.

When the Rs 2000 note was launched, it was decided that the printing would be "scaled down" going forward, since the new high currency value note was meant for meeting the re-monetisation need.

"The printing of 2000 rupee notes has been substantially reduced. It has been decided to limit the printing of 2000 currency notes to minimum. This is nothing new," the official said.

SPCC discuss on various political activities

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

A meeting of the Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee to discuss various political activities at the state and the national level in 2018 and on the future programmes of the party was held at the party office here today.

SPCC president, Bharat Basnet, deliberated on alliance options for the party and on future programmes, informs an SPCC press release.

The release claims that SPCC has initiated the unification of all

opposition parties in the interest of people of Sikkim.

Mr Basnet mentioned that being a responsible national party, the Congress wants to establish the right values of the Republic in the State by taking all opposition parties together to end corruption and establish a transparent administration in the State.

He added that failure of the opposition parties to unite cohesively and the recent statement of the Chief Minister alleging that the Centre on ignoring

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from Raj Bhavan informs.

The calendar contains pictures of rare and exotic species of birds captured at various locations across the state.

It may be mentioned that Sikkim Ornithological Society, the only bird organisation in Sikkim, has been working tirelessly towards conservation

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Addressing the press conference, Mr Lepcha mentioned that the Queer Pride Parade is scheduled to be taken out from Deorali and conclude at Titanic Park or Paljor Stadium depending on the permissions received from the authorities.

He mentioned that the main objective be-

hind the parade was to generate awareness among the people to treat and accept LGBTQI members as equals in the society and to eliminate the related stigma.

Mr Lepcha mentioned that another objective of the event was to protest and condemn the Transgender Bill of 2018. He added that the parade

will also have the participation of LGBTQI community members from Darjeeling and Siliguri and their supporters.

"We would like to request every individual and organisation of Sikkim to come forward and support the rights and welfare needs of the LGBTQI community of

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Governor releases Sikkim Ornithological Society 2019 calendar



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

Governor Ganga Prasad released a calendar for 2019 published by the Sikkim Ornithological Society here at Raj Bhavan today.

SOS president, Nosang Limboo, and secretary, Chewang Bonpo, were present on the occasion, a press communiqué

from Raj Bhavan informs.

The calendar contains pictures of rare and exotic species of birds captured at various locations across the state.

It may be mentioned that Sikkim Ornithological Society, the only bird organisation in Sikkim, has been working tirelessly towards conservation

and awareness of avian diversity in the State since its inception in 2005.

The Governor, while extending New Year greetings to the members of the society, enquired about the activities of the society.

He also urged the society to work towards conservation of State's

rich biodiversity in a bid to promote Sikkim as a premier Eco-Tourism destination in the country.

Mr Limboo provided a brief insight into the activities and awareness interventions of the society towards preserving the exotic species of birds and butterflies of Sikkim, the release mentions.

While AIADMK has 37 members, the TDP has 15

45 LS members suspended in 2 days for disruptions

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI):

Cracking the whip on unruly MPs, Speaker Sumitra Mahajan has suspended 45 Lok Sabha members belonging to the TDP and the AIADMK since Wednesday after they created ruckus in the House and continuously disrupted proceedings for days.

Mahajan had suspended 24 AIADMK members on Wednesday for five consecutive sittings. A day later, she suspended 21 members of AIADMK and TDP and an unattached YSR Congress member. The action was taken under rule 374A of Lok Sabha which says that they cannot attend the remaining days of the session, which concludes on January 8.

While AIADMK has 37 members, the TDP has 15

in the lower house. Action against such a large number of MPs is unusual.

In February, 2014, the then Speaker Meira Kumar had suspended 18 MPs from Andhra Pradesh following bedlam in the House. Those suspended then were either supporting or opposing creation of Telangana.

Proceeding in Lok Sabha during the winter session that commenced on December 11 have been repeatedly stalled due to protests by AIADMK and TDP members over a proposed dam on river Cauvery and special state status to Andhra Pradesh respectively.

While 19 MPs were suspended around noon on Thursday, two others were asked to leave the House around 2.00 pm.

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AIDWA objects to purification ritual after women's entry into Sabarimala temple

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI): The All India Democratic Women's Association has expressed strong objection to the purification rituals carried out by the priests after two women of menstruating age visited the Sabarimala temple, calling it "demeaning" as it projects women as "impure" and "unclean".

On Wednesday, the two women had stepped into the temple of Lord Ayyappa, breaking a centuries-old tradition defying dire threats from the Hindu right.

Kanakadurga, 44, and Bindu, 42, stepped into the hallowed precincts guarded by police three months after the apex court's historic judgement lifting the ban on entry of girls and women between 10 and 50 years of age into the shrine of Lord Ayyappa, its "eternally celibate" deity.

Following the entry of the women into the shrine, the chief



priest had decided to close the sanctum sanctorum of the temple in order to perform the "purification" ceremony.

"The purification ritual is demeaning to women as it projects them as 'impure' and 'unclean'. It is also a clear violation of the Supreme Court verdict," AIDWA said in a statement.

AIDWA strongly condemns the attempts of right wing groups to create a communal frenzy and

subvert the implementation of the orders of the Supreme Court (SC) in the Sabarimala case. "They have resorted to threats and attacked the houses of the two women imperiling the lives of their families," the statement said.

AIDWA has called upon all its units in the country to condemn this regressive stand of the communal forces on January 3, the birth anniversary of social reformer Savitribai Phule.

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Sikkim vehicles continue to face harassment in WB, alleges SMTWA
YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 03 JAN:

Allegations of harassment of Sikkim-registered vehicles in Siliguri have resurfaced even though the matter was settled after a reciprocal transport agreement was signed between the Sikkim and West Bengal Sub Divisional Authority and Siliguri Transport Agency (STA) last year.

Sikkim Motor Transport Workers Association [SMTWA], president, Tinku Adhikari has alleged that drivers are still facing problems when they enter Siliguri.

West Bengal traffic police are refusing to recognize countersigned permit issued by the Siliguri Transport Agency since the date of issuance is not mentioned in the document, he said further adding that the STA on the other hand denies of any such incident being reported.

According to the reciprocal agreement, at least 2,500 Sikkim vehicles are allowed to carry out transportation to all sub divisional areas of Kalimpong and Darjeeling districts of West Bengal.

Mrs Chamling arranges donation of 602 blankets for senior citizens of Zoom-Salghari constituency

SUMMIT REPORT
JORETHANG, 03 JAN:

A blanket distribution programme for senior citizens was held at Garib Utthan Bhawan here under Zoom-Salghari constituency today on the initiative of Tika Maya Chamling, the wife of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

Advisor, Power Department, Gagan Rai, was present as the chief guest accompanied by the area MLA, AK Ghatani, NJMC chairperson Tika Gurung, zonal incharge [South-West], Sukman Limboo, SDF social media in-charge, Avinash Yakha, South District, Panchayat members and SDF party functionaries.

The chief guest, in his address, stressed that due to the good



governance provided by the SDF party under the leadership of Pawan Chamling, Sikkim was peaceful, secured, and unified.

"We have to appreciate the distribution of blankets during winter

season," he remarked in recognition of the gesture.

A total of 602 blankets were distributed to senior citizens from all 29 wards under Zoom-Salghari constituency.

Concerned Area MLA, AK Ghatani in his brief mentioned that the blanket has been distributed for the senior citizens by the personal concept of Mrs Tika Maya Chamling and not from SDF party, he said.

Daylong EVM and VVPAT training held for West Sikkim



GYALSHING, 03 JAN (IPR): A one-day EVM and VVPAT Training Program organized for EROs, AEROs and Supervisory Officers of the West District was organized by the CEO Office, Gangtok at the New Warehouse, Kyongsa, West Sikkim. Karma Lodey Lepcha, ADC (W), Tashi Tshering Bhutia, Addl. Dir. (CEO) along with SDMs and BDOs of the West District were present in the Training Program. Mahesh Sharma, State Level Master Trainer on VVPAT and EVM was the

resource person for the Program.

Karma Lodey Lepcha, ADC (W) asked the participants to make proper use of the training which is very crucial for every participant to understand and take up seriously. He asked the concerned BDOs to install the VVPAT and EVM Machines at the Rimbi Mahesh Mela 2019 so that the public can be made aware of the machines functions and services. He also requested the BDO Gyalshing to make proper arrangements to

install the similar machines at the Gyalshing Bazar Area for demonstration to the public.

The program was conducted to enhance the skills required by the personnel to understand the working of the VVPAT and EVMs prior to the General Elections of 2019. The Resource Person, Mahesh Sharma gave an in depth training on how to properly use the functions of the machines and to cope up with the technical difficulties if faced during the working of the machines.

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SNPP scoffs at State blaming Centre of ignoring Sikkim's issues

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

Sikkim National People's Party (SNPP) president, Delay Namgyal Barfungpa, has slammed the CM's recent remark that the central government was not paying the required attention to Sikkim's issues and called it a very confusing statement.

This is a clear case of double standards, he

said, pointing out that on one hand, the SDF was part of the National Democratic Alliance, and on the other it was blaming the Centre for not fulfilling the pending political demands of the State.

Assembly elections are approaching and since the SDF Government has failed to deliver on its promises, especially on the Limboo-Tamang

seat reservation issue and tribal status for 11 left-out communities, they are shifting blame.

"What has actually happened is that the Chamling Government has failed to pursue Sikkim's major demands in the right earnest with the Centre and is now blaming Delhi," r Barfungpa said, adding that the latest remark of the CM also reveals his nervousness.



Sikkim Rajya Manch workers donate blood

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

Sikkim Rajya Manch president, RN Chamling, has extended his best wishes and greetings of New Year 2019 to the people of Sikkim. To be-

gin the new year, the SRM president and workers donated blood at a voluntary blood donation camp here at STNM Hospital on Wednesday. An SRM press release informs that 20 party workers donated blood at the camp.

'Political leadership should be temperate in criticism of each other and media'

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI):

Expressing concern over the "gradual decline" in the nature of political discourse, three media bodies on Thursday urged political leadership across party lines to be temperate in their criticism towards each

other and the media.

While neutrality is expected of journalists, they too expect restraint from political class at large while commenting on them especially when the political atmosphere is getting charged with general

elections approaching, a joint statement issued by the Press Club of India, Indian Women's Press Corps, and Press Association said.

"Terms like 'prestige' used by a former Union minister and more recently 'pliable' by the president of a political

party for the media are inappropriate and lower the dignity of discourse in general," they said.

The three media bodies expressed concern over the "gradual decline in nature of political discourse, more so in a highly polarised political environment".

