

ECI launches VVIP for Election 2019

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 FEB: The Election Commission of India has launched a Voter Verification and Information Programme (VVIP) for voters for verifications of their names, new registrations, changes in their details and correction in the Voter ID cards for the upcoming General Elections 2019, an official press communiqué in the office of Chief Electoral Officer, Sikkim, said. ECI has enabled various channels for the VVIP programme and set up contact centres in all districts across the country. The Voter Helpline number is 1950. Contact Centres are equipped with latest information and telecom infrastructure to help the voters. The VVIP Programme was launched during the day intensive Training-Workshop on use of Information Communication Technology for the conduct of General Elections 2019. The training was conducted by Additional Chief Electoral Officers, in charge of IT, Nodal Officers, State Level Master Trainers and technical

resource persons from all States and Union Territories. Speaking on the occasion, Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa said that the strength of technology is to make it easy for use by all. He exhorted those attending the workshop to imbibe and in turn explain it extensively to all.

He reminded the participants that the central theme of ECI's endeavours was to make Elections more inclusive. With use of Apps, prompt responses should be ensured to actually facilitate the voter.

One of the important applications for which the training was imparted to all States and UTs was cVIGIL. The cVIGIL App provides time-stamped, evidence based proof of Model Code of Conduct, Expenditure Violation, having live photo/video with auto location data.

Any citizen can lodge a complaint through this Mobile App. Flying Squads then investigate the matter and the Returning Officer takes the decision. The status of cVIGIL can be shared with the cVIGIL complainant within a specified time limit.

Alembic workers withdraw protest after Labour Deptt secures assurances

SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 13 FEB:

The aggrieved casual workers of Alembic Pharmaceutical Pvt Ltd, Mamring-Samardung in South Sikkim, withdrew their protest after receiving a written assurance on their demands from the Labour Department and Alembic Pharmaceutical.

They were on dharna at the Labour Department since Monday evening with an eight-point charter of demands.

On the second day of their dharna on yesterday, Labour Secretary LB Chhetri had assured the aggrieved workers that officials from the management of Alembic Pharmaceutical would be summoned and a meeting arranged between representatives of the company, workers and the department.

The meeting was held today.

Assistant General Manager Saibal Mukherjee and HR Manager Pradeep Sharma from Alembic Pharmaceutical arrived at the department this morning and directly went to the Secretary's office.

With the arrival of the company officials, the Secretary called representatives of the aggrieved workers to a meeting in the conference hall of the department.

However, the workers refused to go to the conference hall and insisted that the meeting be held at the site of the dharna in the presence of every aggrieved worker.

In the afternoon, the



Secretary, accompanied by other officials came down to apprise workers on decisions taken during a meeting on their demands.

However, the workers insisted that the department call both officials of the company to the spot, especially the HR Manager, who later came down but refused to have the direct dialogue with the workers or the media on any issue.

"We are here on the invitation of the State government and we have already discussed all issues and cleared our stand to the department. The department will convey the decisions taken in the meeting," Mr Mukherjee said.

He added the company will take action according to the directions of the department.

On the occasion, workers placed their various

grievances and issues directly to the officials of the company but they refused to speak on any issue.

Later, the Secretary mentioned about various decisions taken in the meeting but workers demanded that all decisions be released in writing.

Finally, at around 4 PM, the Secretary came down with the minutes of the meeting in written and shared it with the aggrieved workers.

As per the minutes of the meeting, decision on eight demands will be initiated by Labour Department and management of Alembic Pharmaceutical Company Limited per the demand placed by protesting workers of the company.

It is informed that the company assured that the employees who were terminated by the company on disciplinary grounds will be taken back after discussion and obtaining approval from the higher authorities of the company by 18 Feb.

On the revision of minimum wages to 20,000 per month, the department has assured to examine the demand and the Secretary also promised the workers that per the norms of the government, revision of minimum wages will be completed by July 2019.

On the demand for withdrawal of all warrants against workers accused of violence, it has been decided that the management will withdraw the

Mamata, other Opposition leaders take part in mega rally in Delhi

DELHI, FEB 13

Opposition leadership including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, gathered in Delhi on Wednesday for a mega rally organised by the Aadi Party, where she slammed the BJP "threat to democracy" which must be defeated in the coming general election.

The rally has been organised nearly three weeks after Banerjee hosted Opposition leaders in Kolkata in a similar show of strength on January 19.

Speaking at the rally, leader D Raja said Constitution is under attack under Narendra Modi as prime minister asserted that Par-

liament has been undermined and bypassed and its role has been minimized under Modi.

"Can you allow a Germany-like situation where Hitler overpowered Reichstag (German parliament)," he said.

"BJP in power is a threat to constitution and democracy. It must be defeated," he added.

Raja asserted that ever since Modi became prime minister, there have been attacks on constitutional values of the country. He said India is defined as a secular, democratic republic while BJP's ideology is "sectarian, communal and divisive".

"Whenever fascist powers have tried to capture power, they first destroy democratic institutions.

"And I am not just talking about CBI, RBI... Institution of Parliament being undermined, bypassing Parliament, minimising its role. It is maximum Modi, minimum governance and minimum Parliament," he said.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other AAP leaders were present at the rally.

Huge posters having the image of B R Ambedkar and slogans like "Tanashahi Hatao Loktantra Bachao" dotted the venue. CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury alleged that BJP is professing

politics of 'Dushashan' by pitting brothers against brothers.

"There is need to replace this government for a better India. This chowkidar needs to be removed to save the country.

"BJP is like Kaurava Sena but the Pandavas (Opposition) will defeat them and save the country," he said.

Interestingly, minutes before Mamata Banerjee arrived, the two left leaders moved away from the stage.

Other senior leaders including Samajwadi Party's Ram Gopal Yadav, AAP's Sanjay Singh, Nationalist Congress Party's Sharad Pawar and LJD chief Sharad Yadav were also present at the rally. **turn to pg02**

Citizenship amendment bill, triple talaq bill set to lapse on June 3

NEW DELHI, FEB 13

(PTI): The contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and the one on banning triple talaq are set to lapse on June 3 when the term of the present Lok Sabha ends as they could not be passed in the Rajya Sabha which adjourned sine die on Wednesday.

The Budget session was the last Parliament session of the present government.

The 17th Lok Sabha has to be constituted before June 3. Lok Sabha polls are due this summer.

Bills introduced in the Rajya Sabha and pending there do not lapse with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Bills passed by the

Lok Sabha and pending in the Rajya Sabha lapse.

The opposition had been opposing provisions of the two bills in Rajya Sabha where the government lacks numbers.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 provides for according Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after seven years of residence in India instead of 12 years, which is the norm currently, even if they do not possess any document.

The legislation was passed by the Lok Sabha during the Winter Session on January 8 and

has been awaiting the Rajya Sabha's nod.

There has been strong opposition to the bill in Assam and other Northeastern states.

Student organisations, political parties and socio-cultural bodies have been protesting on the grounds that it seeks to grant nationality to non-Muslims who have come into India up to December 31, 2014, thereby increasing the deadline from 1971 as per the Assam Accord.

Also, according to the Assam Accord, all illegal immigrants who have come after 1971, irrespective of their religion, have to be deported and this bill violates that.

Two BJP chief ministers of the Northeast, Arunachal Pradesh's Pema Khandu and Manipur's Biren Dingh -- have voiced their opposition to the contentious Bill.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the bill is an "attribution of the wrong" was done during Independence Partition. India will guard all who had been victims of the Partition.

