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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## Will not accept excuses, but will extend all required support to ensure uninterrupted power supply, CM tells Power Deptt officials

ARPAN PRADHAN  
GANGTOK, 25 JAN:

Addressing a co-ordination meeting of Power Department officials here at Chintan Bhawan today, Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] stressed that the State Government should work for all the people because not everyone has the access or opportunity to speak out their problems.

"The Government is for everyone and should be working for those who cannot reach out to the government and speak out their problems so we have to work for all in general," he said.

The coordination meeting was attended by engineers and other staff of the Power Department along with the Power Minister MN Sherpa, Chief Secretary SC Gupta, Power Secretary AB Rai, Development Commis-



sioner VB Pathak, and ACS, Power Department, AK Yadav.

The PCE/ Secretary, AB Rai, placed the present status report of the Department and highlighted the various problems and challenges being faced by the depart-

ment.

With the CM and concerned Minister in attendance, he also placed various demands of the Department.

The Power Minister, in his address, emphasised the need for internal discipline and coordi-

nation in the Department so that people received the best service possible.

He also directed the officers to inform the general public in time about scheduled power cuts and also directed the officers to disconnect the electricity connection

of those who have not cleared their dues.

The Chief Minister, in his address, assured that the Government was in full support of the Department in its bid to provide quality and uninterrupted power supply to the general public and urged all

officers and engineers to work in coordination and efficiently in the service of the state and the public.

He stressed that in the months of February and March, students will be having their Board exams hence it was very important to ensure uninterrupted power supply.

He underlined that while the Government will not accept excuses for supply disruptions, it will provide all required financial and executive support for the Department to be able to work efficiently.

He also took the opportunity to register his disappointment with many field staff and officers not having quick response to urgent situations and announced that two-wheelers will be provided to those who work dedicatedly on field.

Turn pg 2

**ENERGISING THE SPIRIT  
OF THE NEW INDIA**

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- Narendra Modi

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spirit of being Indian.

Let us come together and fulfil our duties to make a new  
India which is clean and free from corruption, dirt, poverty,  
terrorism, casteism & communalism.

Heartiest Greetings on

# Republic Day

davp 22202/13/0051/1920

# DDU-GKY trainees lash out against project implementing agency

## SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 JAN:**

A section of students in the first batch of the capacity building programme under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana [DDU-GKY] scheme have lashed out against Margdarshak Development Projects Consulting Pvt Ltd, the Project Implementation Agency [PIA] for the scheme in Sikkim. The students have accused the PIA for making false promises and not meeting the guidelines of the project.

They have alleged that candidates in the first batch suffered and ultimately became jobless even after completing the programme, and all this because of the false promises and poor implementation of guidelines by the PIA.

Social activist Ban-



dana Rai from Delhi had first raised the issue [on social media] of 24 DDU-GKY scheme trainees from Sikkim facing problems in their placement in Bangalore.

Following the same, the State Institute of Capacity Building [SICB] and some Sikkim candidates in Bangalore had condemned her claims. This push back has convinced candidates from the first batch of the programme and even some

former officials of Margdarshak Development Projects to break their silence and come out openly with their allegations.

Addressing a press conference here today, they alleged, "We completed a six-month course on Bedside Assistant in June last year and were sent on a three-month placement to Guwahati. We were trained to assist nurses, but were assigned works related

to housekeeping during placement. We worked in unhygienic conditions and faced many problems, threats and harassment but somehow we all managed to return home."

They further alleged that Margdarshak Development Projects lacked professional placement or training plans and did not meet its financial assistance commitments to candidates.

It is informed that the

second batch of students was presently in Bangalore and the third batch is still undergoing training at the Centre.

Likewise, former state head of the scheme in Sikkim, Amrit Sharma, who resigned a few months back, alleged that Margdarshak Development Projects has have not met the guidelines of the scheme and has made false assurances to candidates.

"This is a wonderful project of the Centre for underprivileged youth to make them capable and employable through capacity building, and being the monitoring agency, if SICB had strictly monitored the work of the PIA, these youth would not have suffered," he said.

He mentioned that despite of repeated requests, SICB has not intervened in the matter.

## CM's Republic Day message

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 JAN:**

Chief Minister, PS Tamang has extended good wishes to the people of Sikkim on the occasion of Republic Day. He has offered special greetings to the Armed Forces, Para-military and the Internal Security Forces.

"The dream of my Government is to make Sikkim into a conscious, well informed, robust and capable entity where the people can live with dignity and happiness.

Let us, on this happy occasion, resolve to maintain and enrich the good tradition of peace, brotherhood and communal harmony. Let us also be responsible citizens and pledge to re-dedicate ourselves to the service of our State and contribute in the process of Nation Building," the CM has said.

He has listed the State's achievements as well as the SKM Government's achieve-

ments since coming to power last year.

"From the coming new financial year, a health plan will be implemented so that government employees, including retired employees, and senior citizens will have many benefits through which overall timely checkup and treatment related benefits will be initiated. Special care for women and child has already been started," the CM has said.

## Godrej organizes Road Safety Awareness Program

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 JAN:**

Godrej consumer products Ltd, Mamring, South Sikkim organised a Road Safety Awareness Program at Rangpo, today, a press release informs.

Officers and staff from the said unit reached Rangpo and with the help of Rangpo Police and Traffic Police they informed all the drivers about traffic rules and road discipline.

Representatives from



Godrej have appealed to all to wear helmets, seat belts and to obey traffic rules to avoid accidents. On the day, the company

also distributed key rings and chocolates sharing safety parameters to drivers as awareness, the release mentions.

## National Voters' Day celebrated in Mangan

### MANGAN, 25 JAN (IPR):

Election Department, North Sikkim, celebrated the 10th National Voters' Day on 25 Jan, 2020 with the theme "Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy" at District Election Conference hall, Mangan. The programme was organised by the office of the chief electoral officer, Sikkim.

It may be recalled that the Election Commission of India was constituted on 25 Jan, 1950. Thus 25 January every year is now observed as the National Voters Day.

Additional Magistrate, North, Surat Gurung was the chief guest for the function



along with SDM, Mangan, Karma Thupden Bhutia, SDM, Dzongu, Tshering Norbhu Bhutia, Deputy Director, Education, North, Sajan V Sebestain, Deputy Director, Election, North, Biswa B Raj Gurung, ADM/N, Mr Gurung

congratulated young voters who have just turned 18 and got the right to vote for the first time. He said that they should become more responsible in order bring positive changes in the society and country as a whole. Right to vote is

one of the fundamental rights of a citizen thus the new registered voters must exert their rights in a befitting manner for the good cause, he urged.

During the celebration SDM, Dzongu, Mr Bhutia read out the na-

tional voters' day message of Chief Election Commissioner of India. Simultaneously, ADM/N administered the national voters' day pledge.

The National Voters Day event also witnessed the felicitation of new registered voters and distribution of Election Photo Identity Card.

Earlier, the programme started with the lighting of lamp by the chief guest followed by the welcome address delivered by the Deputy Director, Education, North while the programme ended with the vote of thanks proposed by Dealing Officer, BBBP, Wangchuk Bhutia.

## Scouts and Guides national integration camp begins



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 JAN:**

Five-day national integration camp of the Bharat Scouts and Guides began at Himalayan Home, Majhitar, today.

The camp is being attended by participants from 27 States

and three neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

From Sikkim, 500 scouts and guides are participating in this camp. Sports and Youth Affairs Secretary, Kuber Bhandari inaugurated the event.

Deputy Director

Scouts and Guides National Headquarter New Delhi, Amar B Chhetri highlighted about the importance of this camp while State Chief Commissioner, HP Chhetri for the Bharat Scouts and Guides Sikkim also addressed the gathering.

## Governor calls for collective effort to take Sikkim to next level of success

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 JAN:**

Governor Ganga Prasad, in his Republic Day message to the people of Sikkim, has invited all to "continue to work harder, get stronger and come together to achieve our goals."

"I do believe that with our collective effort, the State will achieve its next level of success in the near future," he states.

Conveying his best wishes to the people on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day, the Governor highlights that the Constitution was a symbol of pride for all Indians.

About Sikkim, he points out that being the first Organic State in

the world, it serves as a model for others to emulate.

"The State has assimilated development, peace, harmony and security. There is no problem like communal riots or strikes in the State," he states, adding that the Sikkim Government has given top priority to the development of the grass root level.

"Rural livelihood, road connectivity, electricity, health facilities, drinking water and housing facilities, essential information for everyone and the modern priority of development have become a reality for the people of Sikkim due to the far-reaching policies of our Government. Sikkim

which is an agricultural state, owing to the farsighted policies adopted by our Government, has now also successfully progressed into the field of industrial and service sector," he states.