Will blow final...

and also restoration of Nepali seats in the Assembly. We will speak with the concerned authorities in Delhi regarding these issues and also try to get appointments with the Prime Minister and President," said Mr Bhutia.

He informed that the party also wants an independent probe into the fire in the record section of the Power department office recently. The CAG report has been highlighting corruption in hydel power projects and during his visit to Sikkim, the Prime Minister spoke about Rs 16,000 crore being allocated to Sikkim for power generation, he said alleging that the fire in the Power Department raises suspicions.

"The CM is presently saying that the Centre has not fulfilled the demands of Sikkim. His party was with the NEDA and NDA for these four and a half years and now at the end, he is making such comments. If he is not satisfied then why not quit NEDA and NDA?" said Mr Bhutia.

Regarding the still vacant post of HSP president, Mr Adhikari said that a democratic process has started for electing the HSP president. Process has started and it will take some time, he said.

Sikkim's first Queer...

Sikkim with their participation in the first ever Queer Pride Parade in Sikkim," he urged.

Mr Tamang informed that Miitiyu Society had taken out the first Queer Pride Parade on the occasion of the Human Rights Day 2018 on 10 Dec in Darjeeling and received tremendous support from all sections of the society.

He added that the parade was successful in giving out a clear message to society that LGBTQI were also part of the society.

Likewise, Ms Dukpa mentioned that the queer pride parade will include a series of musical and other awareness events to urge society to end the stigma attached to the LGBTQI community.

She added that the Transgender Bill 2018 was a violation of the NALSA verdict and breaches the judgement of the Apex Court.

Responding to media queries, Mr Tamang mentioned that there were many LGBTQI in Sikkim but they have not been coming out openly due to fear of the society and pressure from the family despite door-to-door motivation.

He mentioned that due to such pressure, many of them have been working outside the State and some have been gone into depression.

He mentioned that the recently formed RHA has been working as a bridge discrepancy between the LGBTQI and the society by creating awareness and working for the welfare of the community.

SPCC discuss on...

issues of the State, clearly showed that Congress was the only right option for the development of Sikkim.

The release informs that SPCC will soon release a pamphlet on the present political condition in Sikkim and clear its role in the upcoming 2019 elections to the people of Sikkim and start its public interaction programme later this month.

45 LS members...

As soon as the Zero Hour commenced at noon on Thursday, AIADMK and TDP members trooped in the Well, raising slogans and carrying banners. The AIADMK members flung papers towards the chair several times. Amid the ruckus, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narendra Singh Tomar appealed to the agitating MPs to return to their seats. However, protests by the unrelenting members of the two Southern parties continued.

At this, the Speaker initially warned that she would be forced to name the unruly members and take action against them.

"I warn you, I will take you names. You have come to the Well and are persistently creating trouble," she said. As the members refused to budge, the Speaker suspended 11 TDP MPs, seven AIADMK members and an unattached member under Rule 374(A) for the next four sitting of the House.

Among the suspended MPs were former Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju (TDP), Thota Narasimham (TDP) and Renuka Butta (unattached) who had won on a YSR Congress ticket. "You are willfully obstructing the proceedings of the House. I am, therefore, constrained to name you and suspend you for four consecutive days," Mahajan said.

The Speaker subsequently adjourned the House till 2 pm after conducting business for nearly 15 minutes during the Zero Hour.

When the House met again at 2 pm, some members continued protest in the Well despite being suspended. She then suspended two more TDP members for disrupting proceedings. Amid the din, the House was adjourned for the day without taking up the remaining part of debate on the Rafale issue. Meanwhile, some pictures being shared on social media purportedly showed TDP members standing on the Speaker's podium and holding placards when the House was adjourned soon after noon.

They had not left the Lok Sabha chamber even after the House was adjourned. Two questions were taken up during the Question Hour even as the members continued to shout slogans. Members from the Congress wanted to raise the Sabarimala issue and Mahajan told them that the matter can be raised later.

Switching from beef to other protein sources can lower diet-related deaths: WEF

NEW DELHI/GENEVA, JAN 3 (PTI): Switching from beef to other protein sources can prevent millions of diet-related deaths globally and drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, though overall consumption of meat and fish is expected to rise rapidly in countries like India, a new study said Thursday.

The new research, done by the Oxford Martin School for the World Economic Forum (WEF), found that balancing meat consumption with alternative sources of protein can lead to significant health and environmental benefits.

It also found a sustainable food industry and healthier human life can be achieved through further innovation in the development of alternative proteins, livestock production and consumer behaviour, Geneva-based WEF said.

For human health, the research found that switching from beef - the base case of the analysis - to other protein sources

could reduce the overall global burden of diet-related deaths by 2.4 per cent, with the number climbing to 5 per cent in high- and upper-middle-income countries.

The report is expected to be discussed at the WEF's annual meeting later this month in Davos, which would be attended by thousands of business, government and civil society leaders from across the world, including from India.

Without giving country-specific figures, it said the findings will be increasingly important given the projected demand for meat from emerging middle classes.

In terms of environmental impact, the study said production of beef alone was responsible for 25 per cent of all food-related greenhouse gas emissions. With demand for protein set to soar, such demand will place huge pressure on the environment.

The report said beef has an emissions intensity of 23.9 kilograms

of CO2 equivalent per 200kcal, while beans, insects, wheat and nuts emit 1kilogram or less CO2 equivalent for the same nutritional value. Other sources such as tofu, pork, alga and chicken produce only 3-6 kilograms CO2 equivalent.

The 13 sources of protein analysed in the report included beef, pork and chicken; fruits and vegetables that can be eaten naturally or processed, such as beans and peas; processed non-animal substitutes such as tofu, wheat-gluten products or mycoprotein; and novel products such as culture meat, insects and alga spirulina.

The WEF's Managing Director Dominic Waughray said it will be impossible to sustainably satisfy the world's future demand for meat.

However, it can be possible to produce enough nutrition for 10 billion people and improve people's health without necessarily giving up meat - even red meat - altogether,

through innovation in products, improvements in how we produce beef, pork and chicken, and an effort on the part of the consumer to embrace a more diverse diet, Waughray added.

Citing the OECD-FAO figures, the report said growth in per-capita consumption of meat and fish within Asia between 2018 and 2027 will be highest in India (12 per cent) and China (13 per cent). During the same period, the total consumption of meat and fish will grow by 25 per cent in India and by 16 per cent in China.

On the other hand, demand for livestock-derived foods is projected to grow rapidly in China with increased focus on meat, while in India it will be slower with high concentration on milk.

The study also said a variety of factors will lead to a different development of supportive and cautionary narratives about alternative proteins in Asia compared with Europe and North America.



ITBP Regional Response Centre holds demo in Pegong

SUMMIT REPORT

PEGONG, 03 JAN:

The 11th Battalion, ITB Police stationed at Pegong, held a regional response centre demo organized by the RRC team under the leadership of Commandant Rajesh Kumar Tomar today. Sub-ordinate officers and jawans

of the unit participated in the demo during which teams were directed by the Commandant and briefed about the aim of the exercise which is to sharpen the skills of team and to enhance swiftness in their response. An exhibition of RRC equipment was also held to familiarise troops about their utility.

Free Winter Coaching Classes for under-privileged students



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

The Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association have begun the Free Winter Coaching Class 2018-19 for under-privileged students appearing for class X and XII board examination from 02 Jan 2019 which will continue till 03 Feb 2019.

The inauguration programme of Free Winter Coaching Class 2018-19 was attended by the principal of Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School, Telegu Gurung, who in his address expressed his deep appreciation for upholding such noble programme year after year and also

shared his experience in the field of education and gave valuable suggestion and advice to the students for the upcoming board examination. Besides he also assured every possible help to the organisation in conducting such a noble programme.

The Free Winter Coaching Class for under-privileged students appearing for board examination was initially started by the organisation in the year 1997 and since then the organisation is continuously conducting this programme every year with the kind support of the Sikkim Government, HRD

Department, Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School, well-wishers and voluntary teachers.

This year the total number of enrolment of students from all the districts is 263, with 107 in class X, 124 in humanities, 15 in commerce, and 17 in science. Further, this year is being facilitated by a team of 21 dedicated teachers who will be voluntarily teaching different subjects at different levels. The organisation would also like to appeal to all the well-wishers to kindly visit the winter coaching class that is being carried out at Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School.

India rejects Donald Trump's jibe at PM on Afghanistan

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI):

Developmental assistance can play a major role in transforming Afghanistan, official sources said Thursday, rejecting US President Donald Trump's jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over funding of a "library" in the war-ravaged country. The sources said also India has been implementing a range of mega infrastructure projects as well as carrying out community development programmes in Afghanistan as per requirement of its people. They said such assistance would go a long way in making the country economically empowered and stable.

Trump took a jibe at Modi for funding a "library" in Afghanistan, saying it is of no use in the war-torn country as he criticised India and others for not doing enough for the nation's security.

In his first cabinet meeting in the new year Wednesday, Trump asked India, Russia, Pakistan and other neighbouring countries to take responsibility for Afghanistan's

security as he defended his push for the US to invest less overseas.

Trump referred to Modi as an example of how world leaders are talking about their contributions that were nowhere near the "billions of dollars" the US was spending.

The sources said India may be building small libraries as part of the community development initiative, but most of its investments in Afghanistan were on mega infrastructure projects including the 218 km road from Zaranj to Delaram, the Salma Dam and the new Afghan Parliament building.

India has also been supplying military equipment to Afghanistan besides providing training to hundreds of Afghan security personnel.

The sources said India plays a significant role in the country as its development partner and that the partnership is built on the specific needs and requirements worked out with the Af-

ghan government.

"India seeks to build capacities and capabilities of Afghan nationals and its institutions for governance and delivery of public service, develop socio-economic infrastructure, secure lives and promote livelihood," said a source.

NHPC organises educational standard improvement classes for North Sikkim students

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JAN:

NHPC's Teesta Stage IV Hydroelectric Project, in association with the HRD Department, has started Educational Standard Improvement Classes (Winter Coaching) for students of classes X and XII of government schools in North Sikkim under its CSR&SD initiative. The month-long fully residential coaching began on 03 Jan for boys at North Sikkim Academy, Managn, and for girls at Govt. Secondary School, Singhik.

121 Boys and Girls of classes X and class XII from different schools are attending coaching being



provided by NHPC on a budget of Rs 5 lakh, an official press release informs.

The Educational Standard Classes were inaugurated by Joint Director, HRDD, Deepak Pradhan, in the presence of officials from NHPC.

Speaking on the oc-

casion, General Manager Lhendup Lepcha, Teesta-IV, thanked HRDD, the resource persons and school management for their efforts and support for the coaching.