On Saturday, addressing a rally in Assam, Modi said the citizenship law won't harm the interests of the people of the region but will provide a court to those who have "embraced the idea" of Mother India. **turn to p**

HSP supports dharna by Alembic Pharmaceutical workers

BYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 13 FEB:

Indro Sikkim Party (HSP), led by president, Dr. Dina Basnet, today extended support to the dharna being organised by workers of Alembic Pharmaceutical at Labour Department.

"When workers are sacked from their jobs, they have no recourse or remedy to meet their basic needs. When they protest, the Government sides with the factory owners primarily because the owners make financial contributions to the party in power, both at the time of a gathering and

at the time of a gathering and

Sikkim Government is working to get GI for Temi Tea: CII requested to engage with State Govt on developing an industrial policy for Sikkim, EoDB, Organic Mission, Tourism and in the areas of climate change and green technologies.

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 FEB:

"The rating of Sikkim might be low in the Ease of Doing Business [EoDB] ranking, but time taken to set up an industry in

the Government, he added. He also highlighted that for better EoDB, infrastructure played a key role when industry is being set up.

As far as tourism is con-

tributed to the growth of the state, he said. While delivering a Special Address at the Inaugural Session of Infra Dialogue@ Sikkim, Chief Secretary AK Srivastava mentioned that Sikkim is a

State Government, he added. He also highlighted that for better EoDB, infrastructure played a key role when industry is being set up.

As far as tourism is con-

Sikkim is the highest producer of large cardamom in the world and has a GI. The state government is trying to get GI for Temi Tea. "Tourism has a great potential in Sikkim which

State Government, he added. He also highlighted that for better EoDB, infrastructure played a key role when industry is being set up.



MABONG, 13 FEB (IPR): Minister-cum-Area MLA, Arjun Kumar Ghatani, inaugurated a newly constructed house under the Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) at Lower Sigeng, Ward No 6 and handed it over to the beneficiary, Raj Man Tamang, today.

Mamata, other Opposition leaders...

...protesting that the rally organised by Arvind Kejriwal is "historic", former Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Geogong Apang said instead of celebrating our diversity, a "minimal, illiberal and monotheistic ideology is being imposed".

"It is appropriate time to fight autocracy and save democracy. People are unhappy with the Modi government," he said.

He said the central government is also not paying attention to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill protests in Jharkhand Pradesh.

"The Centre has a 'Look East' policy but it is against the people of northeast," he alleged and said it has come to Delhi with a "deep sense of anguish".

"Mizoram said it will be a different country if the government comes back in power. Arunachal also is the same. India is a united country and if any government tries to impose CAB in northeast, people will uproot it," he said.

Samajwadi party leader Ram Gopal Yadav said Jharkhand Pradesh will play a crucial role in 2019 and assured BJP will not open its account in UP, which has 10 Lok Sabha seats.

He said the SP-BSP-RLD alliance will "create a situation" in UP that Modi will have to find another seat, besides Varanasi, to contest the coming Lok Sabha election.

"This Opposition, he said, will defend the country to save democracy from BJP.

"All democratic institutions are under assault," he alleged, adding, "We need to identify the elements, and, in partnership with BJP, are trying to weaken the Modi and Mamata governments."

DMK Rajya Sabha MP Kanimozhi said she is here on behalf of her party chief Stalin to extend support to opposition leaders.

"This BJP government has to go if economy, farm-deprived people, freedom of expression is to be protected," she said.

Alembic workers withdraw...

...complaint on the first day of the hearing in court as the case is already registered.

On the demand to abolish the Labour Contract Act, the Secretary assured that the department will not renew the licenses.

With regard to ESIC facilities, the Secretary conveyed to the protesting workers that the department has already initiated this and have received a copy of notification from the Central government covering South District as an ESIC District.

A copy of the notification has been passed on to the management of the Alembic Pharmaceutical for immediate implementation, it is informed.

On the demand for medical check-up at least twice a month, the Secretary stressed that the company should well inform all employees working in different divisions in the factory in advance about doctor visits.

On the demand for increase of the House Rent Allowance from Rs 600 to Rs 2000, the company argued that they have recently increased the HRA of employees from Rs 300 to Rs 600. However, Assistant General Manager requested the Secretary that the government notify a rate for house rent. On the same, the Secretary assured to having a meeting with all pharmaceutical companies immediately to fix a uniform rate and convey the same to all companies.

Speaking to media, aggrieved workers explained they have withdrawn their protest believing the assurances given by the Secretary. However, they assured that if all assurances recorded in the minutes

for NEH Centre, Sikkim Centre has been distributing day-old Vanaraja chicks to farmers here under the Poultry Seed Project since 2010. More than Rs 3.6 lakh worth of Vanaraja chicks have been distributed under the project since its inception. During the current year, more than 80,000 Vanaraja chicks were distributed to farmers across the State.

To reduce early chick mortality and economic management of the Vanaraja birds for eggs and chicken meat production, mass dissemination of the technology at the village level is important. Keeping this in mind, a three-day training programme for rural unemployed youth on "Entrepreneurship development through Vanaraja Poultry Farming" was conducted at ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute from 11 to 13 Feb, under leadership of Joint Director, Dr Ravikant Avasthe,



ICAR-NOPFRI.

A total of 14 farmers from East, South and West districts of Sikkim participated in the programme.

Coordinating the programme, Principal Scientist, Dr Rafiqul Islam, (Animal Reproduction) explained the objective and outline of the programme to the Scientists, officials and the participants at the valedictory function today.

The training programme covered 10 lectures and two hands-on training sessions on housing, feeding, lighting, preventive and therapeutic management of Vanaraja birds both at intensive and backyard

rearing systems including organic vegetable and crop production in integration with poultry farming.

Dr Islam detailed and practically demonstrated the trainees about floor preparation in deep litter housing system, feeding and therapeutic management of Vanaraja chicks at various age groups.

He briefed the participants about restricted feeding schedule of Vanaraja layers for optimising egg production and demonstrated vaccination of chicks and adult birds including administration techniques of various oral medicines to Vanaraja chicks and adult

birds in feed and water.

Examples of many successful farmers of Sikkim were also presented before the participants to inspire them towards running successful poultry farms.

He highlighted the role of Vanaraja chicken in meeting the nutritional requirements of the rural family with the production of high quality eggs and meat with comparatively much higher production rate than the native chicken.

Dr Raghavendra Singh, Senior Scientist (Agronomy), deliberated on organic crop production to support Vanaraja backyard poultry farm-

ing organic conservation agriculture practices major field crop production in Sikkim.

Senior Scientist, Matarbar Singh, Agriculture, forestry, meanwhile reiterated that backyard poultry farming was very close to organic farming and invited the participants to utilize the know-how gained during the three days training program for increasing production through Vanaraja poultry farming in their respective areas.

Scientist Dr Chandan Kapoor, Plant Breeding and Genetics, briefed the participants and encouraged them to undertake Vanaraja chicken farming as an enterprise to become self employed and labour requirements were very low.

Later, each participant was provided with 37 Vanaraja day-old chicks and essential vitamin supplements along with handouts about backyard poultry rearing practices.

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Sikkim Government is working...

Organic Mission and tourism. Dr. Srivastava invited people to visit Sikkim to feel Sikkim by staying and investing in Sikkim.