The State government, the Governor conveys, is also making efforts to develop its tourism capacity by introducing homestays in rural areas.

Extending greetings to the armed forces, paramilitary forces, who provide sustained security to the nation, and members of their families, the Governor states, "I pray that your success inspires others to strive for the best as well."

## Judicial system has failed us: Margaret Alva on CAA

### MANISH SAIN

**JAIPUR, JAN 25 (PTI):**

Senior Congress leader Margaret Alva on Saturday said the Citizenship (Amendment) Act "negates" constitutional guarantees and rights given to all Indians and that the judicial system which is supposed to be the protector and the interpreter of the Constitution "has failed us".

Speaking at the 'Of the People, By the People: The Indian Constitution' session at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival

here, the former governor of Rajasthan said she had expected the courts "to be more active and more vocal" on the matter.

"Of late identity is being associated with religion. I don't know how or why this has begun to take root. We have been told that certain people are welcome and certain are not, some get automatic citizenship and others do not. To me this is a negation of the constitutional guarantees and rights given to all Indians," she said.

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General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College. Flat Land no cutting required. Price 27 Lakhs (negotiable). **Contact: 9800201335**

### LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

### LAND FOR SALE

An area measuring 1 acre at Sadam South Sikkim near Loretto Convent School at Gupti road. Price negotiable any one interested can contact: 78640-04501,62970-03235, 98320-48410

## National Voters' Day observed in South District

### NAMCHI, 25 JAN (IPR):

On the occasion of the 10th National Voters' Day, District Election Officer (DEO) cum District Collector (South), Ragul K administered the National Voters' Day pledge at a program held at Namchi DAC Conference hall today.

The event also had the presence of SDM Namchi, Agwane Rohan Ramesh, SDM (HQ), Chiran Rizal along with the officials and staff of Election Department, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and newly enrolled young voters.

In his address, the DEO South spoke about the significance National Voters' Day celebrations abs informed the gathering that casting of vote a democratic practice. He urged all the eligible voters to value and exercise their franchise to elect a rightful candidate.

During the program, DEO South administered the National Voters' Day pledge besides presenting Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) numbers to 4 newly enrolled young voters of the district.

He also presented

awards and certificates to the Best Performing BLOs under South District based on their performance during 2019 Sikkim Legislative Assembly-Parliamentary Elections and By-Elections of Poklok-Kamrang constituency.

The names of the awardees from 8 different constituencies under South District are as follows:

- 08 Zoom-Salghari-Purnima Chettri
- 09 Barfung-Basu Dev Khanal
- 10 Poklok-Kamrang-Dawa Tshering Lepcha

- 11 Namchi-Singhithang-Mani Kamal Gurung
- 12 Melli-Hom Nath Sharma.

- 13 Namthang-Rateypani-Mukunda Dhungel
- 14 Temi-Namphing-Gokul Prashad Subedi
- 15 Rangang-Yangyang-Pahal Man Limboo
- 16 Tumin Lingee-Pashu Ram Sharma

During the course of the program, a message from the Chief Election Commissioner of India was also read out before the attendees.

# Songbing Lingdem Hotspring Festival begins

WANGCHUK BHUTIA  
MANGAN, 25 JAN:

The 4-day long Songbing Lingdem Hotspring Festival got underway today here in upper Dzongu.

Organised by the Songbing Hotspring Tourism Development Committee, the festival, now into its fourth year, aims to boost village tourism in the area and interest more tourists to explore the area and thereby create opportunities for local youth in the hospitality sector.

The festival was inaugurated by Forest Minister Karma Loday Bhutia accompanied by SKM's Dzongu constituency in-charge, Chung Kipu Lepcha, BDO Tem-



pa Rinzing Bhutia, CDPO Netuk Lepcha, RO Ashish Gurung, HoDs and committee members.

In his address, the Minister assured that the year 2020 would be a progressive one or all-

round development.

Sharing that he was visiting Lingdem after a gap of 35 years, he remarked that when he had last visited, there was no hotspring in the area, and now that

it has one, it was providing the area more exposure in tourism and creating opportunities.

Regarding the demand for a tourism guest house, he as-

sured that the demand will be fulfilled and urged the committee members to select a proper location for it.

The festival is scheduled to conclude on 27 January with the football finals between Sultan Boys and Sangdong FC. The winner's will take home Rs. 60,000 and the runners-up Rs 30,000.

Earlier, the SHTDC president, Dupzor Lepcha, presented the welcome address which was followed by a cultural performance.

The SKM in-charge for Dzongu, in her address, commented that she was very impressed with SHTDC's work in the area.

# 10th National Voter's Day celebrated in East District



GANGTOK, 25 JAN (IPR):

The 10th National Voter's Day with the theme of "Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy" was celebrated amid fervent patriotic devotion here at Conference Hall of Zilla Bhawan, East District today.

The celebration was attended by Chief Electoral Officer, Sikkim, R. Telang. He was accompanied by District Magistrate, East, Raj Yadav, Special Secretary, Rural Development Department cum Roll Observer for Special Summary Revision, Anil Raj Rai, Additional Secretary, Election Department, Roshni Rai, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Shyam Pradhan and Sub-Division-

al Magistrate, Hemant Rai. Also present in the programme were BLOs, EROs, AEROs, Zilla Panchayat members, students, principals and the new registered voters.

The main objective of the programme was to encourage new voters to take part in the election process of the largest democracy in the world.

During the programme, the National Voters Day pledge was administered by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The CEO in his address lauded the freedom enjoyed by citizens of India as compared to other neighboring countries. He stated that India has sustained itself as the largest democra-

cy in the world due to constitutional rule and independent institutions such as Supreme Court, Election Commission of India etc.

He urged those present in the meeting to become responsible voters to sustain democratic values in the country. Furthermore, he added that one should not vote influenced by caste, religion and communal feelings.

On the occasion, a few new registered voters were felicitated by the Chief Guest. He also felicitated the Best Electoral Literacy Club, Best District and State Level BLOs, Best AERO, Best ERO, and best Nodal Officer.

# Footballers leave for National School Games

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 JAN:

Sikkim's U-17 Boys Football team left today for the 65th National School Games to be held from 28 January to 02 February at Agartala, Tripura. The 18-member squad is being accompanied by Pushpa Gurung as team coach and Mayal Lepcha as team manager and Bharat Tamang as chef-de-mission.

In a see-off programme held here at

Paljor Stadium on Saturday morning, Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari, extended his best wishes to the team and handed over track-suits and jerseys to the team members.

A press communique from SYA department informs that this was the 12th and last batch of the State for the National School Games. It is informed that the State has sent 209 boys and girls



and officials in ten disciplines since October last year to the 65th National School Games 2019-20

being held in 12 venues across the country.

The state team is participating in Archery, Ath-

letics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Karate, Taekwondo, Football, Table Tennis and Swimming.

# Governor meets NIFAA and YVK team

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 JAN:

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad granted audience to Yuva Vikash Kendra and National Integrated Forum of Artists and Activists (NIFAA) organization of Tripura and Sikkim here at Raj Bhavan today, a press release informs.

A team of Yuva Vikash Kendra and NIFAA is in Sikkim for 3 days tours as part of 'Sadhbhavana Tour 2020'. It was in-

formed that to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Statehood Day of Tripura, Yuva Vikash Kendra and NIFAA initiated North East 'Sadhbhavana Tour 2020' which was commenced on 21st January to strengthen the peace, harmony, brotherhood of North East and integrity.

The Governor wished all the members for successful 'Sadhbhavana Tour' and has given his blessings to for their future endeavor.



# Rotary Club presents Vocational Excellence Awards 2020

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 JAN:

To celebrate Vocational Service Month of the Rotary International, Rotary Club of Gangtok presented Vocational Excellence Awards to three entrepreneurs of Sikkim at Hotel Elgin Nor-Khill on 24 Jan, 2020, a press release informs.

The awardees are Kushan Zulca of Mitho, Smita Rai of Namchi Designer Candles and Chimi Ongmu Bhutia of Lagstal Design Studio.

All three of them have excelled in their field of vocation and are sup-



porting the local populace of Sikkim by providing employment, marketing of their products, and guidance to prepare and produce traditional

crafts, the release mentions.

Every year Rotary Club of Gangtok presents Vocational Excellence Awards to encourage

those who are true and dedicated to their profession and excel their chosen vocation.

Yogesh Verma spoke on the recent trends in diseases like cancer, diabetes and hyper tension. He attributed the rise of these diseases in recent times due to lifestyle changes, and lack of information and guidance.

Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia, was the chief guest for the function. He acknowledged the good work done by Rotary Club of Gangtok since its formation in 1968 and interacted with

the audience. He sought the help and support of Rotarians in the projects he plans to take up in his constituency and the State.

Also present on the occasion were Rotarians from Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe and Rotary Club of Gangtok South, members of Inner Wheel Club of Gangtok and Gangtok Orchid. Club flag was exchanged between Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe and Rotary Club of Gangtok as a mark of camaraderie and friendship.

# Sikkim starts Women's U23 One Day

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 JAN:

Sikkim U23 Women's team is currently on a tour for Women's U23 One Day Trophy 2019-20, the league round of which will be played in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack between 10 teams of Plate Division from 24 Jan to 16 Feb, 2020, a press release informs.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has entrusted Sikkim Cricket Association (SICA) with the responsibility of hosting this tournament which will be played between Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Bihar, Puducherry, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Jammu &

Kashmir.

The inaugural match was played between Sikkim and Meghalaya at KIIT Cricket Stadium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha on Friday, 24 Jan, 2020. Sikkim won the match by 61 runs earning 4 Point(s).

Sikkim won the toss and elected to bat first and put up 217 runs in 50 overs with the loss of 6 wickets. It was Rinki Rajak's 54 runs followed by a Captains inning by Sarojini Giri's of 100 not-out that helped the team reached a worthy target. Diki Lhamu Bhutia's 12 runs not-out and Songkit Lhamoo Lepcha's 10 runs added to the total. In the second innings Meghalaya were well restricted by

the efficient bowling and superb fielding of Sikkim throughout the game.

Meghalaya made 156 runs of 50 overs losing 7 wickets to Sikkim with the highest score of 37 runs by L Tamang, Pranita Chettri, Priyanka Gurung, Mariam Subba, Neema Yanki Lepcha and Aruna Barman took 1 wicket each and two run-out were made by Aruna Barman and Sarojini Giri.

The release mentions that the Sikkim dressing room is boosted with this win and players and support staff are looking forward to their next encounter with the Nagaland on 27 January, that will be played at Ravenshaw University Cricket Ground, Cuttack, Odisha.

# U-17 football team leaves for National School Games

GANGTOK, 25 JAN (IPR):

The Department of Sports & Youth Affairs conducted a seeing off programme at Paljor Stadium for the U-17 Football Boys Sikkim Team for 65th National School Games on 25 Jan, 2020.

The Sikkim team comprises of 18 players and three officials, coach Puspa Gurung, manager, Mayal Lepcha and Chef-De-Mission, Bharat Tamang.

The tournament will be held at Agartala, Tripura, from 28 Jan to 02 Feb, 2020. SYA Secretary, Kuber Bhandari extended his best wishes to the team

and gave away the track suit, jersey to the team.

This is the last and 12th batch leaving for National Games. Since October 2019, 209 Boys & Girls including officials in 10 (Ten) Sports Disciplines - Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Karate, Taekwondo, Football, Table Tennis and Swimming have participated in 65th National School Games 2019-20 in 12 different venues.

Director, Deputy Directors, Assistant Director and Coaches of SYA were present during the programme.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

# CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED FOR AMBA SCHOOL LIBRARY UPGRADATION

Wandering Souls of Sikkim is excited to announce our plan to upgrade the school library of Govt. Secondary School, Amba, East Sikkim. This will be fourth such upgradation of school libraries by WSOS.

We have successfully upgraded 3 school libraries so far with the support and contributions of our generous patrons and are looking forward to receive more such contributions.

We request all to kindly contribute books either old or new or cash for the upgradation of school library at Amba.

Our Library Initiative is aimed at upgrading School libraries specially in rural areas of the state and for laying a foundation for better future of our young minds studying in these schools.

To Contribute Contact WSOS at 7384639193.



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**  
**OFFICE OF THE SR. SUPERINTENDENT OF PRISONS**  
**STATE CENTRAL PRISONS**  
**RONGYEK**

**TENDER NOTICE**

Sealed quotation are invited from registered firms of Sikkim for Supply of ration, grocery, hardware and electrical items to the State Central Prison, Rongyek and District Prison, Namchi for the period with effect from 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021. The rates quoted by the firms inclusive of all transportation / carriage charges upto point of delivery i.e. the Central Prison, Rongyek and District Prison, Namchi as and when the items are requisitioned shall be final for all purpose.

Th quotations addressed to the Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek should reach the office of the undersigned on pr before 10 AM on \_\_\_\_\_. The Tender Selection Committee shall open the tenders in the office of the Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek at 11 AM on the same day in the presence of the Tenderers or their authorized agents.

The quotations shall be accompanied by a state Bank of Sikkim T.D.R made in favour of the Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek for Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty thousand ) only alongwith certified copies of the concerned firms registrations, valid Trade License, GST registration etc. The failure to submit anyone of the above mentioned documents shall render the quotation void.

The tender Selection Committee reserves the right to accept any or all of the quotations without assigning any reason thereof.

The Tender documents can be obtained from the Office of the Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek between 10.00 AM to 2.00 PM on all working days with effect from the publication of Tender Notices.

Sd/-  
Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek

R.O No. 334/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

dt. 22.01.2020

## A Document of Faith

*Understand the Constitution better to appreciate Article 371F and its true potential*

The Constitution of India is one of the most comprehensive documents codified to ensure equality for all citizens. In fact, not just citizens, but all those who find themselves within the geographical boundaries of India, enjoy certain rights. It is another matter that this does not sit well with those in office at the Centre, and now that they enjoy a brute majority in Parliament, their brutishness is on full display and there is no ignoring the ugliness of despise being force-fed.

But we digress. It is no secret that equality still evades the citizens and that disparities still mar the land. While this is true, it is not a failing of the Constitution; the blame rests in the limited ability of those responsible to uphold the Constitution. Those approaching the Constitution with 'limited ability' are not only the politicians as many would have naturally inferred, but also the lay citizens for whom the document was drafted and the intellectuals who are expected in any society to refine the people's understanding of rights, issues and situations. Of late, an ideology is taking an axe to the Constitution and its values, and that is a whole new worry.

Meanwhile, as a people, we have failed in internalizing and understanding the document that makes us free, equal and empowered. Take Sikkim's example, it must have been the promise that the Constitution of India holds that convinced the Sikkimese to end a monarchy and become a part of India. Sure, there is this almost fashionable debate over what is the correct term to use – merger or annexation, and much as that is an interesting discussion to get into, we leave that for a later date. It is the sensitivity of the Constitution of India which made Article 371F possible. Remember, there was no Article 371F when 1975 happened, nor any demand or understanding of such an arrangement when the Merger was effected, and yet the Article was inserted into the Constitution to set the ground rules for India on how Sikkim's incorporation into the Union was to be handled. Article 371F did not flow from the magnanimity or farsightedness of the leaders of the time, but was conditioned by the principles espoused by the Constitution. Article 371F is a powerful tool providing Sikkim with its special status within the Indian Union. Unfortunately however, it has been reduced to convenient dodge to continue living in the past. The Act was inserted into the Constitution to guide Sikkim's future, not to keep it stuck in the past. It provides Sikkim with the unique privilege of cherry-picking what it likes and wants of the Indian democracy and allows it the space to adapt and grow at its own pace. Clearly, the idea was to cushion the shock of sudden change and it would be a disservice to the Constitution of India to allow its provisions to get reduced to a one-dimensional understanding perpetuating status quo forever.

Since Article 371F is so important for Sikkim and for the political rhetoric of lazy politics, one wonders why the public space here, in the more than four decades that the Article has been a part of the Constitution, never received an informed discussion or deliberation on this clause which makes Sikkim a part of India? There has been a lot of jingoism and many half-truths are routinely thrown around, but Article 371F has not received the honest discussion it deserves. For whatever many groups might say about it, 371F is a progressive Act and that is how it should be used; not as a political slogan to confuse people and keep them stuck with one leg in the distant past. The exemption from Income Tax being enjoyed by Sikkim Subjects becomes possible due to this Article and some better informed interpretations and tactful arguments can win the State even more special arrangements. That will require reasoned positions and appraisals which will benefit if they have an emotional core, but will prove harmful if approached only emotionally.

What is safeguarded by Article 371F will always be safe, the Constitution is strong enough to guarantee that, but the real aspirations which moved the people so strongly in 1975 will be achieved only when the true potential of the Constitution trickles down to every corner of the State. For that, a more confident understanding of what this document is all about has to be promoted. For that, Sikkim's engagement with Article 371F will have to move beyond the lazy chauvinism which blinks a more complete understanding. Article 371F cannot be understood in isolation of what the rest of the Constitution holds. This Republic Day, maybe acquiring a deeper appreciation of this document is a promise the people can make themselves and keep.