He also spoke about the role of NHPC in social development apart from generation of electricity

and extended his good wishes to the students for the forthcoming board examinations.

DGM (HR), RK Verma, during the interactive session with participating students, detailed the CSR&SD activities undertaken by NHPC.

Sharath Kamal eyeing a historic 9th national title

CUTTACK, JAN 3 (PTI):

Veteran Sharath Kamal will be chasing a record-breaking ninth title when the 80th National Table Tennis Championships begin at the Nehru Indoor Stadium here on Friday. Sharath, who reached a career-high ranking of 30 last month, is just a step away from surpassing Kamlesh Mehta's eight titles.

If he does that, Sharath would not only create history but could remain there as the lone Indian for a long time to come.

The only challenge for him is his team mate G Sathiyam, who has been in a terrific form

with a proven record and is just a spot behind Sharath at No. 31 in the ITTF rankings.

It is about the maturity he needs to bring about on table against the senior pro will be the clincher in a crunch final. However, one can certainly expect a classy final if they reach there.

Manika Batra will be the favourite to lift the women's trophy.

Ever since her performances at the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games last year, her stocks has risen and she also bagged the Breakthrough Star' award by ITTF at its annual awards in Incheon last month.

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Schedule Form A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (Under Regulation 6 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016 FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CREDITORS OF: BLUEFERN VENTURES PRIVATE LIMITED	
Sl. No.	Relevant Particulars
1.	Name of Corporate Debtor: Bluefern Ventures Private Limited
2.	Date of Incorporation of corporate debtor: 23.02.2010
3.	Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated/registered: Government of Sikkim, Law Department, Gangtok, Sikkim
4.	Corporate Identity number / Registration number of corporate debtor: 849 dated 23.02.2010
5.	Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor: Elhanga Villa, Dathang Road, Namchi Bazar, Namchi, South Sikkim
6.	Insolvency commencement date in respect of Corporate debtor: 21st December 2018
7.	Estimated date of closure of insolvency resolution process: 19th June 2019
8.	Name and registration number of the Insolvency Professional acting as Interim Resolution Professional: Hrisikesh Dasgupta IBBI/IPA-003/IPN00082/2017-18/10705
9.	Address and E-mail of the Interim Resolution Professional, as registered with the Board: AV Insolvency Professionals Pvt. Ltd. Bajrang Kunj, Room No 412 & 413, 2B, Grant Lane, 4th Floor, Kolkata - 700 012 Email Id: hkdasp@gmail.com
10.	Address and e-mail to be used for correspondence with the interim resolution professional, if different from those given at sl. No. 9: Address as in 9 Email Id - cirp.bluefern@gmail.com
11.	Last date for submission of claims: 14th January 2019
12.	Classes of creditors, if any, under clause (b) of sub-section (8A) of section 21, ascertained by the interim resolution professional: N/A
13.	Names of Insolvency Professionals identified to act as Authorised Representative of creditors in a class (Three names for each class): N/A
14.	(a) Relevant Forms and (b) Details of authorized representatives: Web link: https://ibi.gov.in/downloadform.html Physical Address: N/A

Notice is hereby given that the National Company Law Tribunal has ordered the commencement of a Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process against the Bluefern Venture Private Limited on 21.12.2018.

The creditors of Bluefern Venture Private Limited are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims on or before 14.01.2019 to the Interim Resolution Professional at the address mentioned against item 9/10.

The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other creditors may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means. Claimants may download the relevant forms from the website of IBBI [www.ibbi.gov.in/downloadform.html](https://ibi.gov.in/downloadform.html).

A financial creditor belonging to a class, as listed against the entry No. 12, shall indicate its choice of authorized representative from among the three insolvency professionals listed against entry No. 13 to act as authorized representative of the class (specify class) in Form CA.

Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.

Date : 02/01/2019 Hrisikesh Dasgupta SD/-

Place : Kolkata Interim Resolution Professional

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GOVT. OF SIKKIM. PUBLIC ADVISORY

It has come to the notice of Human Resource Development Department that various certificates from unrecognized Boards and Universities are under circulation. This is creating confusion among public.

Courses of B.Ed and D.El.Ed on Teacher Education are governed by the NCTE norms. There is a jurisdictional limit for taking regular course admission. Any candidates/institution bypassing it and obtaining Degrees will face strict legal action by the Department. A regular candidate has to be a fulltime attending candidate in an approved institution for such professional courses.

Aspiring candidates and their parents should note that only CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), CISCE (Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations), NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling) and SBTE (State Board of Technical Education) are the recognized boards functioning in Sikkim. Further, the list of boards established/recognized by the States and All-India Boards can be seen at www.sikkimhrdd.org or by scanning the QR code provided below.

All the members of public are, therefore, advised to take admission for their wards only in the recognized schools and institutions affiliated to recognized boards.

The members of public are also advised to sensitize and create awareness in their locality.

31/12/2018

R.O. No. 570/IPR/Pub/Classi./18-19

DATED: 03.01.2019

Director i/C

Examination Section

HRDD

Govt. of Sikkim.

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM HEALTH CARE, HUMAN SERVICES & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT GANGTOK - 737101

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Health Care, Human Service & Family welfare Department, Govt. of Sikkim invites tender from interested implementation Support Agencies for the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna, Sikkim. Tender reference No. 10/PMJAY/2018.

Tender fees: Rs.5000/-

EMD : Rs. 1,50,000/-

Kindly visit the website www.sikkimtender.gov.in/inc-gep/app for more details.

Contact No for any queries: +919434869939/ +919434022919.

R.O. No. 568/IPR/Pub/Classi./18-19

Dated: 02.01.2019

Sd/-

Dr. Rinzing Dorjee

Pr. Director (II)

SummitTIMES

Culture Matters

...which is why it should be nurtured not 'protected' into suffocation

Turn to any corner of the world, click to any group on social media or tune into any conversation on identity or future prospects, and one will definitely be eavesdropping on voices of complaint ruing about a culture under threat, a way of life nearing extinction.

While there are always external elements like the influence of globalisation and the pressure to homogenise which eat away at the edifice of individual cultures, the biggest risk comes from those who refuse to let cultures breathe - those who view it as a relic which needs to be preserved even at the cost of nurture which would keep it organic, relevant and exciting. Nurturing is the more difficult enterprise because it requires allowing 'culture' to adapt, incorporate and grow and that can happen only in an environment of proud confidence; an environment which is open and indulgent. Unfortunately, we live in times of easy paranoia and quick outrage and there are too many who see cultures as perfect and view any influence or adaption as a blemish. They refuse to accept that culture is not something that can be pickled for posterity. Culture, because it is about a people, is vibrant, alive and current. It is spontaneous, almost instinctive, and not something that can be taught or directed. It is imbibed. Since culture forms a part of evolution, it is also subject to fresh interpretations, nuances and expressions.

Because culture is about people, it cannot survive on state patronage alone - that would be relegating it to the status of departmental undertaking and a by-the-numbers presentations because the state will not risk taking responsibility for vibrancy which some sections might see as contamination. It also needs to be accepted that if a people reject their culture as ripe for extinction, no amount of preservation helps. Yet, a culture should not be dismissed even before one has understood it. It is important that the repository of culture is passed on to the next generation to nurture and craft as it feels right. And yes, even discarded if it wants to, but only after it has understood and lived it. If anything, what the State needs to ensure is adequate defences against the snuffing out of a culture due to persecution. In olden times, this happened by way of invasions and was an automatic result of state formation with the subsuming of ethnic identities to suit a nationalistic agenda/ identity. A similar snuffing out is at play in the current times as well, and even though the pressures might be different, they remain real threats to cultures, some of which are on re-discovery mode. And yet, cultures survive even intentional, persistent and state-endorsed onslaught like in the case of Tibetans who hold on to a rich and colourful culture and tradition in exile even as the same is wiped out at home. Closer home, the manner in which the Limboo people kept their language and faith alive despite having lost their land, should provide for some inspirational models.

The lesson is simple, when the desire to sustain a way of life is strong enough, no assault can deliver a fatal blow. Similarly, one needs only look at the cardboard caricatures of 'culture' choreographed to entertain tourists across the country to realise that forced performances rob a culture of its soul. Confusing? Well, that is how life is and that is how things will be with culture and traditions because they are a part of life. There are no easy answers and no checklist of things to do... The only hope lies in earnest commitments and open minds.

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence.

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com



An economist's take on the Poland climate conference: The glass is more than half full

ROBERT STAVINS
theconversation.com

The global climate change conference in Katowice, Poland, that wrapped up on Dec. 15 had a challenging mission. Three years ago in Paris, 196 countries and regions agreed to curb global greenhouse gas emissions. Now they had to agree on rules and guidelines for how to do it.

Two urgent realities hung over the negotiations. First, U.S. President Donald Trump announced in June 2017 that the United States would withdraw from the Paris Agreement in November 2020 - the soonest that any nation can actually do so. Second, although countries that are responsible for 97 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions have pledged to make cuts, the initial reductions will surely not be enough to keep global warming below two degrees Celsius. So, a key question is how the Paris Agreement can facilitate increased ambition over time.

Delegates in Poland wanted to make progress by filling in details of the skeletal Paris Agreement. Was the meeting a success? A simple yes or no would be misleading. But from my perspective leading a delegation from the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements at the conference, there were significant gains in two key areas.

Nations agreed on uniform rules for measuring and reporting their own performance in cutting emissions. There also were intensive discussions of how to connect reduction efforts across regions, nations and sub-national areas, which offers many economic and other benefits. Even though the latter issue was not resolved in Katowice, I see the final agreement as a glass that is more than half full.

One set of counting rules

As I wrote in 2015 when it was signed, the Paris Agreement was a major milestone. In it, 195 countries plus the European Union - accounting for 97 percent of global emissions - pledged to develop national targets and action plans for reducing their emissions. They also agreed to revise these contributions every five years, with an eye to ratcheting up their goals over time. In contrast, the predecessor international agreement, the Kyoto Protocol, covered only 14 percent of global emissions.

But the Paris Agreement gave 154 developing

countries significant wiggle room by granting them flexibility in determining how they would measure their emissions and track progress toward their national targets. For developing countries, this was important. Some lacked the capacity to accurately monitor their emissions, and others resisted being treated with the same rigor as industrialized countries. In their view this was unfair, since developed nations' emissions were responsible for most of the warming that had occurred to date.

But now this has changed, thanks partly to close collaboration in Poland between the U.S. and Chinese delegations. These delegates worked closely to foster a remarkable consensus that all countries must follow uniform standards for measuring emissions and tracking the achievement of their national targets.