Naresh Agarwal, Chairman, CREDAI, and Director, Advance Contractors & Engineers (P) Ltd. while delivering an address on affordable housing, highlighted the importance and potential of affordable housing in Sikkim. Since lots of investments are coming in Sikkim, the need for affordable housing will increase in near future in the state.

Sudip Datta, Co Chairman, Infrastructure Subcommittee, CII Eastern Region & COO, IL&FS Township & Urban Assets Ltd delivered an address on attracting Private Sector investment in Sikkim.

In his address, he highlighted that the state is well equipped to get investment from quality promoters.

"Time has now come for Sikkim to move to the next level," Mr Datta said.

He suggested that the State Government needs to demarcate premium areas in the state (with low density and high value) to attract high value customers.

The Infra Dialogue Session also had a Panel Discussion on Infrastructure Development in Sikkim with experts from the IT, Road, Tourism, State & Central Governments deliberating on Challenges, Opportunities and the way forward in the infrastructure development in Sikkim.

Citizenship amendment bill...

The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) bill which makes the practice of instant triple talaq (talaq-e-Biddat) a penal offence, is being opposed by opposition parties which claim that jail term for the husband for divorcing his wife is legally untenable.

The government has promulgated the ordinance on triple talaq twice.

Under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Ordinance, 2019, divorcing through instant triple talaq will be illegal, void and would attract a jail term of three years for the husband.

A Bill to convert the earlier ordinance, issued in September, 2018, was cleared by the Lok Sabha in December and was pending in the Rajya Sabha.

Since the Bill could not get parliamentary approval, a fresh ordinance was issued. Seeking to allay fears that the proposed law could be misused, the government has included certain safeguards in it such as adding a provision of bail for the accused before trial.

These amendments were cleared by the Cabinet on August 29, 2018.

While the ordinance makes it a "non-bailable" offence, an accused can approach a magistrate even before trial to seek bail. In a non-bailable offence, bail cannot be granted by police at the police station itself.

A provision has been added to allow the magistrate to grant bail "after hearing the wife", the government had said.

HSP supports dharna...

HSP member also mentions that HSP believes that

Minister inaugurates district forest complex

NAMCHI, 13 FEB (IPR):

Minister for Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department, Tshering Wangdi Lepcha inaugurated the newly built District Forest Complex at Namchi today.

Built at an estimated cost of Rs 1,46,00,000 the facility is a two-storied infrastructure which houses the offices for DFOs and ACFs of social forestry, land use, wildlife and territorial, staff including lounge and public utility.

The programme was attended by DC (South), Prabhakar Verma, SP (South), Manish Verma, Conservator of Forest (T), Nima Wangdi Tamang, CCF (FCA), Udai Gurung, DFO (T), Pegyla Tshering Venchungpa, Chairman, and councilors of Namchi Municipal Council along with Heads of Department, forest of-



officials and staff.

After the inauguration programme, the Minister along with other dignitaries took a brief inspection of the complex.

Addressing the gathering the Minister congratulated the forest officials and the staff for putting in their hard work and dedication for the smooth functioning of the forest department which he said is highly commendable. He added that the newly estab-

lished infrastructure will meet the requirements of a composite forest complex for south district. He also spoke in length about the several eco-friendly measures adopted and implemented by the State Government and called upon the departmental officials and staff to discharge their duties diligently.

At the onset, DFO (T) gave the technical report wherein she elaborated on the project which she

informed commenced from the year 2015 and also brought to light the plan was approved and sanctioned under Environment Cess.

She updated that the building has a total of 10 officers' rooms for the DFOs and ACFs of the respective four divisions. The rooms for the officers staff has been designed as per corporate standards keeping in mind the ease with which functions can be discharged.

CAG report on Rafale deal 'total obfuscation of truth': CPIM

NEW DELHI, FEB 13 (PTI): The CPIM on Wednesday said the CAG report on Rafale deal presented in Parliament raised more questions than answers and alleging that it is "total obfuscation of the truth".

In a detailed statement the party said that it was clear that the deal was "costlier" not "faster in terms of delivery" and the Indian Air Force

CAG report on Rafale not worth paper its written on: Rahul Gandhi



NEW DELHI, FEB 13 (PTI): Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday noted that the CAG report on the Rafale deal does not mention the dissent note by negotiators and said he doesn't think its worth the paper its written on. Gandhi's dismissal of

trialist Anil Ambani, the Congress chief alleged.

The government and Ambani have rejected the Congress' allegations on the fighter jet deal with France.

"The argument given by the prime minister for the new Rafale deal was price and faster delivery

the prime minister "treason" and violation of the Official Secrets Act by acting as Anil Ambani's "middleman" in the Rafale jet deal, citing an email claim the businessman was aware of the deal before India France finalised it

...the social and the anthropic arm of the nicipal Education and ical Group (MEMG), association with Sik- Manipal University U), has partnered a local hair & beauty ning centre to under- projects to empow- women from econom- y weaker sections to ure skills to be gain- employed and even g self-employed.

The Foundation part- ed with Identity by 's, a well-known ty salon in Gangtok, led by Yangchen Lep- to partner the skills ning project for Beau- Hair Care in Sikkim ch is geared towards ing Sikkimese wom- away the certificates to either as entrepre- rs or making a career



in this profession.

The pilot batch of 15 candidates successfully completed the three-month training today. Vice-Chancellor, SMU, Lt. Gen (Dr), MD Venkatesh, handed away the certificates to the successful candidates.

Speaking on the oc-

casation, Director and Chief Instructor of Identity by Lata's, Ms Lepcha, said that the course was aimed at providing free training to Sikkimese women candidates with minimum documentation and a nominal registration fee of Rs 1,500

per candidate.

"The comprehensive course focused on topics related to beauty, hair and wellness. The students were trained with latest innovations in beauty and hair services, adhering to pres-

ent standards. The candidates were assessed by an independent assessor on the completion of the course," she details.

She thanked the Manipal Foundation and SMU for the initiative and said that such vocational courses would not only

ety's growth as a whole. Addressing the gathering, Vice-Chancellor, SMU, congratulated the candidates and expressed his happiness on the successful completion of the course.

"Manipal Foundation is committed to empowering our society, through a focussed approach that will drive our initiatives which are executed through partnerships that are built on mutual respect, shared passion, and clarity of purpose, ethical practices and sustained commitment. This is just the beginning. The Foundation will continue to support such initiatives in Sikkim. We are confident that these trainees will be able to apply to local job opportunities in this sector," he said.

The opening of the shopping plaza at Lal Bazaar here is finally close to coming true with Chief Minister Pawan Chamling scheduled to inaugurate it next week.

The plaza will be home to all kinds of shops. The stalls and shops which were shifted to back side will be allocated rooms for trade. The plaza will also in-

The inauguration was discussed at a meeting held at the community hall of Singtam North Panchayat attended by area MLA, Somnath Poudyal, accompanied by MEO, Singtam, President, SK Pradip and all councillors.

The shopping plaza is slated to be inaugurated on 21 Feb, 2019.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for general information of public that an extensive 10 days house to house re-verification program to reconfirm if any eligible voter or any new voter who has turned 18 years on 1.1.2019 has been left out. The re-verification programme is being conducted from 15th February, 2019 to 25th February, 2019 by Booth Level Officers in their respective polling station jurisdiction.