# What Not To Say When Women Talk To You About Sexual Harassment

Sian Lewis

THECONVERSATION.COM

The explosive 2017 #MeToo campaign demonstrated just how many women had stories to share about sexual harassment and assault – and how many experiences had been kept silent until that point. In the wake of the collective outpouring online, sexual harassment is now a topic of everyday discussion.

While conversation itself is progress, it has also become clear that women are still having to expend a significant amount of emotional labour to explain and justify their personal experiences to the men around them. That's particularly the case when men decide to play devil's advocate in these discussions. It immediately forces women into a corner where they must adopt a defensive position to argue the validity of their experience or reaction to it. This can be exhausting – hence the term "emotional labour".

Having researched women's experiences of sexual harassment in the public space for over three years, I began to notice common retorts when engaging in conversation with men about the prevalence and impact of such behaviour. These common rebuttals actively derail the possibility of a progressive and productive interaction.

**'WORSE THINGS HAPPEN'**

It can be easy to trivialise sexual harassment – particularly when comparing it to more severe forms of sexual assault. It might seem like being leered at in the street isn't as bad as actually being grabbed, but the harm of sexual harassment partly lies in its everyday and repetitive nature. The most normalised intrusions, such as leering, cat calls or wolf whistles, happen so regularly that they often go unmentioned or challenged. They are taken for granted.

But apparently "low-level" incidents of sexual harassment act to remind women of the risk of more invasive sexual assault or violence. That fear, in turn, affects their everyday experiences, making them feel more fearful and limiting their ability to navigate public spaces in the same way a man might.



A 2018 survey covering 13 countries showed how men vastly underestimate the level of sexual harassment women experience in their lifetime. Men estimated that 36% of women experienced sexual harassment, whereas the figures show closer to 60% (likely still an underestimate).

This is concerning as it affects the way we have conversations about sexual harassment. For men, it's an abstract scenario or an "interesting" topic that isn't that likely to happen. With that in mind, it's easy to see how a point of view can be adopted simply for argument's sake without understanding how high the stakes actually are for women.

**'NOT ALL MEN'**

It is not uncommon, when a woman is telling a story of sexual harassment, for men to take a defensive stance and act as if they are being personally attacked. It's important to recognise that these discussions are not an attack on "all men" but on the perpetrators and a society that still functions in a way that allows this behaviour to manifest and persist.

Responding with "but not all

men" insinuates that you are more concerned with how this situation affects you and your existence as a man, than the woman who has been harassed or assaulted.

**'MEN ARE VICTIMS TOO'**

Men and boys are also victims of sexual violence, and arguably the stigma and shame for male survivors is exacerbated by the prevalence of toxic masculinity. Victimisation and vulnerability (especially of a sexual nature) does not sit well with society's ideals of "being a man".

However, recognising that women are disproportionately affected by sexual violence does not deny that it also happens to men and boys. Attempts to claim the issue as gender neutral only act to dilute the severity and impact that sexual harassment and abuse has on women's everyday lives.

**'WHY DIDN'T YOU SHOUT BACK?'**

Feminist academic Liz Kelly theorised sexual harassment as on the "continuum of sexual violence". This is helpful in understanding that when sexual harassment occurs in public, the fear of escalating the situation often affects how women react.

You might not think a cat call or a prolonged gaze is dangerous but the woman on the receiving end doesn't know whether that expression of attention is the end of the encounter or if it is going to turn into something more threatening. Exiting the situation to avoid a more serious incident is almost always the priority rather than speaking your mind.

My research, which focused on women's experiences of sexual harassment on public transport showed exactly this – when a man masturbated across from them in an empty tube carriage, their primary concern was to get the hell out.

Telling someone how they should have reacted to sexual harassment is really just a form of victim blaming. Focusing on how the victim responded, rather than the behaviour of the perpetrator feeds into the dangerous narrative that it is a woman's responsibility to keep herself safe from men, that she must alter her behaviour to exist in a world where sexual harassment is normalised to the point it is seen as inevitable.

**OWN YOUR RESPONSE**

Sexual harassment is widely debated as a "women's issue". But the issue itself does not lie with women. It lies with men, or rather, it exists as a symptom of a society that allows sexist attitudes to fester. Yet the burden of combating sexual harassment (and other forms of sexual violence and gender inequality) still seems to fall predominantly on the shoulders of women.

If you play devil's advocate, you can express a provocative, often belittling viewpoint without having to take ownership of it. That only makes it more exhausting for women to discuss a topic that affects their daily lives.

When confronted with the reality of sexual harassment, if men continue to respond in such a way, it acts to invalidate and silence women and their everyday realities. It doesn't take much to listen, but it can make all the difference to how a story is told.

*[the writer is Associate Lecturer in Criminology and Sociology, University of Roehampton]*

## Academic Freedom: Repressive Government Measures Taken Against Universities in More Than 60 Countries

KIRSTEN ROBERTS LYER

THECONVERSATION.COM

Universities around the world are increasingly under threat from governments restricting their ability to teach and research freely. Higher education institutions are being targeted because they are the home of critical inquiry and the free exchange of ideas. And governments want to control universities out of fear that allowing them to operate freely might ultimately limit governmental power to operate without scrutiny.

My recent report, co-authored with researcher Aron Suba for the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law, has found evidence of restrictive and repressive government measures against universities and other higher education institutions in more than 60 countries.

This includes government interference in leadership and governance structures to effectively create state-run institutions that are particularly vulnerable to government actions. It also includes the criminalisation of academics for their work as well as the militarisation and securitisation of campuses through the presence of armed forces or surveillance by security services. We also found evidence that students have been prevented from attending university because of their parents' political beliefs, while others have been expelled or even



imprisoned for expressing their own opinions.

Some of the more shocking examples of repressive practices have been widely publicised, such as the firing of thousands of academics and jailing of others in Turkey. But much of what is happening is at an "administrative" level – against individual institutions or the entire higher education system.

There are examples of governments that restrict access to libraries and research materials, censor books and prevent the publication of research on certain topics. Governments have also stopped academics travelling to meet peers, and interfered with curricula and courses. And our research also found governments have even interfered in student admissions, scholarships and grades.

**REPRESSION, INTIMIDATION**

Hungary provides a particularly glaring recent example of government interference with university autonomy. The politicised targeting of the institution I work at – Central European University – has been well documented. But the government has also recently acted against academic life in the country more broadly. It has effectively prohibited the teaching of a course (gender studies) and taken control of the well-regarded Hungarian Academy of Social Sciences.

What makes the Hungarian example especially disturbing is that it is happening within the European Union – with seemingly no consequences for the government. This is despite the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

which states that: "The arts and scientific research shall be free of constraint. Academic freedom shall be respected." Meanwhile the Hungarian government still has all the privileges of being an EU member state, which includes receiving large sums of EU money.

The inexplicable failure by the EU to enforce its own standards is particularly troubling and helps to normalise this behaviour. Indeed, there are clear signs such repressive practices are spreading. Anti-human rights legislation, policy and practice that begins in one country is frequently copied in another. Anti-civil society legislation recently adopted in Hungary and Israel, for example, which aims to stop protests and minimise the number of organisations receiving funds from abroad, was previously adopted in Russia.

Repressive practices against universities are starting to spread in Europe. Earlier this year it was reported that the Ministry of Justice in Poland planned to sue a group of criminal law academics for their opinion on a new criminal law bill.

**ACADEMICS IN DISTRESS**

The freedom of academics and university autonomy is not entirely without scrutiny. There are some excellent organisations, such as Scholars At Risk and the European University Association who actively monitor this sector.

But, at an international level, university autonomy is rarely raised when governments' human rights records are being examined. And there is no single organisation devoted to monitoring the range of issues identified in our recent report.

Without proper monitoring, universities, academics and students are even more vulnerable because there is little attention paid to these issues. And there is little pressure on governments not to undertake repressive measures at will.

A global monitoring framework is needed, underpinned by a clear definition of university autonomy. The UN and EU institutions also need to pay more attention to the dangers that such attacks on universities pose to democracy and human rights. A stronger line against governments who are acting in violation of existing standards should also be taken.

Universities should be autonomous in their operations and exercise self-governance. These institutions are crucial to the healthy functioning of democratic societies. Yet academic spaces are closing in countries around the world. This should be a concern for all. The time for action is now, before this trend becomes the new norm.