This was a significant accomplishment, and a major step toward a level playing field among nations. Such uniform treatment is essential for addressing the threat of climate change, because increases in emissions are mainly coming from the large emerging economies: China, India, Brazil, Korea, South Africa, Mexico and Indonesia.

Conceivably, this equal treatment could make it easier for the United States to remain in the Paris Agreement if President Trump should become convinced that such action would be politically advantageous in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election. It also will create a path for a future Democratic or Republican administration to rejoin the Paris Agreement if Trump follows through on his promise to withdraw.

Linking policies across borders

A second key question was how the Paris Agreement itself, as it was fleshed out, could enable and indeed facilitate more ambitious emissions cuts over time. One strategy is linking regional, national and sub-national climate change policies, so that emissions reductions in one jurisdiction can count toward another jurisdiction's commitments.

This strategy often is characterized, somewhat inaccurately, as "carbon markets," but it is broader than that. It could involve countries exchanging credits for their emissions reductions due to use of carbon taxes, cap-and-trade systems or conventional performance standards, such as requiring power plants to emit no more than a certain amount of carbon dioxide per unit of electricity generation.

You make decisions quicker and based on less information than you think

NADAV KLEIN
theconversation.com

We live in an age of information. In theory, we can learn everything about anyone or anything at the touch of a button. All this information should allow us to make super-informed, data-driven decisions all the time.

But the widespread availability of information does not mean that you actually use it even if you have it. In fact, decades of research in psychology and behavioral science find that people readily make data-poor snap judgments in a variety of instances. People form lasting impressions of others in the span of milliseconds, evaluators judge teachers in less than a minute and consumers make shopping decisions based on little deliberation. Even voting decisions can seemingly be predicted from preliminary impressions formed during incredibly brief time periods.

If these findings seem remarkable to you, recent research by my colleague and me suggests that you are not alone. The immediacy of human judgment generally surprises people. Individuals fail to anticipate how little information they and others use when making decisions.

And this disconnect can have implications in daily life: After all, recognizing how much - or little - information people actually use to make judgments and decisions could influence how much you try to share with others. A job candidate should have a sense of how much of her resume prospective employers will actually read so she can prioritize her efforts accordingly.

And it would help when you're deciding how much information to acquire when making your own decisions. How long should you try out a subscription service before deciding

whether you like it enough to pay? How much time should you date a love interest before deciding to tie the knot?

COMPARING PREDICTIONS AND REALITY

In our research, my co-author Ed O'Brien and I tested whether people can correctly anticipate how much information they and others use when making varied judgments. We consistently found that people were surprised by how quickly they make judgments and how little information they use doing so.

In one study, we asked participants to imagine having pleasant or unpleasant interactions with another person. In comparison, we asked another group of participants to predict how many of those interactions they would need to experience to determine someone's character. We found that people believed they would need many interactions to make this judgment, when in fact the first group needed few.

In another study, we asked MBA students to write applications for hypothetical management positions, and then asked actual HR people to read their materials. Our applicants wrote and shared much more material than the hiring professionals cared to read.

We also asked people who have never been married to predict how long, after meeting their future spouse, it would take them to decide that this person is "the one." Fully 39 percent of these never-marrieds thought they would need to date this person more than year before they'd feel ready to spend the rest of their lives with him or her. In contrast, married people reported having made this judgment much more quickly, with only 18 percent stating that it took them more than a year to do so.

Similar mispredictions occur when evaluating subscription services based on trial periods, tasting novel beverages, and evaluating streaks of luck, athletic performances and academic grades. In all cases, people believed they would use more information than they actually did.

MISUNDERSTANDING THIS HUMAN TENDENCY

There are several reasons why people might have the wrong impression about how quickly they and others make judgments.

One possibility is a belief that the human mind processes information incrementally. A naive perspective might imagine that new information stacks on top of old information until some mental threshold is reached for making a decision. In reality, however, preliminary research suggests that information aggregation is much closer to an exponential function; the first few pieces of information are weighted much more heavily than later information.

Another possibility is that people fail to realize how rich and engrossing each separate piece of information is. In psychology, this is called an empathy gap. Consider the question of how many interactions are necessary for you to decide whether you like and trust someone. It may be tempting to believe you'll rationally evaluate each interaction as you would a dry statistic. But social encounters are vivid and engaging, and the first experience may simply be so absorbing as to tilt your judgment irrevocably, making future interactions unnecessary.

RECOGNIZING THE RUSH TO JUDGMENT

It's not clear that quick decisions are always bad. Sometimes snap judgments are remarkably accurate and they can save time. It would be crip-

The existing linkage between cap-and-trade systems in California and Quebec is one example of such a connection. Under that link, firms in California can exchange emissions allowances with firms in Quebec and vice versa.

This approach can provide many benefits. It saves money because firms can take advantage of lower-cost opportunities to reduce emissions in other locations. And it improves operation of markets for carbon reductions by reducing the market power of dominant firms and the likelihood of price spikes. States, countries and regions can also benefit politically from working together.

Most importantly, linkage satisfies a key criterion of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, that nations have "common but differentiated responsibilities" for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, with wealthy countries having greater responsibility for the accumulated stock of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Linking reduction policies means that nations can have very different ambitions in their national contributions to global efforts without sacrificing overall cost-effectiveness.

These strategies are likely to include very different types of national policies. As I have shown in work with Michael Mehling and Gilbert Metcalf, linking such diverse policies is not simple, but in many cases is feasible.

Delegates in Poland sought to write guidelines for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which guides such international cooperation. However, they were not able to reach agreement, due to objections from a single country - Brazil - and hence the issue was punted to the next conference, which will be held next year in Santiago, Chile.

This may not represent a failure, because linkages and exchanges under the Paris agreement can, in principle, proceed in the meantime. But without knowing what some potential future guidance and rules might bring, governments may hesitate to pursue bilateral linkages.

Ultimately, success or failure of the Paris Agreement will depend upon national actions. And for that, it remains too soon to observe or even to predict the long-term outcome.

[the writer is Professor of Business and Government, Harvard University]

pling to comb through all the available information on a topic every time a decision must be made. However, misunderstanding how much information we actually use to make our judgments has important implications beyond making good or bad decisions.

Take the problem of self-fulfilling prophecies. Imagine a situation in which a manager forms a tentative opinion of an employee that then cascades into a series of decisions that affect that employee's entire career trajectory. A manager who sees an underling make a small misstep in an insignificant project may avoid assigning challenging projects in the future, which in turn would hamstring this employee's career prospects. If managers are unaware how willing they are to make quick and data-poor initial judgments, they'll be less likely to nip these self-fulfilling destructive cycles in the bud.

Another example might be the human tendency to rely on stereotypes when judging other people. Although you may believe that you'll consider all the information available about another person, people in fact are more likely to consider very little information and let stereotypes creep in. It may be a failure to understand how quickly judgments get made that make it so hard to exclude the influence of stereotyping.

Modern technology allows virtually any decision made today to be more informed than the same decision made a few decades ago. But the human reliance on quick judgments may forestall this promise. In the quest for more informed decision-making, researchers will need to explore ways to encourage people to slow down the speed of judgment.

[the writer is Postdoctoral Researcher at Harris Public Policy, University of Chicago]

SC dissatisfied with efforts by Meghalaya govt to rescue 15 trapped miners; says bring them out dead or alive

NEW DELHI/SHILLONG, JAN 3 (PTI): The Supreme Court on Thursday expressed strong dissatisfaction over the rescue efforts to trace 15 people trapped in a mine in Meghalaya for 22 days, telling the state government to bring them out dead or alive.

The tough talk by the apex court came on a day when the multi-agency operations to rescue the miners failed to make any headway with efforts to pump the water out of the mine not yielding any result.

The 15 miners remain trapped in the 370-foot-deep illegal rat-hole coal mine in Lumthari village of East Jaintia Hills district since December 13 after water from a nearby river gushed in.

“For people who are trapped there, every minute counts,” the court said and suggested that the help of the Army could be also taken.

Holding that “prompt, immediate and effective” operation is needed to rescue the trapped people, the court said there should not be any delay as it was a question of life and death. “We pray to God that they all are alive.”

A bench comprising Justices A K Sikri and S Abdul Nazeer asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, to apprise it by Friday the steps which the government intends to take in the matter.



“As the Union, you should do something now. Either you take the help of Army, which has not been done yet. They (Army) are ready and they have volunteered also,” the bench told Mehta, issuing notice to the Centre on a PIL seeking effective and best rescue measures.

“We are not satisfied (with steps taken for rescue). It is a question of life and death. What has happened in the last so many days we do not know.

“No matter whether they (trapped persons) are all dead, some alive, few dead or all alive, they should have been taken out by now. We

pray to God that they all are alive,” it said.

Family members of at least seven trapped miners have already given up hope to rescue them alive and requested the state government to retrieve the bodies for last rites.

The divers of the Navy and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) were unable to resume the search operation as they could not go inside due to the high water level.

Asked if the divers would take another chance later in the day, operation spokesperson R Susngi told PTI that they would wait, but there

was a remote chance of the water level reducing so soon.

Fire Service personnel from Odisha resumed work at 10 am and it was found that the water level rose again, a day after full-day pumping resulted in the water receding by 16 inches, Susngi said.

During the hearing in the apex court, the solicitor general told the bench that several members of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) were working at the site and instead of the Army, the government has sent Navy personnel there as the mine was submerged in water.

“72 members of NDRF are already there but still no

result,” the bench observed, adding, “Why can’t you take help of the Army? He (petitioner) says that water pumps were sent to Thailand. Why cannot it (pumps) be used here also?”

The petitioner said in his plea that Kirlskar Brothers Ltd (KBL) had offered high-powered water pumps and given technical support to the Royal Thai government in June-July 2018 for the operation to rescue a football team trapped inside a cave system in Thailand.

KBL offered to provide four specialised high capacity Autoprime de-watering pumps, which were kept

ready at Kirlskarvadi plant in Maharashtra to be airlifted to Thailand.

Mehta, while maintaining that the petition seeking urgent steps for the rescue said he would take instructions in the matter.

He said the Union coal minister had held a meeting, which was attended by the chief minister of Meghalaya, and a nodal officer has been appointed.

“We have requested solicitor general Tushar Mehta to look into it with regard to the urgency involved as it is a question of life and death,” the court said.

The counsel appearing for the state said adequate steps were taken and besides 72 NDRF personnel, members of state disaster response force, the Navy, fire department and Coal India Ltd were also involved in the rescue operations.

At the outset, the counsel appearing for Meghalaya said they have already taken steps for rescue of these persons.