All eligible Citizens are requested to participate during the house to house survey and co-operate with the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to reconfirm and verify the individual details of each household. If any eligible voter is left out, they may submit Forms 6 for Non-Addition and shifting, Form 8 for correction of entries and 8A for transposition within Assembly Constituency.

Further citizenship may also verify their details in the Electoral Roll through Voter Helpline No. 1950. www.nvsp.in and www.ceos.sikkim.nic.in.

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Date: 13.02.19

Gangtok Rotaract clubs win big at annual district conference



MMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 13 FEB:

The Rotaract Clubs of Gangtok Hills and M University attended 29th Annual District Conference cum Assembly "U Utxov" in Guwahati on 01 to 03 Feb 2018 have returned with a haul of 13 awards. Hosted this time by Rotaract Club of Guwahati, the district Conference is annual function of Rotary International District 3240. Rotaract, as an organization, focuses on the overall development of the youth, its theme

being "Fellowship through Service".

The SRM Rotaract Club returned home with:

- 1) Best Club in the Conference
- 2) Best International Service Award
- 3) Photo Display - 1st Runner Up
- 4) Miss Ritu Utxov - Samikshya Kharel
- 5) Miss Popular Face - Tulasha Sharma
- 6) Best DJ Dance - Ritika Chettri
- 7) Best Dressed Club.

Rotaract Club of Gangtok Hills received the following awards:

- 1) Best President - Palmu Bhutia
- 2) Best Zonal Secretary - Jyoti Chettri
- 3) Best Photo Display - Deeden Bhutia
- 4) Fashion Show - Bharti Sharma
- 5) Best Delegation Leader
- 6) Speech Competition - 2nd Runner Up

Renuka Gurung - Weaving traditional items

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 07 FEB:

A resident of Mangmon basti, Dentam, West Sikkim, Renuka Gurung, has been spinning yarn from sheep wool and weaving traditional jackets, skull caps etc. She scours the region for sheep wool and attests that enough is still available.

Talking to Summittimes, Ms Gurung shares that it makes her happy and adds that all her worries evaporate when she weaves, an activity she finds therapeutic.

"When engaged in work, weaving different traditional items I find my will strengthened and it motivates me to work harder. And this supplements my income, too. Though my family looks after me, earning my own

keep has a whole different thrill," she shares.

As for her journey into weaving, Ms Gurung says that she was interested in knitting since a young age and was good at it. Weaving then became a natural transition for her when she chanced upon it around 13 years ago and has not looked back since. Her neighbours introduced her to weaving, she informs.

And now her products have buyers across the state. Occasionally there is the Jorethang Maghey Mela or exhibitions where she takes up a stall and does brisk business.

A substantial amount of her work is also exported outside the State even as she works from home.



She specialises in Bhurkha Sun [which covers sofas, seats, tables, etc.] costing Rs 2000-4000 [printed & basic], jackets Rs 6500, and skull caps Rs 500/600.

Her products are also available at her daughter's shop - "New Look Fashion" opposite Denzong Cinemal Hall, Lal Bazaar.

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ANTYESTI KRIYA

The Antyesti Kriya of late Seegautam, wife of I.K Gautam (Ex Commissioner, Excise Deptt.), is to be held on 20th Feb. 2019 falls on the 20th February 2019 (Wednesday). Relatives, friends, family and



Not a day passes without a drug bust somewhere in Sikkim and booking of people under the Sikkim Anti-Drugs Act (SADA). There are obvious instances when even addicts, inferred from the amount of contraband confiscated from them, are put behind bars branded as peddlers. This clause alone militates against what the SADA was originally planned as. It has now been eleven years almost to the day since the Sikkim Anti-Drugs Bill was passed by the State Legislative Assembly on 10 February 2006. Let us take a look at what this Bill was originally proposed as and what it has become during implementation.

The Bill was both, strong and humane, and the sensitivity which underlined it was one that could have served the State well. Most anti-substances of abuse acts, not only in India, but the world over, are draconian in intent. In their bid to keep drugs off the streets, they become too strict and blur the line separating an addict from a peddler. Sikkim had deigned to think differently and the original Bill made a clear distinction between an addict and a drug pusher. It understood that while the former is a victim, the latter is a criminal. The existing laws against drugs in the country make no such differentiation. In that sense, Sikkim was leading the way in how substance abuse could be combated effectively. What had made the Bill even more special was that it appointed blame where it was necessary. The society's failing in responding to its responsibility towards keeping future generations 'clean' was emphasized. In the list of punishments listed for substance abuse [as different from dealing in the drug], an identified addict was required under law to undergo detoxification, spend time under watch in probation and the State was committed to her/his rehabilitation into society. Also included was a fine of up to Rs. 10,000 in the case of young, unemployed and unmarried. It was clear that this was done to appoint some responsibility on parents/ guardians for having ignored addiction in their child for so long that s/he was picked by the cops and convicted by the Courts. Similarly, the Bill fixed strict action against vehicles being used as ferries to smuggle these substances of abuse into the State. Not only was there a jail-term facing the driver, but the vehicle was also liable to be seized and a stiff fine levied for its release.

The Bill was strong and the cops wielded more power. It was possible that this power would get misused and abused. To check this, the Bill proposed to make the dropping of charges or framing of weak charges offences under the Act and very risky undertakings. The Bill offered to help addicts kick the habit while at the same time it made ignoring addiction and accepting bribes to look like the other way a very expensive affair. Where the people failed to get proactive, the government had taken charge. Unfortunately, a lot of these aspects of the original Bill do not find mention in the implementation, and Sikkim is the poorer for it.

20th anniversary of the 1979 revolution, during which Shi'ite Islamists, led by religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini, toppled Mohammad Reza Shah's secular monarchy.

The linchpin of the Islamic Republic's political system is Ayatollah Khomeini's doctrine of Wilayat-i Faqih, or guardianship of the jurist, which makes a Shia religious jurist the head of state. The jurist's legitimacy to hold the most powerful position in the state is claimed to be based on divine sovereignty.

As its name suggests, the Islamic Republic of Iran's current system combines theocratic and republican elements. The president and parliament are democratically elected, while the members of powerful institutions such as the Guardian Council and the judiciary are appointed by the Supreme Leader (Wali-yi Faqih).

The Guardian Council oversees elections and the final approval of legislation. According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic, all legislation, policies and programs must be consistent with the observance of Islamic principles. The Guardian Council has a duty to monitor all legislative decisions and determine whether their implementation would cause a violation.

This unprecedented political system brought in four decades of internal conflict. The established Islamic Republic of Iran also ceased being a US ally and instead became an enemy. International sanctions, along with the clergy's mismanagement and endemic corruption, have resulted in a dire economic situation. There is a strong fear the high unemployment and inflation rate will continue to rise. Under these circumstances, there are now doubts the Islamic Republic can survive. And some wonder whether we may soon see another revolution. So, what is the situation in Iran 40 years after the Shah was overthrown and who is agitating for change?

DECADES OF UNREST

After Ayatollah Khomeini died in 1989, a more conservative Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, came to power and strengthened the theocracy.

The reformist movement emerged in the mid-1990s to counter the newly established conservative regime. They had little chance of gaining power through theocratic institutions, so they focused on the electoral side. They campaigned for women's rights, democratic rule and a civil-military divide.

Reformists gained power twice: from 1997 to 2005 and from 2013 – with the election of the relatively moderate president, Hassan Rouhani – until now. In these years, reformists



controlled electoral institutions such as the presidency and the parliament.