*[the writer is Associate Professor of Practice, Acting Director Shattuck Centre, Central European University]*

## Prashant Kishor now trains his guns at Sushil Modi

**PATNA, JAN 25 (PTI):** A fresh turmoil was caused in the ruling JD(U)-BJP alliance in Bihar on Saturday by a tweet from election strategist-turned-politician Prashant Kishor, who sought to underscore Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi's hostility towards Chief Minister Nitish Kumar when their parties had, for a brief period, parted ways.

Kishor, who was inducted into the JD(U) more than a year ago and made the party's national vice-president weeks later, has ruffled the BJP with his stout opposition to CAA, NPR and NRC and provision of professional service to leaders like Mamata Banerjee and Arvind Kejriwal.

In his fresh tweet, he shared a video clipping where Sushil Modi -- then stripped of the position of power because of Kumar's exit from NDA -- can be heard attacking



the JD(U) chief.

Along with the clip, Kishor also shared a January 22 tweet Sushil Modi, where he had said, "Kumar often faces troubles at the hands of those whom, out of generosity, he picks up from dust and catapults to the skies."

"To someone he gave away his chair, to others he gave Rajya Sabha berths or rewarded with top organisational posts,

bringing them out of political wilderness".

The deputy chief minister's remarks were seemingly aimed at Jitan Ram Manjhi, who succeeded Kumar in 2014, besides JD(U) national general secretary Pavan Varma and Kishor himself.

While Manjhi revolted against Kumar and floated his own party, Varma has left the chief minister sore by sharing

in public a two-page letter he wrote to him earlier this week, questioning the JD(U)'s tie-up with BJP in Delhi at a time when the saffron party was facing public resentment in the form of protests against the CAA.

Incidentally, the video clip of Sushil Modi shows him inveighing against Kumar for having dethroned Manjhi for the sake of his own return to power and defending

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "DNA" jibe at the JD(U) leader, which had become a major issue during the 2015 Assembly elections.

Kishor, in his tweet, said, "@SushilModiji is unparalleled when it comes to dishing out character certificates. Look at what he said earlier and what he is putting in writing now, after having been made the Deputy CM".

"His chronology, too, is clear," remarked Kishor twisting the knife with an indirect reference to the "aap chronology samajh lijiye" remark of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, whom the election strategist had attacked a few days ago for "being dismissive of citizens' dissent".

The Bihar BJP was predictably peeved. Party spokesperson Nikhil Anand came out with a strongly-worded statement charging Kishor with "working on the

pay-rolls of Lalu Prasad (jailed RJD supremo)".

"Instead of explaining chronology to others, he would do well to understand the colloquialisms of the Bhojpuri-speaking area to which he belongs. It is for his type that words like thethar (in-correctible) and latkhor (despicable) have been coined," Anand fumed.

JD(U) sources said that Kishor had been an outlier for quite some time and his utterances must not be construed as the party line.

"What Kishor has said about Sushil Modi's duplicity is true. But it is equally true for Nitish Kumar himself.

"We can understand that he is not a full-time politician. But he must act and part ways with the JD(U) at the earliest else he may lose his credibility," said Madhav Anand, a national general secretary of RLSP, which is a constituent of the opposition Grand Alliance.

Assam govt to file case against Shaheen Bagh protest mastermind



**GUWAHATI, JAN 25 (PTI):** Assam government would register a case against the alleged mastermind of the Shaheen Bagh protests in Delhi for his "seditious" comment "aimed" at disrupting law and order in the state, a minister said on Saturday.

Addressing a press conference, Assam Finance Minister said Shergil Islam was heard saying in an audio clip that the state should be cut off from the rest of India and taught a lesson.

"Assam government has taken cognisance of this very seditious statement and we will register

a case against this individual," Sarma said.

"A lot of wrong things have been said by this individual, aimed to create law and order situation in Assam.

We will bring this person to the court so that he is punished in accordance with the law," he added.

Thousands of people, including women and children, have been protesting since December 15 at Shaheen Bagh and nearby Jamia Millia Islamia against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

## College in Patna withdraws ban on wearing burqa

**PATNA, JAN 25 (PTI):** A college for women here on Saturday withdrew its ban on wearing of burqa in its premises after it had prohibited it as part of the institute's new dress code.

Acknowledging that the prohibition was due to a misunderstanding, the college authorities said that it has "no intention to disturb or harass students of any community".

"Students are informed that they have to come to college in the prescribed dress code every day, except on Saturday.

"Besides, the use of 'burqa' is prohibited both inside the classroom and the college premises. A fine of Rs 250 will be imposed if anyone is found violating the code," the notice by J D Women's College said.



College principal Shyama Roy confirmed that the ban on wearing of burqa in the institute's premises has been withdrawn and said that the college has issued a second notice specifying that there is no ban on the clothing.

"There is a dress code of the college which specifies that a student has to wear a maroon colour kurta, white salwar and white dupatta. There is a misunderstanding in

the notice ... We sincerely apologise for it," Rekha Mishra, a teacher of the college, said.

JD Women's College is affiliated to Patliputra University. Mishra said students may come to college wearing 'burqa' and attend classes after removing it at the college premises if they wish.

"Many students used to come to classes in their home dresses in burqa, which was op-

posed by some others. Following the objections, college authorities issued notice asking students to strictly comply with the dress code," another teacher of the college said on condition of anonymity. The students who had objected to the ban on using 'burqa' inside the college expressed happiness over the college administration's decision to withdraw it and said they will comply with the prescribed dress code.

## Nadal, Halep roll on as shocks rattle Australian Open



**MELBOURNE, JAN 25 (AFP):** World number one Rafael Nadal and Wimbledon champion Simona Halep dodged an exodus of seeded players as the shocks kept rolling at the Australian Open on Saturday.

A day after Serena Williams and title-holder Naomi Osaka fell by the wayside, second seed Karolina Pliskova crashed out to leave another gaping hole in the women's draw.

Pliskova and Osaka's exits mean two of the top three women's seeds are out of the running, clearing obstacles for the likes of Halep and 2016 winner Angelique Kerber.

Switzerland's Belinda Bencic, the sixth seed, won only one game against Estonia's Anett Kontaveit, the world number 31, as she bombed out 6-0 6-1.

Croatian 19th seed Donna Vekic also crumbled to lower-ranked opposition when she lost 7-5 6-3 to Poland's Iga Swiatek, who is returning from a stress fracture in her foot.

Nadal took the court against fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta after staying up to watch Roger Federer's late-night thriller with John Millman, which went to a fifth-set tie-breaker.

"I watched it until one o'clock -- it was impossible to sleep watching this match," he said.

But he showed no signs of tiredness, racing through 6-1 6-2 6-4 in just 1hr 38mins in what he called his "best match of the tournament so far, without a doubt".

"I'm improving every day, so super-happy. I did well on my serve and hit good forehands down the line, which is a key shot for me," he said.

- 'SUPER SALTY' -

Nadal, 33, who can equal Federer's record 20 Grand Slam titles with victory in Melbourne, will now meet either Karen Khachanov or Nick Kyrgios -- the outspoken Australian with whom he has a running feud.

Kyrgios, who labelled Nadal "super salty" last year, and mimicked his serving routine during his second-round win, will face his biggest test yet against the Russian 16th seed, who won their only meeting in Cincinnati last year.

Halep put away Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva 6-1 6-4 to reach the last 16, where she will play Belgium's Elise Mertens, who won in three sets against CiCi Bellis -- ending the American's Grand Slam return from long-term injury.

She shrugged off the departure of some of the tournament favourites, saying defeats can happen to anyone.

## No UT status for Bodo-dominated areas in Assam: Minister



**GUWAHATI, JAN 25 (PTI):** Assam Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday clarified that the Centre would not upgrade the state's 'Bodoland Territorial Area Districts' (BTAD) to a Union Territory, as part of a new peace accord likely to be inked between various stakeholders and the Centre.

Addressing a press meet here, Sarma, who is also the North-East Democratic Alliance convener, said no new village or area would be added to the BTAD under the new accord.

"The Centre has informed the state government that no Union Territory will be created or new areas be added to the

BTAD, but the accord will ensure that the territorial integrity of Assam is maintained," he told reporters.

People of Assam should be rest assured that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah would not agree to the division of Assam, he stated.

"The Union government has taken the initiative to hold peace talks with the various stakeholders in the BTAD. The entire framework (of the accord) is being prepared by the Centre," the minister said.

"If a fresh Accord is signed in the near future, permanent peace will come to Bodoland and Assam's territorial integrity will also remain intact," Sarma added.