“What steps have you taken? These miners are trapped there for long time. You may have taken steps but they are still trapped. You need some support from the Central government,” the bench said.

To this, the state’s counsel said the Centre was also lending support to them in the rescue operation.

“Then why you are not successful yet? Is it because

of the water?” the bench asked. The state’s counsel said the illegal mine where the 15 persons were trapped was connected with a nearby river. Senior advocate Anand Grover, appearing for petitioner Aditya N Prasad, told the bench that an adjoining mine was connected with a river and the authorities were using only pumps of 25 horsepower(hp) to flush out the water.

He said the KBL had sent water pumps of 100 horsepower(hp) during the rescue operation in Thailand last year. “We need a central co-ordinating machinery to deal with such situations,” Grover said, claiming that authorities have not taken appropriate steps.

He claimed that persons, who have no prior experience in dealing with this type of situation, have been sent for rescue operation in Meghalaya.

The PIL also sought a direction to the Centre and other authorities concerned to prepare a standard operating procedure (SOP) for rescue operations in “mines and other similar conditions”.

It sought directions to the Centre and the state to utilise the services of the technical wing of the Indian Armed Forces -- the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force -- in the rescue operation immediately.

Celebratory firing: Family of deceased woman donates her kidneys

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI): In an act of benevolence, the family of a woman architect, who died Thursday after being critically injured in celebratory firing during a New Year’s eve party here, has donated her kidneys.

The woman was wounded in celebratory firing during the party at former Bihar MLA Raju Singh’s farm house here. Singh and his driver Hari were arrested Thursday, police said.

Archana Gupta, 42, was on life support at the Fortis hospital in Vasant Kunj where she was brought to on the intervening night of December 31 and January 1.

“Till Wednesday, the patient continued to be in a critical state and on life support. Despite best efforts by our team of doctors, the patient could not be revived and was declared brain dead on January 2,” according to hospital authorities.

Thereafter, the proposal to donate her organs for a larger cause was discussed with the family. Post consultation, the “family agreed to donate her kidneys,” they said.

According to NOTTO (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation), once a patient is declared brain dead, a hospital can approach the family for organ donation.

NOTTO protocols and guidelines also stipulate that any hospital has to inform it about a possible organ donation after which the government body decides as to which organ is to be sent to which hospital. Specific locations are given based on a list of priority recipients, the hospital authorities said. “In this

case, after the necessary approvals and the hospital-wise rota was decided by NOTTO, one kidney was sent to Apollo Hospital and the other given to Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj,” a hospital spokesperson said. Gupta was brought to the emergency ward of the hospital at 12:18 am on January 1 in an “extremely critical condition.”

“Her family, displaying enormous strength and grit in their hour of grief decided to donate her kidneys. An no-objection certificate was obtained from the Delhi Police since this is a medico-legal case,” the hospital said in a statement.

In his complaint to police, Gupta’s husband had said that they were at the farm house on Monday night to celebrate the New Year along with friends and around midnight, two-three rounds were fired by Raju Singh.

Immediately, he noticed that his wife had fallen down and was bleeding. Incidentally, it was Fortis hospital which had informed the police after which a medico-legal case was registered.

Mangla Dembi, Facility Director, Fortis Hospital, Vasant Kunj, said, “We thank the donor’s family for recognising the importance of organ donation and are deeply appreciative of them to have agreed for this magnanimous and noble act in their hour of grief and irreparable loss.”

“It is extremely motivating to see a gradual shift in public perception on the issue of organ donation in our country,” Avnish Seth, Director, Fortis Organ Retrieval and Transplant (FORT), said.

Meghalaya mine: No change in water level

SHILLONG, JAN 3 (PTI): The multi-agency operations to rescue the miners in Meghalaya failed to make any headway on Thursday, with efforts to pump the water out of the mine not yielding any result.

The divers of the Navy and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) were not able to resume the search operation for the 15 trapped miners as they could not go inside due to the high water level.

Asked if the divers would take another chance later in the day, operation spokesperson R Susngi told PTI that they would wait, but there was a remote chance of the water level reducing so soon.

The 15 miners remain trapped in the 370-foot-deep illegal rat-hole coal mine in Lumthari village of East Jaintia Hills district since December 13 after water from a nearby river gushed in. The operation to rescue them entered the 22nd day on Thursday.

Fire Service personnel from Odisha resumed work at 10 am and it was found that the water level has risen again, a day after full-day pumping resulted in it receding by 16 inches, Susngi said.

One more pump will be put to use at the mine on Thursday and another would will be installed at an abandoned mine, about 100 metres away, he said. Meanwhile, the

high-powered submersible pump from Coal India is yet to begin work, three days after it arrived at the site. Preparation is still going on to get the pump operational, Susngi said.

The spokesperson had said divers would resume operation once the water level at the main shaft decreases to about 100 feet from its current level of over 160 feet.

Authorities said there were at least 90 abandoned mine shafts in the area and they were full of water. Rescuers believe that these nearby mines might be interconnected and draining out water in these mines could help in reducing the water level in the main shaft.

Editors guild expresses concern over Bengali daily editor’s arrest by CBI; seeks fair probe



NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI): The Editors Guild of India on Thursday expressed concern over the arrest of a leading Bengali daily’s editor by the CBI last month and asserted that the views held by him in discharging his editorial responsibilities should not be a factor in the probe.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on December 20 arrested Suman Chattopadhyay, editor of Ei Samay, in connection with West Bengal’s ICORE fund scam. He was

summoned to the premier investigating agency’s office in Kolkata after several rounds of questioning and was placed under arrest by officials. The Editors Guild of India, in a statement, expressed concern over Chattopadhyay’s arrest by the CBI on “reported charges of financial misdeemeanour”.

The guild said it believes that nobody has immunity from the law and it must take its own course, but warned that the views held by Chattopadhyay in discharging his

editorial responsibilities should not be held against him or become a factor in the investigation.

“The guild wants the government to make sure that its investigative agencies are totally fair and professional in pursuing this investigation and prosecution,” the statement said.

It also urged law enforcement authorities to provide Chattopadhyay all the options and facilities that are available to citizens for seeking due legal recourse.

8 cops, 10 labourers injured as police crackdown on protestors

GOLAGHAT, JAN 3 (PTI): At least eight police personnel and 10 labourers of a tea estate were injured on Thursday in Assam’s Golaghat district when agitators pelted stones at the security force, prompting the police to lathicharge and fire rubber bullets.

Carrying stones, about 300 labourers of Bogidhola Tea Estate, where a lockout had been declared, had blocked a road demanding “unconditional release” of three of their coworkers.

The three per-

sons were arrested on Wednesday for illegally plucking tea leaves from the garden and selling them without permission from authorities, Numaligarh police outpost in-charge, Pranjit Borah, said.

When the protestors pelted stones at the police injuring eight of them, the security force resorted to lathicharge and fired rubber bullets at them to bring the situation under control, Borah said.

When the demonstrators attempted to

flee, some of them fell down receiving minor injuries, he said.

The situation was now under control, he said.

The owners of the tea estate had filed an FIR on Wednesday accusing the workers of illegally plucking tea leaves and selling them.

Lockout was declared in Bogidhola Tea Estate since December 14, 2017 when its owners were arrested for allegedly firing at labourers during a protest rally over wage-related issues.

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

informed, inquisitive, relevant

Need to learn from mistakes, says Agarwal after missing out on maiden ton

CHETAN NARULA

SYDNEY, JAN 3 (PTI): India opener Mayank Agarwal was livid with himself after squandering a golden opportunity to score a maiden Test hundred on day one of the fourth Test but hopes to quickly learn from mistakes in his fledgling career.

Agarwal scored 77 runs while Cheteshwar Pujara scored his 18th Test hundred as India finished at 303-4 at stumps. They put on 116 runs for the second wicket, setting a platform for the rest of this Test. The Karnataka opener had made 76 and 42 in his debut Test in Melbourne.

"I am quite disappointed for missing out on a big score. With that said, it's a learning curve. If I don't make this mistake again, it will be a good learning. I was looking to dominate Nathan Lyon and it didn't work out. Really disappointed that I threw my wicket," he said on Thursday.

India lost KL Rahul early and the duo faced a testing spell of short bowling from the Australian pacers. Agarwal said that their focus was on building partnerships, and he was talking with Pujara for the same throughout.

"Recently I faced such short bowling from New



Zealand-A side (in New Zealand). They also came very hard, but to be really honest, I think the Australian pace bowling attack came really, really hard. They bowled quick bouncers and they were sharp. They were consistent and didn't give anything away," he said.

"The plan was always to get a small partnership after each wicket and that's the same thing we spoke about. We said to each other that let's try to play close to the body and not give them wickets. Even if we are not getting too many runs too quick, it's alright; let's try get a partnership and take it from there on-

wards," he added.

Pujara was unbeaten on 130 runs at stumps, having faced 250 balls, the fourth time he has played 200-plus deliveries in an innings on this tour. Agarwal talked about learning from his batting style and showed heady praise on the senior batsman who scored his third hundred of the series on Thursday.

"Definitely, it is great to watch him bat from the other end and also to watch him bat the way he grinds the bowlers. He has got a pattern to it and he understands his strengths and know that he is very tight with his defence. He looks to do

that and waits for the bad ball to come. "This game is for five days and there is time. It is a very long game and if you see him bat, you can learn a lot. Patience is his strength and he sticks to that," he said.

For Agarwal too though, this was an additional confidence booster after his showing in the debut Test at Melbourne. He credited Rahul Dravid for instilling this confidence in him.

"Runs gives you lot of confidence. The more you play it gives you confidence and belief in your game. I think those runs have really helped me and have given me a lot of confidence. They have helped

me stay within myself.

"Obviously playing under Dravid is good. We, as batsmen, speak about our technique and the game, and he is out there to help us, guide us and help us climb the ladder. And his advice has been really helpful. He told me to think about how to manage my mental energy and that's something we have spoken about for 4-6 months."

Talking about the course of this Test on the second day, Agarwal said, "We are very happy, we would have liked to be just three down but that said 303-4 on first day after choosing to bat, I think we are in a great position."

Eat 'Kadaknath', not grilled chicken: MP agri centre to Kohli

BHOPAL, JAN 3 (PTI):

The head of an agri science centre in Madhya Pradesh wants Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli to stop eating grilled chicken and switch over to the 'Kadaknath' chicken, rich in iron and whose meat and blood are black.

In a letter to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and Kohli, Jhabua-based Krishi Vigyan Kendra's senior scientist and head Dr I S Tomar said 'Kadaknath' has low cholesterol and high protein and iron content, and suggested the cricketer to switch over to this chicken breed.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVKs) are agricultural extension centres of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research.