For decades, reformers have struggled to limit the power of theocratic institutions – while still broadly complying with the laws of the clergy, and the principles set in place by Khomeini – and expand the power of republican institutions. However, they were no match for the Khomeini-led resistance, and theocratic institutions are more powerful today than they were in the mid-1990s.

Iran has also continually had tense relations with the international community. In addition to eight years of war with Iraq, Iran has been under sanctions for almost all of the past four decades. These have been imposed by the US, the EU, and the United Nations over claims Iran breached its nuclear obligations.

Today, the Donald Trump-led US government is pursuing an extremely hostile approach to Iran. Crucially, the US has withdrawn from a nuclear deal negotiated with the Obama administration – under which Iran agreed to limit its nuclear program. The US has reapplied previous sanctions (which were lifted under the deal) and imposed new ones. Iranians are also the most affected of the Muslim majority countries included in Trump's travel ban.

Reformists have made some progress towards easing economic hardship, loosening social control, and initiating a temporary easing of tensions with the outside community. But the parlous nature of the political structure empowers the theocrats to manipulate the system and stymie any reform effort that promises a path to democratisation.

REFORMISTS OR PRO-REGIME OPPOSITION

The protests that swept Iran between December 2017 and January 2018

showed that many Iranians don't consider the reformists capable of bringing about meaningful change. Protestors expressed their anger over increasing economic hardship, as well as Iran's support and funding for foreign conflicts, namely the civil wars in Yemen and Syria. They also chanted slogans calling for an end to the rule of clerics.

Rampant corruption, the failure of Rouhani to fulfil his promises – such as boosting the economy, extending individual and political freedoms, ensuring equality for women and men, and easing access to the internet – and the return of sanctions have combined to shatter hope of reform. This has been expressed in global protests by the Iranian diaspora calling for a change to the government.

It seems unlikely the reformists will be able to maintain their positions in the country's electoral institutions. The sad reality is that even if they have another chance, the result will only compound their failures.

These circumstances have led to another stream of opposition – one agitating for a toppling of the Islamic Republic and regime change – gaining currency. Most members of this group are in exile, including Iran's ex-prince and son of the Shah overthrown by the revolution, Reza Pahlavi.

But there is profound disagreement between the opposition groups in exile. Although they share a similar goal, they have consistently proven unable to agree on an overarching framework. The profound divisions among the groups has drained both their resources and intellectual capacity, which has rendered them incapable of contesting the country's ruling clergy.

Those advocating for regime change have also been incapable of articulating a viable alternative

to the Islamic Republic. All opposition groups overuse the abstract notion of "secular democracy" without clearly explaining what exactly they have in mind.

Pahlavi's desire is reportedly not to put himself back on the throne, but to let the people decide what the political system would look like. He has said:

"It's not the form that matters the content; I believe Iran must have secular, parliamentary democracy. The final form has to be decided by the people."

While this is a legitimate statement, figures like Pahlavi ought to offer viable alternatives that would help bring opposition groups together. Potential alternatives should be structured to appeal to the mass considerable segment of whom he expressed disillusionment with the ideal of an Islamic state.

Opposition groups are also prone to delegitimising the Islamic Republic, questioning the way the clergy rule the country. In doing so, they forget the people who have already expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the clergy.

The opposition needs to skillfully craft an alternative to the Islamic Republic and a comprehensive plan for the transition to democracy. Until an alternative political system is formulated and popularised, the opposition will remain impotent and unable to initiate transformation in the country.

Of course, change is not impossible. A military confrontation with Israel or the US, the departure of 79-year-old Ayatollah Khomeini, or a spontaneous mass uprising could prove a game changer.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer, National School of Arts, Australian Catholic University]

Data science is a growing field. Here's how to train people to do it

AN DE JONGH
CONVERSATION.COM

The world is inundated with data. There's a virtual tsunami of data moving around the globe, renewing itself daily. Take just the global financial markets. They generate vast amounts of data – share prices, commodity prices, indices, option and futures prices, and more.

But data is of no use if there aren't people able to collect, collate, analyse and apply it to the benefit of society. All that data generated by global financial markets gets used for asset and wealth management – and it must be properly analysed and understood to inform good decision making. That's where data science comes in.

Data science's primary aim is to extract insight from data in various forms, both structured and unstructured. It's a multi-disciplinary field, involving everything from applied mathematics to statistics, artificial intelligence to machine learning. And it's growing. This is because of advances in computer

people. Some can work in depth on theory and others can explore the application area.

But how should these data scientists be trained so they're prepared for the big data challenges that lie ahead?

Data scientists typically use innovative mathematical techniques from their own subfields to try and solve problems in a particular application area. The application areas – finance, health, agriculture and astronomy are just some examples – are very different. This means that each poses different problems, and so data scientists need knowledge about the particular application area.

For example, consider astrophysics and the Square Kilometre Array being built on the southern tip of Africa. It will be the world's largest radio telescope when completed in the mid-2020s. The array of telescopes is said to receive data at one terabyte per second and researchers are typically interested in analysing the masses of data in order to detect tiny signals.



- Data management skills;
- Subject matter knowledge in selected fields of application; and
- Professional problem-solving skills.

This list should be expanded at the postgraduate level. And, whether at undergraduate or postgraduate level, all of these courses should have a practical element. This allows students to develop both professional and problem-solving skills.

For instance, at the Centre for Business Mathematics and Informatics at South Africa's North-West University, my colleagues and I have organised a professional training programme that sees students working for months at a client company to solve a specific industrial problem. These problems are mainly in the financial field; for example, models to predict a customer's ability and willingness to pay, models for improving collection and models for fraud identification.



BOURNE, FEB 13 (PTI): Sundarbans -- the iconic Bengal tiger's coastal stronghold -- the world's biggest mangrove forest -- could be destroyed by climate change and rising sea levels over the next 50 years, scientists say.

Spanning more than 10,000 square kilometers, the Sundarbans region straddles Bangladesh and India and is the biggest mangrove forest on Earth, and the most critical area for the endangered Bengal tiger, researchers said.

"Fewer than 4,000 legal tigers are alive today," said Bill Laurance, a professor at the James Cook University in Australia.

"That's a really low number for the world's largest cat, which used to be far more abundant today is mainly confined to small areas of India and Bangladesh," Laurance said.

"What is most terrifying is that our analyses suggest tiger habitats in the Sundarbans will vanishingly by 2070," said Anirban Mukul, an assistant professor at Independent University Bangladesh.

The researchers used computer simulations to assess the future suitability of the low-lying Sundarbans region for tigers and their prey species, using mainstream estimates of climatic trends from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Their analyses included factors such as extreme weather events and sea-level rise.

"Beyond climate change, the Sundarbans are under growing pressure from industrial developments, new roads, and greater poaching," said Laurance.

"So, tigers are getting a double whammy -- greater human encroachment on the one hand and a worsening climate and associated sea-level rises on the other," he said.

However, the researchers emphasised that there is still hope.

"The more of the Sundarbans that can be conserved -- via new protected areas and reducing illegal poaching -- the more resilient it will be to future climatic extremes and rising sea levels," said Laurance.

"There is no other place like the Sundarbans left on Earth. We have to look after this iconic ecosystem if we want amazing animals like the Bengal tiger to have a chance of survival," he said.