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## News Broadcasters Federation condemns attack on Deepak Chaurasia at Shaheen Bagh

**NEW DELHI, JAN 25 (PTI):** The News Broadcasters Federation on Saturday condemned the alleged attack on News Nation consulting editor Deepak Chaurasia by protesters at Delhi's Shaheen Bagh and demanded police action against perpetrators of the violence.

In a statement, the News Broadcasters Federation said it is extremely concerned about the repeated instances of violence directed at journalists in the line of duty at Shaheen Bagh.

These attacks have been fuelled by a growing spirit of intolerance by those claiming to be protestors at Shaheen Bagh, NBF president Arnab Goswami said in a statement.

"The most recent attack on senior journalist Deepak Chaurasia and his camera crew at Shaheen Bagh, which was recorded on camera, reflects the growing hostility of some of those at



Shaheen Bagh towards journalists unwilling to toe their line," he said.

In recent weeks there have been similar attacks on several other TV journalists in the course of which camera equipment has been broken and destroyed and some journalists, including those who were victims of Friday's attack, have had to be hospitalised, Goswami said.

The NBF, which is the largest such organisation of news broadcasters pan India, demands immediate police action

against those who have perpetrated the violence and seeks solidarity among all members of the Indian media against this relentless attack on reporters, and editors of news media organisations, he said.

Police said Chaurasia, 51, complained to them saying he was beaten up and his camera was snatched by a mob at the protest site.

An FIR has been registered under sections 394 (voluntarily causing hurt in committing robbery) and 34 (com-

mon intention) against unknown persons at the Shaheen Bagh police station, a senior police officer said.

On his Twitter handle, Chaurasia uploaded a one-minute video in which he was seen surrounded by protestors and later manhandled by them. They tried to remove him from the spot and also snatched his mic.

In another part of the video, a group of men can be seen trying to snatch a camera from the cameraman.

## DRI seizes 10 kg of smuggled gold

**KOLKATA, FEB 25 (PTI):** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a smuggling syndicate and seized 10 kg of gold, 429 kg of silver and Rs 20.16 lakh in Indian cur-

rency and arrested two persons, an official said.

The total value of the seizure is estimated at Rs 6.42 crore, a DRI statement said on Saturday.

The syndicate is in-

involved in the smuggling of gold biscuit from Bangladesh through the border of North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.

Acting on a tip-off, DRI sleuths on Thursday con-

ducted searches at different premises in Burrabazar area of Kolkata. The agency also seized coins made of silver of foreign origin and Rs 20.16 lakh of Indian currency, the statement said.

**VIDEO NEWS SECTION**

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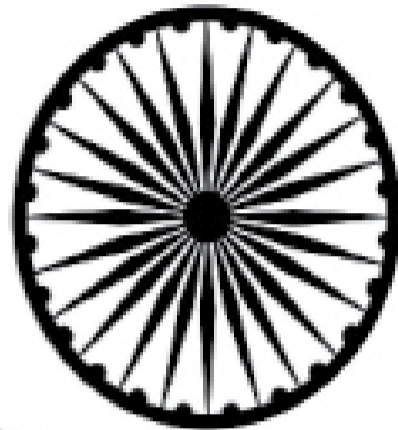
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# 71<sup>st</sup> Republic Day



"Where the mind is without fear  
and the head is held high,  
where knowledge is free.

Where the world has not been broken up into  
fragments by narrow domestic walls.

Where words come out from the depth of truth,  
where tireless striving stretches its arms towards  
perfection.

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost it's way into the dreary  
desert sand of dead habit.

Where the mind is led forward by thee  
into ever widening thought and action.

**INTO THAT HEAVEN OF FREEDOM, MY FATHER,  
LET MY COUNTRY AWAKE !"**

*Rabindranath Tagore*



Department of Information  
& Public Relations  
Government of Sikkim

# Air pollution linked to poor brain development in kids: Study

**NEW YORK, JAN 25 (PTI):** Exposure to traffic-related air pollution (TRAP) during early childhood is associated with structural changes in the brain at the age of 12, according to a study which warns that the pollutants may affect physical and mental development in kids.

According to the study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, children with higher levels of TRAP exposure at birth had reductions at age 12 in the brain's gray matter volume, and outer layer thickness compared to children with lower levels of exposure.

In the study, the researchers from the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in the US used magnetic resonance imaging to obtain anatomical brain images from 147 children who were 12 years old.

The children were

earlier part of the Cincinnati Childhood Allergy and Air Pollution Study (CCAAPS), which recruited volunteers prior to the age of six months to examine early childhood exposure to TRAP and health outcomes, the scientists noted.

Using an air sampling network of 27 sites in the Cincinnati area, the scientists estimated the exposure of these children to TRAP at four or five sites over different seasons.

According to the researchers, the children and their caregivers also completed clinic visits at ages 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 12.

"The results of this study, though exploratory, suggest that where you live and the air you breathe can affect how your brain develops," said Travis Beckwith, lead author of the study from the Cincinnati Chil-



dren's Hospital Medical Center.

"While the percentage of loss is far less than what might be seen in a degenerative disease state, this loss may be enough to influence the development of various physical and mental processes," Beckwith added.

The researchers explained that the brain's gray matter, which are regions with nerve cells

wrapped by insulating glial cells, are involved in movement of body parts, as well as sensory perception, such as seeing and hearing.

They said the thickness of the brain's outer layer, the cortex, reflects the outer gray matter depth.

According to the study, specific regions in the brain's frontal and parietal lobes, and the cerebellum, which

is responsible for voluntary movements like posture, balance, coordination, and speech, were affected with decreases on the order of 3 to 4 percent.

"If early life TRAP exposure irreversibly harms brain development, structural consequences could persist regardless of the time point for a subsequent examination," Beckwith said.

## China to build second new hospital to treat coronavirus cases as death toll rises to 41

**K J M VARMA**

**BEIJING, JAN 25 (PTI):** China on Saturday announced plans to build a second hospital within half a month to treat more cases of the deadly coronavirus as the fast spreading virus continues to wreak havoc in the country and abroad with 41 people dead and more than 1,300 infected, dampening the Chinese New Year celebrations.

The confirmed cases for the first time crossed the 1,000 mark and rose sharply to 1,287 as of Friday with 237 people in critical condition battling for their lives in China, the National Health Commission said on Saturday.

Almost all provinces, including Beijing, are reporting steady rise in the number of cases mostly of people who travelled from Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.

The pneumonia situation had resulted in 41 deaths, including 39 in central China's Hubei province and one in north-eastern province Heilongjiang, the health commission said on Saturday.

Additionally, a total of 1,965 suspected cases have also been reported, it said.

China on Saturday said it will build another 1,300 bed makeshift hospital in Wuhan in the next 15 days in addition to the 1,000 bed hospital being built in the city in 10 days, state-run People's Daily reported.

The feverish pace at which the hospitals are being built indicate that China apparently is preparing to treat far more patients considering the speed at which the virus is spreading.

The virus has spread to Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Nepal, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and the United States as of Thursday.

Japan on Friday reported a second confirmed case.

firmed case.

A chinese doctor reportedly died of the novel coronavirus on Saturday morning, the first fatality among health workers since the pneumonia-like illness first surfaced in late December, state-run China Daily quoted online news website Paper.cn as saying.

Liang Wudong, a 62-year-old doctor with the otolaryngology department who treats conditions in the ear, nose and throat at Hubei Xinhua Hospital, was suspected of contracting the new virus on January 16. The hospital that he works is in Wuhan.

On January 18, he was transferred to Hubei Jinyintan Hospital, which has received the majority of infected patients, and died at about 7 am on Saturday, the report said.

Previously, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission said on Tuesday that 15 medical workers were confirmed as contracting the virus, with one suspected case. One of them is critically ill, the China Daily report said.

Wuhan, the city of 11 million people, is where the virus is believed to have first emerged. The victims' average age is 73, with 89 being the oldest and 48 youngest.

Also China's National Health Commission has dispatched 1,230 medical staff to Wuhan to combat the novel coronavirus outbreak in the region.

Local media earlier reported that 450 military medical personnel have also landed in the city to offer support.

Also, the local government in Wuhan on Saturday has banned all vehicles, including private vehicles in downtown Wuhan to curb virus, a report by the Daily said.

The city along with 12 cities in Hubei province have already banned all public transport to prevent the virus from spreading.

At present, there is no cure for the virus which has pneumonia-like symptoms and is contagious among humans.

The virus has triggered a cause of concern for India too as many of the 700 odd Indian students studying in universities of Wuhan and Hubei provinces are still stuck up there.

The Indian Embassy has established hotlines to keep close contact with them.