In a chat show, Kohli had said he prefers grilled chicken and mashed potatoes for lunch. He is currently in Australia, playing the fourth and last Test match of the series in

Sydney, which India lead 2-1. India won the last Test in Melbourne by a convincing 137-run margin.

Kadaknath chicken breed is unique for its black colour due to its black-feathers. Its black colour stems from the deposition of melanin pigment. Its black meat is believed to have medicinal properties. This breed is native to tribal districts of Jhabua, Alirajpur and Dhar in Madhya Pradesh.

The Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India has awarded Geographical Indication (GI) Tag to Madhya Pradesh's Kadaknath chicken.

"It has come to light through media that Virat Kohli and other members of Indian cricket team are eating grilled chicken in their diet. But due to higher level of cholesterol and fat in it (grilled chicken), the team has stopped taking it and adopted a

vegan diet," Tomar said in the letter.

"The Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Jhabua wants to suggest to Kohli and BCCI that the Kadaknath chicken meat has very low cholesterol and fat and has higher protein and iron content," he said. He cited a report by the Hyderabad-based National Research Centre on Meat to substantiate his claim.

The cholesterol level in Kadaknath meat is about 184 mg per kg while in other chicken breeds it is around 214 mg per kg, Tomar said. Kadaknath's meat has 25 to 27 per cent protein content, while that in other chicken breeds is about 16 to 17 per cent, he added.

Kadaknath has just about one per cent fat, as against 5 to 6 per cent found in other chicken breeds, he said. Tomar claimed that the Kadaknath meat is also helpful for people suffering from respiratory problems.

Liverpool will drop points, says Man City boss Guardiola

MANCHESTER, JAN 3

(AFP): Pep Guardiola is convinced Premier League leaders Liverpool will drop points between now and the end of the season as the Manchester City boss prepares for Thursday's huge title clash with the Reds.

Guardiola's City side have been unable to keep pace with unbeaten Liverpool despite their own blistering start and sit in third place, seven points behind Jurgen Klopp's outfit ahead of their crunch meeting at the Etihad Stadium.

Liverpool have dropped just six points so far this season and come into the match on a nine-match winning streak in the league, but Guardiola is confident they will make mistakes amid a heavy domestic and European schedule.

"We are there, still with a lot of games to go and I think everyone will lose points this season, even Liverpool, because there are a lot of competitions," he told reporters on Wednesday.

"They have been incredible ... scoring four or five goals in every game. They are solid behind and in front."

Guardiola feels his own team deserve credit for amassing 47 points in 20 league matches and is certain they will get opportunities to apply pressure on Liverpool after Thursday's match.

"We have dropped



off sometimes but that is normal. During the season, sometimes you forget what you have to do," added Guardiola.

"You have to remember those things, and come back, and we have done it exceptionally well." Liverpool have not won the English league since 1990, two years before the creation of the Premier League, and Guardiola believes that will be significant motivation for Jurgen Klopp's side, similar to what drove his own side to win last season's title with a record 100 points.

"My feeling is last season it was a little bit easier to maintain than hunger because 80 per cent of the players had not won anything in their lives. "So I can feel what they feel, the Liverpool players. After 29 years not winning the title, to be there to win the Premier League, I understand it."

Guardiola also claimed that Liverpool's illustrious history, which includes 18 English

league titles and has seen them crowned champions of Europe five times, will push Klopp's squad to match those achievements. "When I was a little boy, I looked at the Premier League from Catalonia, from outside, and it was always two or three teams, and Manchester City were not there," he said.

"In the past decade our club has been incredible. Every time here in the past six or seven years, we have qualified for the Champions League. "History is not 10 years, it's much more, it's longer, Anfield is Anfield, Old Trafford is Old Trafford, and the history is there and the Champions League titles are there. The players, when they put the shirt on, they know what they have to defend.

"Maybe in the next decade, the players will feel it when they come here. Our target is there now. It's to go higher and then higher than that -- and that is what I want to maintain.

Lukaku saves Solskjaer's perfect record as Chelsea fire blanks

LONDON, JAN 3 (AFP): Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's Manchester United made it four wins out of four in the Premier League, beating Newcastle to close the gap on fourth-placed Chelsea, who were held at home by Southampton.

United have been transformed since their former striker replaced Jose Mourinho, scoring 12 goals in his first three games in temporary charge but were forced to dig deep to emerge with a 2-0 win against a disciplined Newcastle side at St James's Park on Wednesday.

The victory leaves them in sixth spot in the table with 38 points, just three behind Arsenal and six adrift of Chelsea.

Substitute Romelu Lukaku broke the deadlock just 38 seconds after coming on midway through the second half, pouncing after Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka had spilled a fierce Marcus Rashford free kick and Rashford himself made sure of the points in the 80th minute.

Manchester United bossed possession but a resolute Newcastle defence kept clear-cut chances to a minimum, prompting Solskjaer to throw on Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez shortly after the hour mark.

The changes bore fruit immediately and the interim boss will be equally pleased that United managed just their third clean sheet of the season in the Premier League.

"Finally we kept a clean sheet," Solskjaer told Sky Sports.

"A very professional performance. We didn't hit the heights that we can do but we were in control, kept plugging



away and got the goals.

"A good first touch from a sub. When you see big Romelu Lukaku running towards you, as a keeper you might take your hands away. We were sluggish in the first half, it was like a testimonial, too many square passes." Solskjaer is only the second manager in Manchester United history to win his first four league games in charge of the club, after Matt Busby in 1946.

It was a frustrating evening for Chelsea, who dominated possession but lacked any cutting edge, maintaining a worrying sequence for Maurizio Sarri's team.

His side failed to score for the third time in their past five Premier League games at Stamford Bridge, raising more questions about Chelsea's need for a top-class striker in the January transfer window.

With Olivier Giroud sidelined after suffering an ankle injury in Sun-

day's win at Crystal Palace, Sarri opted to recall misfiring striker Alvaro Morata. But once again the former Real Madrid star looked completely bereft of touch and confidence.

"If you can score the first goal, you can find spaces so it's easier," said a frustrated Sarri.

"We need to solve the problem of the last 20 metres. In the last matches, we were in full control but it's not easy in this moment to score the first goal." Chelsea earlier Wednesday announced they had agreed terms with Borussia Dortmund for the signing of US winger Christian Pulisic for a reported ?58 million (?73 million). He will link up with the club ahead of the 2019/20 season.

In an astonishing game at Bournemouth, the home side shared six goals with Watford in a helter-skelter first half but there was no addition to the scoreline in the second half.

'Fighter' Djokovic into Qatar quarter-finals after scare



DOHA, JAN 3 (AFP): Novak Djokovic admitted he had to "fight" to come back from a set down to beat world number 36, Hungary's Marton Fucsovics at the Qatar Open.

The world number one survived a huge scare to eventually triumph 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 Wednesday and admitted his opponent was "very close to the win".

"For the first two sets he was the better player," said two-time Qatar Open champion Djokovic. "He played really well, smart, changing up the rhythm and the pace of the ball and moving me around.

"I was kind of in a corner and I had to find my way and fight my way through."

The match lasted exactly two hours, which was twice as long as the Serb spent on court in his first round stroll against Damir Dzumhur, where he lost just three games.

A backhand winner eventually secured victory for Djokovic but the result was in doubt for a long time, with the Serb only breaking Fucsovics in the tenth game of the second set to ensure the match went into a final set shootout.

Djokovic added: "I

knew his qualities and especially in the slower conditions, so I did expect that it was going to be a match with a lot of rallies and very physical and that has proven to be the case." The number one seed, will play fifth seed Nikoloz Basilashvili in the quarter-finals.

The Georgian beat Russia's Andrey Rublev, the 2018 runner-up, 6-3, 6-4 on Wednesday.

If he wins his last eight match, Djokovic is on course to meet Stan Wawrinka in the semi-finals after the Swiss also won on Wednesday, beating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

Wawrinka plays Spain's Roberto Batista Agut in the quarters.

Also through is France's Pierre-Hugues Herbert who notched a second thrilling victory in as many nights by beating Germany's Max Marterer 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (8/6).

Herbert, who beat second seed and world number eight Dominic Thiem 24 hours earlier, will now play Tomas Berdych in the last eight, who won a three-set match against Fernando Verdasco, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, in the last match of the night.

Sharif denied helper in jail, told to maintain room on his own

ISLAMABAD, JAN 3 (PTI): Pakistan's incarcerated former premier Nawaz Sharif will maintain his jail room on his own as the Punjab province government on Wednesday refused to provide him a prisoner who could serve as his orderly, according to a media report.

Sharif has been serving a seven-year jail term in Lahore's Kot Lakhpat jail in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills graft case and being a former prime minister he is entitled to better facilities including an orderly who is from prisoners.

Punjab's Inspector General of Prisons Shahid Saleem Beg said on Wednesday that Punjab government decided that it could not provide a prisoner to Sharif who could serve as his orderly and that he would have to maintain his room on his own, the Dawn reported.

The prisons chief said Nawaz Sharif has been asked to maintain his room" to serve out the seven-year "rigorous" imprisonment handed down to him in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills/Hill Metal Establishment reference.

Speaking to media personnel in the presence of Punjab Governor Chaudhry Sarwar at the Governor House, the prisons chief said Sharif's case was highly sensitive and he could not be allowed to go outside his barracks in the prison.

He said Sharif's rigour had been kept within his barracks.

According to the jail manual, he said, the former premier had been asked to maintain his room himself.

However, he later clarified to the daily that Sharif had not been put to any rigour, adding that the manual allowed elderly inmates certain concessions on that count.

Any issue related to Nawaz Sharif in jail could bring a bad name to Pakistan, Beg said.

An anti-corruption court in Pakistan on December 24 sentenced the ousted premier to seven years in jail in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills graft case but acquitted him in the Flagship Investments case, concluding a series of three court cases against the Sharif family in the high-profile Panama Papers case.

The Al-Azizi Steel Mill case was about setting up steel mills in Saudi Arabia allegedly with corruption money.

Three cases - Avenfield properties case, Flagship investment case and Al-Azizia steel mills case - were launched against the Sharif family by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on September 8, 2017 following a judgment by the Supreme Court that disqualified Sharif in the Panama Papers case in July last year.