Pratap Yadavs private bodyguards spotted inside Bihar assembly premises

PATNA, FEB 13 (PTI): A team of private bodyguards, hired by RJD MLA Pratap Yadav, were on Wednesday found roaming inside the Bihar assembly premises where he told reporters "I have asked Patna SSP Garima Mallik to conduct a thorough inquiry into any lapse that may have taken place. Anybody found guilty of dereliction of duty will be punished".

While exiting the assembly around lunch time, Yadav told reporters "I need to have adequate security for myself. And if I do not make arrangements for the same myself, who will."

Would Chief Minister Nitish Kumar provide me with adequate security? Incidentally, Yadav had in December 2017 lashed out at the NDA government at the Centre for the scaling down of the security cover of his father currently serving sentences in fodder scam cases with an undignified remark about the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

2 nationals of Myanmar deported recently: Govt

NEW DELHI, FEB 13 (PTI): As many as 267 police stations in the country do not have the telephone facility while 129 others do not have even the wireless sets, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

Union minister of state for home Hansraj Ahir said a total of 863 police stations in India do not have their own building while 273 police stations do not have a modern vehicle.

The number of police stations where the telephone facility is not available is 267 and the number of police stations where the facility of wireless communication is not available is 129, he said replying to a written question.

There are around 15,650 police stations in the country.

HC stays city court's order to CBI on ponzi scam probe papers

KOLKATA, FEB 13 (PTI): The Calcutta High Court Wednesday stayed an order of a magistrate court here that directed the CBI to submit certain documents related to a ponzi scam probe, till the HC delivers its judgement on a prayer by the agency challenging the magistrate's directions.

Justice Shivakant Prasad reserved the judgement as he concluded hearing in the CBI application.

A case was filed at Ballygunge police station in connection with a hearing the matter relating to the unruly situation at the hotel.

The magistrate court directed the CBI to produce certain documents in connection with its investigation into the ponzi scam before it on February 14, challenging which the CBI moved the high court. Appearing for the CBI, Additional Solicitor General Kaushik Chanda submitted that the magistrate court here can adjudicate a criminal case involving the rampage at the hotel, but it cannot enlarge

267 police stations in India don't have telephone, 129 have no wireless sets

Mobile internet services will, however, continue to remain suspended for some more time.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP chief Amit Shah, and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh for not tabling the bill in the Rajya Sabha and opting for consensus.

"On behalf of the people of Northeast & in particular Manipur, I would like to profusely thank Honble PM @narendramodi ji, BJP Pres @amitshah ji and HM @rajnathsingh ji for not tabling the CAB and opting for consensus driven approach. We deeply appreciate ur affection for NE!", Singh tweeted.

Student outfits, socio-cultural organisations and political parties were up in arms against the Centre, claiming granting citizenship to non-Muslims who came to India up to December 31, 2014, would violate

Mamata ropes in just retired IPS officer Rina Mitra to advise on security issues

KOLKATA, FEB 13 (PTI): Senior IPS officer Rina Mitra, a top contender for the post of CBI Director before her retirement last month, has been appointed as the Principal Advisor to the West Bengal government on internal security, a senior official said Wednesday.

Responsibilities of Mitra, who retired on January 31 last, for the newly created post would be defined later in a separate order, he said.

Secretariat insiders described the appointment of Mitra as a tactical move by the Mamata Banerjee government at a time when its officials were at loggerheads with the Federal Investigative agency.

The West Bengal police had a tiff with the CBI recently over its action against Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar in the Sardha chit fund scam case.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had taken strong objection to the CBI act against Kumar

Meghalaya govt puts cap on weight of school bags

SHILLONG, FEB 13 (PTI): In a major relief to students, the Meghalaya government has put a cap on the weight of schoolbags for all classes and set restrictions on homework for classes 1 and 2.

According to the state education department, the official order issued to the school authorities is in tune with the directives of the Union Human Resources Development Ministry.

"We have issued instructions via a notification, setting limits on the weight of schoolbags for classes 1 and 2. The weight of schoolbags for classes 1 and 2 has been capped at 1.5 kg, while bags for those studying in classes 3 to 5 will be capped at 2 kg."

The order also ensures that the students are asked to carry only textbooks that have been mentioned in their timetable, the order said.

The education department has also barred schools from assigning homework to students



the Assam Accord. Under the accord signed in 1985, all illegal immigrants who came after 1971, irrespective of their religion, were to be deported.

Two BJP chief ministers of the northeast -- Arunachal Pradesh's Pema Khandu and Manipur's Biren Singh -- had also opposed the bill, which the prime minister called an "atonement for the wrong that was done during Partition".

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma of the National People's Party, a BJP ally who had threatened to pull out of the NDA if the bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha, called it a "great moment" for the people of the northeast.

Sangma had marshalled parties of the region to launch a concerted protest against the legislation.

Prafulla Kumar Ma-

hanta, a former Assam chief minister who spearheaded the students' agitation that resulted in the signing of the Assam accord, warned the Centre against taking the ordinance route to "impose" the new citizenship law.

"Government of India must take note of it and not impose the bill by bringing an ordinance. Like the government has weapons, the public also has other alternatives," the AGP leader said. His party had walked out of the NDA over the controversial legislation.

Another former chief minister of Assam, Tarun Gogoi of the Congress, branded the development a victory of democracy, of the people of the northeastern region and Assam.

"The BJP wanted to destroy the existence, language, culture and heritage of the indigenous people of Assam and the northeast region," he said, insisting the bill violated the Indian Constitution.

"They were hoping to get votes in the name of Hindutva. That has been defeated," he said.

Himanta Biswa Sarma, however, was typically combative on the issue.

"The BJP is committed and will forever be committed to the bill. I will fully support the bill. I will fight (the election) with this commitment. There is nothing to be afraid of," he said.

Sarma, who had controversially won the 2017 Assembly election of Assam will "go the whole way" if the bill is passed, said, "I will save the (Assam) community".

"If we do not have the bill, entire Assam will be ruled by Bangladeshis in 2021. That will destroy Assam's civilisation, culture and language will be finished forever."

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West Indies on the
th day of the third
final Test in St Lucia.
Thrashed in the first
matches of the se-
to surrender the
den Trophy after 10
rs in English posses-
t, the tourists gained
measure of consol-
in completing a
-run victory with
y to spare.



Get an improbable
et of 485 after Joe
t declared his side's
nd innings at 361
ward-point boundary
to achieve the landmark.
He finished unbeaten on
102 off 191 balls with 12
fours and one six embel-
lishing his innings.
- **ANDERSON BURST** -
James Anderson, who
bled away the West Indies
top order with three wick-
ets before lunch, had no
more success with the ball
but his devastating early
impact ensured that it was
not a matter of when,
only if England would have
completed a massive vic-
tory on the fourth day.
Moeen Ali also
claimed three wickets
while Mark Wood, the
tearaway fast bowler
who took five wickets in

the first innings, snared
the important scalp of
Shai Hope as the West
Indies slipped to 35 for
four before lunch.
His six wickets and
impact on the game
earned him the 'man of
the match' award.
"I watched Gabriel
all season knocking us
down and thought I had
to get some back for I,"
he said of his raw pace.
"I'm not thinking as
far ahead as the Ashes.
We've got a great squad
and there's plenty more
cricket to go."
West Indies' only pe-
riod of relative comfort
at the crease came in
the afternoon session
when Chase and Shim-
ron Hetmyer put on 45
runs for the fifth wicket.