The fast spreading virus dampened the celebrations of China's Lunar New Year which began on Saturday.

On Friday Chinese bid goodbye to "the year of the pig" to welcome "the year of rat".

In Chinese lunar calendar, years are grouped into a 12-year cycles, with each year assigned an animal symbol: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. In view of the virus scare, several cities, including Beijing, have cancelled special events. The festival is also known as the Spring Festival.

Large cultural activities during the spring festival in Beijing such as temple fairs were cancelled to prevent the spread of the virus.

China's biggest city Shanghai raised the emergency response to public health safety to level 1, the highest, following Beijing, and Hubei, Hunan, Zhejiang, Anhui and Guangdong provinces as more cases were reported.

Beijing so far has reported 34 confirmed cases of the coronavirus infection, official media reported.

Amid the unknown virus wreaking havoc, Chinese and American researchers are working together to develop a vaccine against the deadly new strain of the coronavirus.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) on Thursday stopped short of declaring the virus a global public health emergency, despite China's climbing death toll.

## Australia confirms first coronavirus cases

**SYDNEY, JAN 25 (AFP):** Australia confirmed on Saturday its first four cases of the new coronavirus that has claimed 41 lives in China, becoming the latest country in a growing list to be affected by the illness.

One man was being treated in isolation after arriving in Melbourne a week ago from the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak.

He has pneumonia but is in a stable condition, health officials said.

Three other men in Sydney who also arrived recently from China had tested positive for the disease and were in isolation in local hospitals.

"They are not particu-



larly unwell," New South Wales state chief health officer Kerry Chant told a press conference.

She said public health officials had managed to track most of the people who had been with two of the men on their

flights from China and none were showing symptoms of the illness.

Officials were still trying to trace the travel of the other man and are waiting on test results from several other people suspected of con-

tracting the disease.

NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard praised the three men in Sydney for approaching doctors once their symptoms arose.

Authorities in Queensland state said five other people had been cleared after they were suspected of infection.

The previously unknown 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is thought to have originated in a market in Wuhan where exotic animals and bushmeat were sold.

It has infected around 1,300 people in China and spread to almost a dozen other countries, including France and the United States.

The virus has caused global concern because of its similarity to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), which killed hundreds across mainland China and Hong Kong in 2002-2003.

Health experts say some human-to-human transmission has been recorded, particularly in Wuhan, a city of 11 million now under lockdown in a bid to limit the spread of the disease.

Australian health minister Greg Hunt said passengers who travelled on the same Melbourne-bound plane as the infected man were being contacted "to provide them with information and advice".

## Trump, Johnson talk telecoms security ahead of Huawei decision

**LONDON, JAN 25 (AFP):** Prime Minister Boris Johnson discussed telecoms security with US President Donald Trump as he prepares to announce if Britain will use China's Huawei in its 5G networks, officials said Saturday.

In a phone call on Friday evening, the two leaders "discussed a range of issues, including cooperation to ensure the security of our telecommunications networks", a Downing Street spokeswoman said.

A White House statement also confirmed they discussed "working together to ensure the security of our telecommunications networks".

The United States has banned Huawei from the

rollout of its next generation 5G mobile networks because of concerns -- strongly denied -- that the firm could be under the control of Beijing.

Washington has been lobbying London to do the same, but there is speculation that it will grant the firm some kind of limited access.

Huawei is already well established in British 3G and 4G networks, and officials have warned that banning it would be hugely costly and delay the rollout of 5G technology.

Intelligence agencies also believe that they can contain any potential risk, although Johnson will have to make the final decision, expected next week.

In his call with Trump, the prime minis-



ter also raised the "need to secure justice" for the family of Harry Dunn, Downing Street said.

The British teenager died in August when his motorbike was hit by a

car being driven by Anne Sacoolas, the wife of a US diplomat.

British authorities have charged Sacoolas with causing death by dangerous driving, but

the US refuses to extradite her.

Johnson "reiterated the need for the individual involved to return to the UK", the spokeswoman said.

## US stresses equal protection under India's new citizenship law

**LALIT K JHA**

**WASHINGTON, JAN 25 (PTI):** Amid protests over the Citizenship Amendment Act in India, a top American diplomat has underscored the importance of the principle of equal protection under the law.

Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Alice Wells, who has just returned from a trip to the region besides attending the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, said on Friday that her visit offered an opportunity to hear more regarding develop-

ments with the new citizenship law.

According to the CAA, members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 following religious persecution there will get Indian citizenship.

"The visit also offered an opportunity to hear more regarding developments with India's Citizenship Amendment Act, which is undergoing I would say a vigorous democratic scruti-

ny, whether it's in the streets, by the political opposition, media, and the courts," she said.

"We continue to underscore the importance of the principle of equal protection under the law," Wells added.

On Jammu and Kashmir, Wells said she was "pleased to see some incremental steps, including the partial return of internet service" in Kashmir.

The restrictions were imposed on August 5 last when India abrogated the Article 370 that gave special powers to Jammu

and Kashmir, and bifurcated the state into two Union Territories.

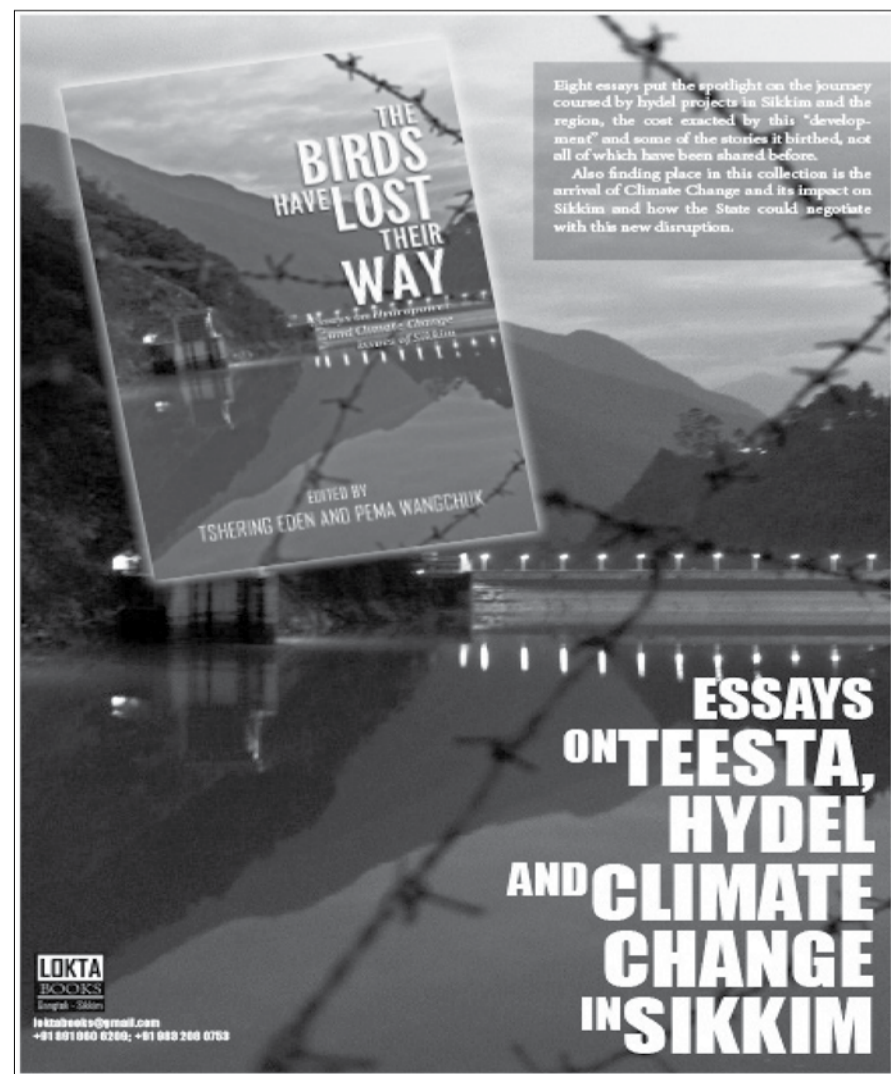
Wells described the visit by US ambassador Kenneth Juster, and other foreign diplomats to Jammu and Kashmir as "a useful step".

"We also continue to urge the government to permit regular access by our diplomats, and to move swiftly to release those political leaders detained without charge," she said.

In the first such trip by foreign diplomats post August 5, envoys of 15 countries, including

the US, early this month visited Jammu and Kashmir where they interacted with select political representatives, civil society members as well as top military brass with the Indian government rejecting criticism that it was a "guided tour".