China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover lands on moon's far side, sends back images

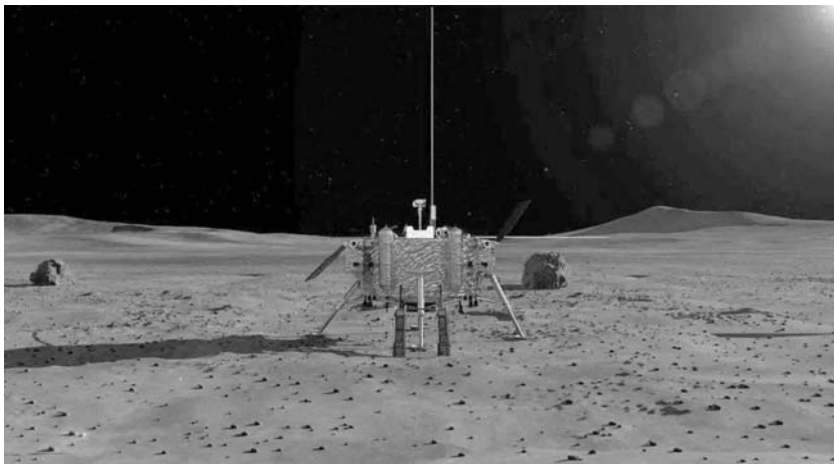
BEIJING, JAN 3 (PTI): China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover scripted history on Thursday when it made the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon and sent back close-up images of the previously unexplored region, a giant leap for cosmic exploration and a major boost to the Communist nation's quest to become a space superpower.

Chang'e-4, named after a Chinese moon goddess and comprising a lander and a rover, touched down at the pre-selected landing area at 177.6 degrees east longitude and 45.5 degrees south latitude on the far side of the moon at 10:26 am (Beijing time), China National Space Administration (CNSA) said.

The lunar explorer landed on the far side of the moon and has already sent back its first pictures from the surface, which were shared by state media.

The pioneering achievement is another demonstration of China's ambitions to be a space power. The country aims to land a crewed flight on the moon in the coming decade. The US space agency NASA congratulated Chinese scientists on their success.

"Congratulations to



China's Chang'e-4 team for what appears to be a successful landing on the far side of the Moon. This is a first for humanity and an impressive accomplishment!" NASA administrator Jim Brindestine tweeted.

"As part of the international science community, we look forward to learning about this rather unexplored part of our Moon exploration," said Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administrator for NASA's Science Mission Directorate.

The robotic spacecraft is carrying instruments to analyse the unexplored region's geology and will conduct

biological experiments.

The first-ever soft landing is being seen as a major milestone in space exploration because unlike previous moon missions that have landed on the Earth-facing side, this is the first time any craft has landed on the unexplored and rugged far side of the moon.

The successful landing formally inaugurated the world's first expedition to the far side that never faces the Earth and is expected to fulfil scientists' long-held aspiration to closely observe the enormous region, state-run China Daily reported. Though the far side has been ex-

tensively photographed by spacecraft, starting with a Soviet probe in 1959, no probe had ever made a soft landing onto it. Scientists around the world have not been able to conduct close observations and surveys of the region for decades.

The probe was launched by a Long March-3B carrier rocket on December 8 from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province.

It landed on the Von Karman crater in the South Pole-Aitken basin and then sent back a picture of the landing site shot by one of the monitor cameras on the probe's lander, marking

the world's first image taken on the moon's far side. The picture, published by the China National Space Administration, shows the place where Chang'e 4's rover will be heading to roam and survey.

Tidal forces on Earth slow the moon's rotation to the point where the same side always faces Earth. The other side, most of which is never visible from Earth, is the far side of the moon.

Direct communication with the far side of the moon, however, is not possible, which is one of the many challenges for the Chang'e-4 lunar probe mission.

Niger army kills at least 280 Boko Haram militants: ministry

NIAMEY, JAN 3 (AFP): Niger's army killed more than 280 Boko Haram militants near the south-east border with Nigeria in days of land and air raids, the defence ministry said Wednesday.

More than 200 jihadists were killed in air strikes and a further 87 by ground troops since the offensive began on December 28, the ministry said in a statement read on state television.

It comes after Western African leaders held talks in November on the escalating attacks by the Nigerian Islamist group in the Lake Chad area, a strategic region where the borders of Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger converge. The operations were carried out on the islands of Lake Chad and along the Komadougou Yobe

river which serves as a natural border between Niger and Nigeria, which has suffered a string of recent attacks on its military bases.

The Niger army said it had lost no troops or equipment in its offensive and had seized eight canoes and two rocket launchers as well as assault weapons, ammunition and vehicles.

In December, Niger's defence minister said he feared Boko Haram would launch renewed attacks on its positions from January, when the Komadougou Yobe river's waters which usually prevent incursions begin to recede.

Niaméy was particularly concerned by the situation in Nigeria where "military bases have been defeated," Defence Min-

ic payloads developed by scientists from the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and Saudi Arabia.

Chang'e 4 is the fourth lunar probe launched by China since the country's lunar programme was opened in 2004.

Chang'e-4 includes two main parts: the main lander weighing about 2,400 pounds and a 300-pound rover. By comparison, NASA's Opportunity rover on Mars weighs about 400 pounds, and the Curiosity rover there is much bigger, at 2,000 pounds.

The spacecraft is largely a clone of Chang'e-3, which landed on the moon in 2013.

Named after the goddess of the moon in Chinese legends, the first Chang'e spacecraft was launched in 2007 to verify China's lunar probe technology, obtain lunar images and perform scientific surveys.

The Chang'e 2 followed in 2010 to carry out high-definition imaging of the moon and investigate landing conditions for the Chang'e 3.

Chang'e 3 landed on the moon in 2013. Chang'e 3 released the first Chinese lunar rover, Yutu, on the moon. It worked there for around 1,000 days.

Death toll jumps to 37 in Russian gas blast

MOSCOW, JAN 3 (AFP): The number of confirmed dead from a New Year's Eve gas explosion in a Russian apartment block jumped to 37 on Thursday as rescuers recovered more bodies from the rubble of the partially collapsed building.

Six children were among the dead, the emergency situations ministry said in a statement, and four people were still unaccounted for. Rescuers have been braving temperatures as low as minus 27 degrees Celsius (minus 16 degrees Fahrenheit) to search through mangled concrete and metal at the site in the Ural mountains city of Magnitogorsk.

Six people including two children have been rescued at the site, but no survivors have been found since Tuesday, when a 10-month-old boy was found in what

officials described as a "New Year's miracle".

The explosion tore through the 10-storey building in the industrial city nearly 1,700 kilometres (1,050 miles) east of Moscow in the early hours of Monday.

The Soviet-era block was home to about 1,100 people and the explosion destroyed 35 apartments, leaving dozens homeless.

The emergencies ministry said work was continuing at the site on Thursday, with nearly 900 people involved in rescue and recovery efforts.

A bridge had been built to reach higher areas and one of the building's walls was taken down as it was threatening to collapse on rescue workers.

On Thursday residents of other parts of the building would be

allowed to enter their apartments, in half-hour stretches, to recover some belongings, the ministry said.

All the survivors were in a stable condition, said the office of Chelyabinsk regional governor Boris Dubrovsky, who visited several of them in hospital on Thursday.

Dubrovsky's office said he had also approved new financial assistance to the victims, including payments of one million rubles (USD 14,500, 12,700 euros) to the families of those killed and 400,000 rubles for those injured.

Families who lost their apartments would receive payments of up to 500,000 rubles, as well as being provided with new homes.

Financial assistance was also to be provided to help pay for funerals, the first six of which were

to be held on Friday, the governor's office said.

The explosion, which officials have said was likely caused by a gas leak, happened as most of the building's residents were asleep.

Witnesses described a "wave of fire" and said the blast was strong enough to shatter windows in nearby buildings.

Investigators have launched a probe, but have said there is no reason to suspect foul play.

Gas explosions are relatively common in Russia, where much of the infrastructure dates back to the Soviet era and safety requirements are often ignored.

Located in the mineral-rich southern Urals, Magnitogorsk, with a population of more than 400,000, is home to one of Russia's largest steel producers.

Saudi prosecutor seeks death sentences as Khashoggi murder trial opens

Riyadh, Jan 3 (AFP): Saudi Arabia's attorney general sought the death penalty for five of 11 defendants charged with the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi as their high-profile trial opened in Riyadh on Thursday.

All 11 accused were present with their lawyers at the opening hearing in the capital, according to a statement by the attorney general carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. The attorney general said Saudi Arabia had twice submitted formal requests for evidence from Turkey -- where Khashoggi was murdered inside the kingdom's Istanbul consulate -- but had received no response. The

names of the defendants have not been officially released. Five top officials in Saudi Arabia -- including royal court insider Saud al-Qahtani -- were sacked over the Khashoggi murder, but there is no proof that they are among those charged. Khashoggi, a contributor to the Washington Post, was murdered on October 2 in what Riyadh called a "rogue" operation.

The 59-year-old Saudi insider-turned-critic was strangled and his body cut into pieces by a team of 15 Saudis sent to Istanbul for the killing, according to Turkish officials. There have been reports that his remains, which have never been found, were dissolved in acid. The de-

fence team on Thursday requested a copy of the indictment sheet and a timeframe within which to review the charges.

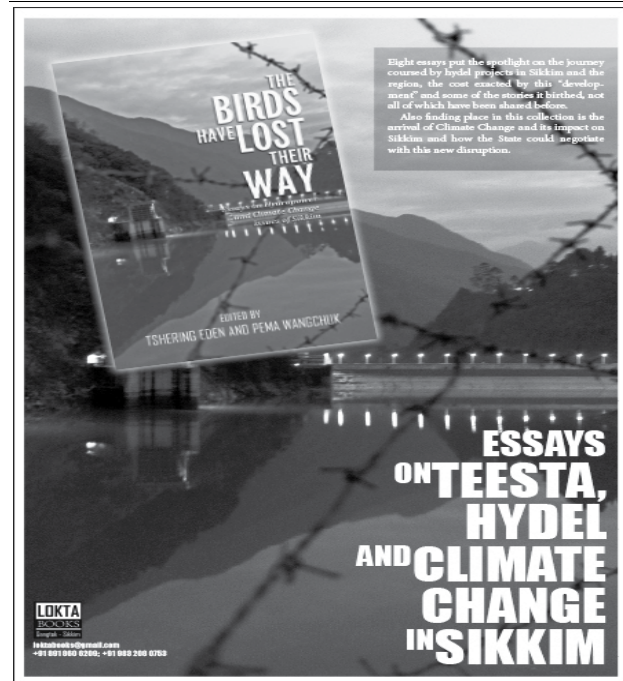
The prosecutor agreed to both requests, SPA said. No date has been set for the next hearing. The Khashoggi murder shocked the world at a time when Saudi Arabia and its de facto leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, were pushing an aggressive public relations campaign to rebrand the ultraconservative monarchy as a modern state.