They undid all their
good work however
when, on the stroke of
the mid-session drinks
break, Hetmyer was run
out for 19 coming back
for a third run as Den-
ly's throw from the cover
boundary to wicketkeep-
er Jonny Bairstow found
the left-hander short of
his ground.
Anderson triggered
the West Indies slide
with just the third deliv-
ery of the innings when
John Campbell, facing his
first ball, sliced a boom-
ing drive to Ali at gully.
Campbell's open-
ing partner, Kraigg
Brathwaite, offered little
resistance himself when
he prodded indecisively
at a full-length deliv-
ery and Stokes held the

entire England second
innings, followed a de-
livery from Anderson for
Root to complete a com-
fortable catch at first slip.
England clearly had
a swift declaration on
their minds at the start
of the day's play with
Root and Stokes resum-
ing at 325 for four.
They belted 36 runs
at a run-a-minute until
the skipper miscued a
low full-toss from Gabri-
el and Hetmyer held the
catch diving forward at
midwicket to prompt the
declaration.
Kemar Roach finished
with one wicket in the in-
nings, lifting his tally to a
series-leading 18.
His exploits earlier in
the series, especially the
five-wicket haul on the
second day of the first
Test in Barbados when
England were routed for
77, earned him the 'man
of the series' accolade.
"All the hard work
has paid off," he said
in reflecting on his
performances over the
three Tests. "I am very
proud of this team and
I want us to work even
harder and get better
following this series win.



BHARAT SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEB 13
(PTI): "I genuinely be-
lieved that I could hit
a six," Indian wicket-
keeper-batsman Dinesh
Karthik said as he reflect-
ed on refusing a single to
non-striker Krunal Pan-
dya in the series-deciding
third T20 International
against New Zealand.
On Sunday night at
Hamilton, things did not
go as per plan in the fi-
nal over, in which India
needed 16 runs, and the
33-year-old has no
qualms in accepting that.
Karthik refusing a single
to the big-hitting Krunal
off the third ball of the
over leading to some de-
bate on whether he took
the right decision.
"I think Krunal and I
batted really well from
that situation (145/6).
We were able to bring
the match down to a
place where the bowlers
were under pressure.
We backed ourselves to
do the job. And at that
stage (after refusing the
single), I genuinely be-
lieved that I could hit a
six," Karthik told PTI on
Wednesday.
Over the last couple
of years, Karthik has
emerged as one of the
most effective finishers
for India in the
shorter formats.
He faltered at Hamil-
ton but it was only him
and Krunal who took the
game to the final over af-
ter India were 145 for six
in the 16th over, needing
another 68 off 28 balls.
"As a middle-order
batsman, a lot of times
you have to trust your
ability to play those big
shots under pressure.
It is also important to
trust your partner
at that time. It did
not come off on that
occasion but those
things happen in the
game of cricket."
Both Krunal and
Karthik shared an un-
beaten 63-run stand off
28 balls but it was not

enough to save the series.
India lost the game by
four runs and series 1-2.
"Some days you are
able to hit a boundary,
some days the bowler
does a good job. And
there, you have to give
credit to Tim Southee
for the way he execut-
ed those yorkers under
pressure. One mistake
there and I am sure we
would have taken him
down," said Karthik.
Asked if the team
management had a word
with him on not taking
that single, Karthik said:
"They were all aware of
the situation and knew
we both did the best we
could. On that day, we
were not good enough.
But the support staff, as
it has been around for a
long time, understood it
(our game plan).
"As I said, you sit
practising those situa-
tions and because the
belief I had in overcom-
ing those situations in
practice, I trusted myself
to do the job in the middle.
I was not able to deliv-
er that day. That is what
sport is. The more you
back yourself, the more
consistent you become in
finishing the game."
Having made his in-
ternational debut al-
most 15 years ago,
Karthik has managed
to play only 26 Tests,
91 ODIs and 30 T20s.
But over the last 24
months, his stop-start
career seems to have found
second wind and he has
featured in as many as
20 ODIs and 21 T20Is
besides making a Test
comeback after more
than eight years.
Karthik, who has
credited Mumbai stal-
wart Abhishek Nayar for
his recent success, can't
recollect days when he
has batted better.
"If you go by the re-
sults, definitely yes (his
best run in international
cricket). There is some
continuity and that feels
good. The team has also

done well so it has b-
a great couple of year-
be a part of."
Despite consis-
performances, Kar-
will have to be on to
his game in the up-
ing T20 and ODI se-
against Australia,
dia's last before
World Cup in May-
ly. And he is ready
prove himself again.
"As an internat-
al cricketer, you have
keep reinventing
wheel, being con-
tent is part of it. TH-
will be questions as
and you have to ke-
answering them (k-
your performances).
"If you read into th-
things too much (of p-
ing yourself repeate-
it only pulls you dow-
is important that wha-
er opportunities you
you do the best you c-
Karthik said his in-
career, albeit an in-
sistent one, has hel-
him immensely in
development as a
isher. He has reach-
stage where batting
der pressure has be-
second nature to him.
"Abhishek and I h-
been practising th-
situations for l-
now. Preparing on
ferent wickets, dif-
ent days, it helps.
"As a player, I
want to revel in th-
situations. That
when you raise the
for yourself and
your team as well."
Has team man-
ment told him that n-
ber six is the spot for
in the batting order?
"Not really. They
also very flexible in
their approach. I d-
think they have fixed
at number five or six.
"They just bel-
that whatever oppor-
ty they will give me at
position, they know th-
will do the best that I
They know that I am
to finish games, irres-
tive of the batting p-
tion," added Karthik.

Newborns to get horoscopes at Raj hospitals

JAIPUR, FEB 13 (PTI): Rajasthan hospitals will offer new mothers a baby's horoscope when they send them home after the delivery, if a proposal being mulled by the state government is implemented.
The hospital-declared horoscope would also suggest that the newborn could be named, the proposal says.
The proposal was tabled at a meeting on January 3 by the state's Sanskrit education department.
The Jagadguru Ramesh Chandra Saraswati Sanskrit University (JRSSU)-Jaipur was the nodal agency to prepare the proposal.
The department was working up on the Sanskrit election manifesto promised to encourage the study of Sanskrit, also set up a 'Vedik' Sanskrit evam Shiksha Board' to promote Vedic knowledge.
The proposal on horoscopes has been prepared and forwarded to the government for further action, Ashok Kumar, university's registrar said.
The proposal has suggested six names for the horoscope scheme with the names of the Gandhiji Janmabhawan and Shaheed Bhagat Singh Janmabhawan.
The scheme's pilot project will be rolled out in five government hospitals in Jaipur as a free service, the proposal says.
At a later stage, the scheme will be implemented in all government and private hospitals if the proposal is accepted. New parents will pay Rs 51 for this at government hospitals and private hospitals will charge Rs 101.
The proposal claims the idea promotes Sanskrit and Vedic knowledge. It will also help 3,000 astrologers, who will be reimbursed for their efforts.
The government's initiative is welcome as it underlines the importance of Sanskrit language. This is on the lines of our traditional Hindu culture, Shastri Koshalendra Das, who is an assistant professor at the JRSSU, said.
The astrologers engaged as resource persons under the scheme should have a degree or diploma in astrology and a licence from the state government or the JRSSU.
The astrologers will get Rs 40 out of Rs 51 charged at government hospitals and Rs 80 out of Rs 101 paid by parents at private hospitals. Under the proposal, the remaining amount will go to the university.
A unique code will be given for every horoscope and a more detailed analysis can be downloaded from the university's website by paying Rs 200.