While in New Delhi, Wells had meetings with her Indian counterparts, which she said were focused on how to build on the diplomatic and defence gains achieved during the 2+2 ministerial dialogue in December.





**A NIGHT OF MUSIC AND MAYHEM! Actress, Margot Robbie stepped onstage at the Birds of Prey Harleywood and Highland film event in Los Angeles.**

## I didn't think I would make it to 17: Billie Eilish on depression

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 25 (PTI):** Teen sensation Billie Eilish has opened up about her struggle with depression which led to her contemplating suicide.

The 18-year-old singer, who is nominated for the best new artiste Grammy award, said two years ago she was in the darkest phase of her life.

"I was so unhappy last year. I was so unhappy, and I was so, like, joyless. I don't want to be dark, but I genuinely didn't think I would make it to 17," Eilish said in an interview with Gayle King for her CBS special.

When the host asked whether the singer ever had suicidal thoughts, she said, "Yeah. I think about this one time I was in Berlin and I was alone in my hotel, and I remember there was a window right there. I remember crying because I was thinking about how the way that I was going to die was, I was going to do it."



Gayle then referred to Eilish's song "Bury a Friend" where she sings "I wanna end me" and asked the singer if that was a real thought in her mind.

"It was. It also rhymed," she said.

The "lovely" singer said she shares a special relationship with her fans and wants them to value their lives.

"I just grab them by the shoulders and I'm like, Please, take care of yourself and be good to yourself, and be nice to yourself. Don't take that extra step and hurt yourself further. And then you can't take it back," Eilish said.

## Brad Pitt says he is not on Tinder

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 25 (PTI):** Hollywood star Brad Pitt's SAG win won't make it to his Tinder bio as the actor doesn't have a profile on the dating app.

The 56-year-old actor had joked during the Screen Actor's Guild (SAG) awards that his outstanding performance by a male actor in a supporting role win for his work on "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" would boost his chances of finding on the the portal.

During an interview with Extra magazine, Pitt was asked if he was aware that Tinder subscriptions had risen because of his comments, to which he replied: 'I'm not on it. I'm not even really sure how it all works. It just sounded funny to me.'

While accepting his trophy at the awards ceremony last week, Pitt said he would add the honour to his list of achievements on his profile.

'I go to add this to my Tinder profile, Thank you my brothers and sisters, this means so much. More than I can possibly



fathom. I watch everything, I watch you all and the work has been mesmerising, so I thank you all," the actor said in his acceptance speech leaving the audience in splits.

## Sony rebooting 'Anaconda', Evan Daugherty on board as writer

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 25 (PTI):** Sony is in early stages of developing a reboot of its 1997 creature film "Anaconda".

According to Variety, the studio has roped in Evan Daugherty, the scribe of "Snow White and the Huntsman" and "Divergent", to pen the script for the new project.

However, no producer, director or actor is attached to the project as of yet.

The original movie, directed by Luis Llosa, was about a documentary film crew in the Amazon that comes across an obsessed hunter looking to find a legendary anaconda.

The film featured the likes of Jennifer Lopez, Ice Cube, Jon Voight, Eric Stoltz and Owen Wilson.

Despite average reviews, the film was able to make a



splash at the box office, raking in USD 135 million against its USD 45 million budget.

The movie spawned several sequels over the years but none were able to match its success.

## Chance the Rapper to host prank show 'Punk'd' on Quibi

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 25 (PTI):** Grammy winner Chance the Rapper has been announced as the host for Quibi's revival of MTV show "Punk'd".

The 26-year-old hip-hop artiste will take over the director's chair for the updated version of the hidden-camera show where pranks are pulled on celebrities.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the show will be reimagined for a new generation of viewers and available in episodes of 10 minutes or less on streaming platform, which will be launched in April.

"Punk'd", which started on MTV in 2003, was created by Ashton Kutcher and Jason Goldberg. Kutcher also hosted the show.

During its seven season run, the actor famously pranked celebs likes Justin Timberlake, Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey, and Frankie Muniz.



## Robert Zemeckis to direct 'Pinocchio' live-action remake

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 25 (PTI):** Veteran filmmaker Robert Zemeckis is set to direct Disney's long-gestating "Pinocchio" live-action remake.

According to Entertainment Weekly, Zemeckis will also co-write a new draft of the screenplay with Chris Weitz.

The original animated movie revolves around living puppet who, with the help of a cricket as his conscience, must prove himself worthy to become a real boy.

The remake of the classic animated story was announced in 2015. Filmmakers Sam Mendes and Paul King were at one point attached to direct the movie.



### DEAR READERS,

**IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING YOUR COPY OF THE SUMMIT TIMES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD, PLEASE MESSAGE OR WHATSAPP US YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AT 9832556698 AND WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE NEWSPAPER REACHES YOU.**

Aries:

Aren't you tired of all this burden and responsibility? Spirit is asking you to take a deep breath and brew a cup of sereni-tea, Aries. Take each sip with awareness. Allow yourself to be uplifted by the fragrance and the flavours. It really is the small things that make a big difference. Want to up the mindfulness game? Journal your thoughts as they come to you. This will not just help you ease the burden but also give you perspective on what you are struggling with.

Taurus:

Transformation is seldom easy. But you knew you had to push through in order to strip away the false layers and get in touch with your most authentic self. The Universe is giving you a gold star for showing up even on the days when you were tempted to give it all up. Continue to rise to your power, Taurus. This will help you restore the balance in your relationships. Revelation, revelation: you are no longer obligated to play the role of the giver and the nurturer in every relationship.

Gemini:

It doesn't matter what the final chapter of this love story revealed. The love you felt—and perhaps still do—for them is real. Don't doubt yourself for a second. In your darkest moments, know that Spirit has a plan for you which will be revealed to you in due course of time. For now, focus on reconnecting with your roots; grounding your energy.

Cancer:

What ignites your inner fire, Cancer? What are the things you feel passionate about? This weekend isn't about drastic changes. It's about finding your True North, realigning with your path, and serving the world in a manner that feels authentic to you. Your intuition will be stronger than ever before. Trust the guidance that is coming through. As an empath and a sensitive soul, you've always had a way with children.

Leo:

Working through your abundance blocks is going to be an important theme for you in the coming days. While your income has been steadily increasing, your insecurities about mon-

ey haven't left your side. What could be the reason behind your deep-seated fear? Let the light of awareness help you help you bring about a deep, inner transformation.

Virgo:

Virgo, keep your eyes on that vision board as you make bold moves that you would have never dreamed of before. Embrace what makes you different. Embrace what makes you, you. What if your authenticity is your greatest gift to the world? On the downside, you may find that you have to deal with people who do not share the same values as you. Remember, karma is the great balancer.

Libra:

Moment of truth: you have more on your plate than you signed up for. How do you keep coming back to this point, Libra? Could your need to micromanage be the reason you are overworked? Spirit is reminding you that there is an easy way around this. Seek the support of like-minded individuals. Open yourself to help. Spend some time building (and training) the right team so you can delegate the tasks at hand. Remember, it takes an orchestra to deliver a

wonderful performance!

Scorpio:

You're no longer the person you used to be, but you haven't transformed into the butterfly you envisioned either. Think of this as an incubation process—one that's preparing you for your show-stopping moment. There are things that will be taken away from you on this journey. Word of warning: this will feel painful in the beginning, as loss often does.

Sagittarius:

A powerful affirmation by Danielle LaPorte to give you the strength you need to break past limiting beliefs and achieve your wildest dreams. "I call all of my power back to me now. I am whole and complete." Send yourself a postcard with the given words or put up a sign board on your desk. You have that look of invincibility about you—one that reiterates you cannot be messed with. Remember, clarity is your gift, Sagittarius.

Capricorn:

Take a good look at what you are putting on your plate. It's not about consuming three meals a day. It's about tuning into the needs of your body and giving it exactly what it deserves.

Working with a health expert will prove to be the real game changer here. But before you add new things to your diet, be sure to eliminate the harmful substances.

Aquarius:

Today, you're being called to step back and reassess your personal space. Are you carrying the regret of offering help to someone? Do you often find yourself saying 'yes' when your head is screaming 'no'? Your time and energy are your sacred, Aquarius. Accept that there is only so much you can do as you rid yourself of unnecessary guilt.

Pisces:

You are not defined by where you come from, where you grew up or where you choose to live now. What a wonderful feeling to be able to strip away the layers of conditioning and see yourself in a brand new light! This is a period of metamorphosis for you, Pisces, one that will redefine your relationship with the world. Trust that your interpersonal relationships will also undergo a drastic shift as a result. Don't apologise for wearing your heart on your sleeve or for saying the three magic words first.