Among Prince Mohammed's strongest allies is US President Donald Trump, who now faces increased pressure to approve measures

against Saudi Arabia. The US has sanctioned 17 Saudi citizens in connection with the Khashoggi murder. France and Canada have also sanctioned Saudi Arabian nationals.

The US Central Intelligence Agency has reportedly concluded that Prince Mohammed very likely ordered Khashoggi's murder. A bipartisan resolution approved by the US Senate last month also holds the crown prince responsible for the killing.

But in November the Saudi attorney general ruled out any involvement by the young crown prince, whose reformist credentials abroad have been seriously tarnished by the murder.



When Manisha Koirala almost got rejected for ‘1942: A Love Story’!

NEW DELHI, JAN 3 (PTI): After watching her enact a scene during the screen test for “1942: A Love Story”, director Vidhu Vinod Chopra dismissed Manisha Koirala as a “terrible actress” but in no mood to give up, she requested him for a second chance the next day and the rest is history.

A gritty Manisha came the next day and after her performance, Chopra remained silent for long, as if in a daze.

And then he said the words that were music to Manisha’s ears: “If this is the heart and soul that you promise to put into each scene of my movie, I will sign you up instead of Madhuri Dixit. Manisha, yesterday, you were at zero. You are at a hundred today.”

Manisha recalls this episode in her memoir “Healed: How Cancer Gave Me a New Life”.

“I remember my screen test for ‘1942: A Love Story’. Veteran filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra had called me to do a scene. But to my disappointment, at the end of it he remarked: ‘Manisha, you were shit. You’re a terrible actress.’

“This was not acceptable to me. The warrior woman inside me had been challenged. I requested him to give me twenty-four hours to come back for a second chance. Back home, I practised my lines passionately, over and over again, until my mother became distressed at my state,” she writes.

“What are you doing to yourself? It’s okay if you don’t get this movie. Don’t kill yourself over it,” her mother told her.The

next day, Manisha says, she poured her soul into her performance and subsequently got signed for the movie.

Manisha, who won a tough battle against ovarian cancer, talks in her book her treatment in the US, the care provided by the oncologists there and how she rebuilt her life once she returned home.

Born into the prominent Koirala family in Nepal, Manisha



made her Bollywood debut with “Saudagar” in 1991 and went on to act in films like “1942: A Love Story”, “Akele Hum Akele Tum”, “Bombay”, “Khamoshi: The Musical”, “Dil Se”, “Mann”, “Lajja” and “Company”.

She took a break from acting in 2012 and returned five years later with the coming-of-age drama “Dear Maya”, Netflix’s “Lust Stories” and biographical drama “Sanju”.

I don’t believe in my own hype: Ranveer Singh



JUSTIN RAO
MUMBAI, JAN 3 (PTI): Ranveer Singh had a great 2018 both personally and professionally but the actor says he navigates through all the “blessings” by staying away from his own hype.

The actor’s flamboyant persona, his marriage with fellow actor Deepika Padukone and back-to-back hits in “Padmaavat” and “Simmba” kept him in the headlines throughout last year and Ranveer is aware how it can affect a person’s outlook.

“When this happens around you, there are two possibilities - you either believe it or you are simply aware of it. While I am aware of it, I don’t start believing in my own hype. My experiences have shaped me to be the kind of person I am,” he says. The actor says he keeps himself grounded by constantly reminding himself of his struggle period.

“I had a proper struggle period of three and half years, so today when opportunities come my way, I value them tremendously. I never lose sight because I have a vivid memory of the times when I had none of this,” he told PTI.

Film industry is one of most volatile places and an actor’s sense of security is

challenged every Friday, something that Ranveer says he has learnt to deal with.

“I try and adopt the middle path- don’t get too carried away with the success and don’t get bogged down by failures. I feel happy when I succeed, you must do that. But then quickly immerse yourself in the current moment again.

“Filmmaking is a collaborative effort, so if it failed, it’s not entirely your doing. I find this middle approach very healthy,” he says.

The 33-year-old actor says the child in him still considers his journey to success in Bollywood as a “fairy tale.”

“This one kid, out of nowhere, had a dream and he’s now living it. Everyday my heart is filled with gratitude. I pray before I go to work and always say thank you because I value it. It is surreal what is happening with me, or around me.

“This love keeps me grounded and humbled. When fans ask me to get clicked with them, what I am actually thinking is ‘What? Me? Do they really want to be clicked with me!’”

The actor will next be seen in Zoya Akhtar’s “Gully Boy” with Alia Bhatt. The poster of the film released on Wednesday.

Kim Kardashian, Kanye West expecting fourth child



LOS ANGELES, JAN 3 (PTI): Kim Kardashian and Kanye West are set to welcome their fourth child, via surrogate. People magazine has confirmed the news.

The couple’s third child, daughter Chicago turns one this month, was also born through surrogacy.Citing multiple sources, Us Weekly claimed the fourth child is a boy, who is due in “very early May”.

Kardashian, 38, has been vocal about expanding her family and her difficulties in past pregnancies.

The couple are also parents to eldest daughter North, five-and-a-half years and son Saint, three.

The reality TV star and West, 41, are yet to comment on the news.



OUT AND ABOUT! Actress Lucy Hale picks up some items from a grocery store in Studio City

Taylor Swift Bids Farewell to Her reputation Era By Shutting Down App

It’s the end of an era, the reputation era that is. While Taylor Swift continues to tease her “next chapter,” she’s also turning the page on her most successful era to date. And as she bids farewell to reputation, Swift’s saying goodbye to her app, The Swift Life. In a post to Swift fans on Wednesday, the app announced that it would be officially shutting down on Feb. 1.

“Over a year ago, we launched The Swift Life alongside Taylor’s critically acclaimed, 6th studio album, reputation,” the statement begins. “It provided a creative and inclusive place for Taylor and her fans to connect with each other while expressing themselves in a uniquely interactive community.”

“As the reputation era comes to an end, our time on The Swift Life will be ending too,” the announcement continues. “The app is no longer available to download and on February 1, 2019 The Swift Life will shut down. Current fans have until this date to utilize the virtual currency they’ve accumulated. Effective immediately, no new in-app

purchases will be permitted.”

For those who are upset about the news,



remember, you can watch the reputation concert movie on Netflix right now!

ARIES: How unlike a Ram to act like an ostrich! But that might be your M.O. if you’re trying to skirt an unpleasant issue. And today, as sensitive Chiron in your secretive twelfth house forms a tangled angle with messenger Mercury, you might do anything to avoid a confrontation. Some Aries could go so far as to pretend this doesn’t exist!

TAURUS: It’s true what they say, Bull: One bad Macintosh can spoil the whole bunch. And with “wounded healer” Chiron in your social sector shooting a harsh beam to affable Mercury, someone in your inner circle could upset the apple cart if their selfish behavior isn’t quashed!

GEMINI: Thinking of a mellow NYE, Gemini? Think again! Before the stroke of midnight, firebrand Mars rushes into Aries and your eleventh house of groups, which means more will definitely be merrier. Early in the day, set some lofty intentions, perhaps writing them down in a dedicated journal or making a vision board that will inspire you on a daily basis.

CANCER: Upgrade to the VIP tickets, Cancer. Shortly before the ball drops on 2019, uncompromising Mars rushes into Aries and your prestigious tenth house until February 14. You’ve got grand plans for the year ahead, and it all starts NOW. Tonight, you practically owe yourself an upscale celebration.

LEO : You may still be digesting Christmas cookies, but you can start burning off those holiday indulgences now. Today, as the life-giving Sun links up with disciplined Saturn in your sixth house of wellbeing, you may find sticking to an exercise routine or a healthy-eating plan easier than ever. Exploit this planetary lift by diving in headfirst. Join a gym—or become a regular at yours—and find a class that will keep you pumped up. In the food department, experiment with cutting back on just one “evil,” like sugar or processed food.

VIRGO: Simmer down! You want to tune out the outer world and listen for messages from your muse today, as the creative Sun winks at structured Saturn in Capri-

corn and your fifth house of self-expression. If you’ve been taking your talents for granted, it’s time to get a little more about serious about them. Withhold judgment for now and just start devoting a few hours a week (and more on weekends) to pursuing your craft—whatever it may be. Romance could reach a passionate peak, but you need to know if the object of your affections is playing for keeps. Ask!

LIBRA : You’ll be in your gracious, glamorous element this NYE as passionate Mars launches a six-week tour through Aries and your seventh house of relationships (aka “the Libra house”). It’s likely that you’re feeling warm and fuzzy about a handful of friendships, and what better way to show how much you care than to host a pre-party party?

SCORPIO: This might not be the NYE that sees you dancing on the bar till dawn, but considering the year of wild growth that’s behind you, a gentler pace is fine by you—isn’t it, Scorpio? Thanks to your co-ruler Mars settling into Aries and your sixth house of self-care this evening, 2018

slinks out more like a kitten than a lion. You’ll be just as happy (happier, probably) bidding adieu to the year in a meditation circle, candlelight yoga class or perhaps on some sandy beach

SAGITTARIUS: Party costume: Check. Crazy shoes and accessories: Check! Wild hair and makeup: Up to you, Archer, but why not? This NYE gets a turbo-charge from passionate Mars. Just before midnight, the red planet bursts into Aries and your festive, flamboyant fifth house until February 14. Since the fifth house also rules fame, this NYE (and the first six weeks of 2019) could turn into one giant photo op for you and your crew.

CAPRICORN: How’s this for a perfect NYE gameplan: Get yourself suitably dressed up; have everyone stop by just as the bubbly reaches the perfect temperature; cue up your killer playlist; and let the rest unfold spontaneously. With passionate Mars nestling into your domestic quarters shortly before the ball drops, you may relish the thought of stay-

ing home and turning your living room into “the club.”

AQUARIUS: Wait a second there, Water Bearer. If you’re about to hit Go on a team project without running your decisions up the flagpole, you need to do a rethink on that. Last we checked, democracy still rules. And with savvy Mercury in your collaborative zone connected with healer-feeler Chiron in Pisces, you have no business trying to be the whole voting committee!

PISCES : Drop the demure Pisces act and let people know what your heart truly desires today. With deep-feeling Chiron in your sign connected to expressive Mercury in your career corner, showing a little more vulnerability can get you far. By simply opening up, you could snag your dream gig or show the powers that be what you’re capable of. But that won’t happen if you pretend you’re not interested. Embrace the competitive spirit (for a change). Provided you play fair, no one is going to resent you for taking what’s rightfully yours.