Dravid Effect: PCB considers former players for coaching youngsters



KARACHI, FEB 13 (PTI): The Pakistan Cricket Board is planning to hire some former players as coaches and managers of the national age group teams, taking inspiration from the success that India has achieved with Rahul Dravid in a similar role.
There is speculation here that former captain Younis Khan is being considered for the role of Pakistan's under-19 coach and manager.
Younis, who retired last year after becoming Pakistan's highest Test run-getter and the first to reach 10,000 runs in the format, has expressed interest in coaching junior players if the board gave him "full freedom" to implement his program.
"Australia utilised the services of their top players like Rodney Marsh, Allan Border and Ricky Ponting while India has also given Dravid the responsibility of manning their under-19 players and it has produced good results," PCB Chairman Ehsan Mani said.
Dravid has been coach of the Indian under-19 and A teams and has drawn a lot of credit for shaping the youngsters. Under his tutelage, the under-19 team won the ICC World Cup last year.
In Australia, Border has served as a selector and Ponting is currently part of the national team's coaching staff.
The PCB, on the other hand, has constantly changed the coaches and managers of the under-19 squad, something that has been blamed for its below-par performances. It has also avoided appointing high profile former players as coaches/managers of the youth teams.
Mani, while speaking to the media in Lahore, said that the board has finally decided to utilise the services of its former senior players to work with the youth.
"We also need to have classes for our players as they go on to become ambassadors for the country. They will be given grooming and education at the National Cricket Academy," Mani said.
"We should have attached our own coaches with foreign coaches just like India did so that they could have also learnt a lot more."
The PCB is also considering appointing former Test captain Muhammad Younis as the batting coach at its National Cricket Academy in Lahore.

KARACHI, FEB 13 (PTI): Making a transition into the senior circuit this year, India's tenor badminton player Lakshya Sen has secured a top 30 ranking by year end.
"Senior national championship is a big event for me. I have played 3-4 times before, in fact, last two years, I have been playing and ranking I will pick events. For the time being I will play the Super 100 and Super 300 events mainly.
"Olympic qualification is

manage and ranking I will pick events. For the time being I will play the Super 100 and Super 300 events mainly.
"Olympic qualification is

Pakistan can break India jinx in upcoming WC, says Moin

KARACHI, FEB 13 (PTI): Former Pakistan captain Moin Khan believes the present national team has the firepower to break its World Cup jinx against India and register the country's maiden win over the neighbours in the upcoming ICC 50-over mega-event in the UK.
In six times in the squad well," Moin said on GTV News channel on Tuesday night.
But Moin, who featured in many famous matches against India and was a member of the 1992 and 1999 World Cup teams, said this time he is confident of Pakistan win.
"I saw this because India lost the game by four runs and series 1-2.
"Some days you are able to hit a boundary, some days the bowler does a good job. And there, you have to give credit to Tim Southee for the way he executed those yorkers under pressure. One mistake there and I am sure we would have taken him down," said Karthik.
Asked if the team management had a word with him on not taking that single, Karthik said: "They were all aware of the situation and knew we both did the best we could. On that day, we were not good enough. But the support staff, as it has been around for a long time, understood it (our game plan).
"As I said, you sit practising those situations and because the belief I had in overcoming those situations in practice, I trusted myself to do the job in the middle. I was not able to deliver that day. That is what sport is. The more you back yourself, the more consistent you become in finishing the game."
Having made his international debut almost 15 years ago, Karthik has managed to play only 26 Tests, 91 ODIs and 30 T20s.
But over the last 24 months, his stop-start career seems to have found second wind and he has featured in as many as 20 ODIs and 21 T20Is besides making a Test comeback after more than eight years.
Karthik, who has credited Mumbai stalwart Abhishek Nayar for his recent success, can't recollect days when he has batted better.
"If you go by the results, definitely yes (his best run in international cricket). There is some continuity and that feels good. The team has also

done well so it has been a great couple of years - be a part of."
Despite consistent performances, Karthik will have to be on top of his game in the upcoming T20 and ODI series against Australia, India's last before the World Cup in May. And he is ready to prove himself again.
"As an international cricketer, you have to keep reinventing the wheel, being content is part of it. There will be questions asked and you have to keep answering them (keep your performances).
"If you read into things too much (of proving yourself repeatedly), it only pulls you down. It is important that whatever opportunities you get, you do the best you can."
Karthik said his international career, albeit an inconsistent one, has helped him immensely in his development as a batsman. He has reached a stage where batting under pressure has become second nature to him.
"Abhishek and I have been practising these situations for long now. Preparing on different wickets, different days, it helps.
"As a player, I want to revel in these situations. That's when you raise the bar for yourself and your team as well."
Has team management told him that number six is the spot for him in the batting order?
"Not really. They are also very flexible in their approach. I don't think they have fixed a position for me at number five or six.
"They just believe that whatever opportunity they will give me at that position, they know that I will do the best that I can. They know that I am ready to finish games, irrespective of the batting position," added Karthik.

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Teen shuttler Lakshya eyes top 30 ranking by year end

AMIT KUMAR DAS GUAHATI, FEB 13 (PTI): Making a transition into the senior circuit this year, India's tenor badminton player Lakshya Sen has secured a top 30 ranking by year end.

"Senior national championship is a big event for me. I have played 3-4 times before, in fact, last two years, I have been playing and ranking I will pick events. For the time being I will play the Super 100 and Super 300 events mainly.
"Olympic qualification is

"Senior national championship is a big event for me. I have played 3-4 times before, in fact, last two years, I have been playing and ranking I will pick events. For the time being I will play the Super 100 and Super 300 events mainly.
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Paul Krugman warned, citing a general of preparedness among economic policymakers.

Speaking at the World Economic Summit in Dubai, Krugman said it was unlikely that "one big thing" would avert an economic downturn. He said a range of economic winds would increase the risk of a slowdown.

"I think that there is quite a chance that we will have a recession late this year or next year," he said.

The main concern has been minimal. Krugman said that we don't have an effective response if things slow down... We don't want to have a safety net, but we need to have a safety net. It's a dominant academic said.

Noting that the central banks often lack the tools to insulate against market turmoil, Krugman said the planning for risk



has been minimal. He said instead trade wars and growing protectionism continue to dominate policy agendas, deferring attention and resources from what should be the real priorities.

Drawing an analogy between the state of the global economy and the famous Titanic ship, Krugman said, "I don't see

the iceberg out there, but if we do hit one, I know for sure this liner is not unsinkable."

Krugman said stagnant wages, growing inequalities and a loss of confidence in the world's business leaders have created a spirited populist backlash against globalisation.

"The results are clear: Forward motion on globalisation has stopped, but it was slowing anyway," he said.

Krugman said people feel they have been shortchanged by the last generation of economic growth, and the consensus around the problem is not mirrored in discussions of the solution.

"The question is what they want as the solution... Turns out

Wage stagnation also expressed skepticism about the promise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

"Technological change is actually relatively sluggish right now," he said.

He warned against the calls of an impending "labour Armageddon" at the hands of increasing digitalisation.

"This is not a transformative revolutionary era," he said on Sunday, adding that despite the technological advancements in the last 25 years, the way people work has not changed all that much.

Krugman is a professor emeritus of Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School. He won the Nobel Prize in 2008 for his work on economic geography and identifying international trade patterns.

Indian-Americans convicted in multi-billion dollar money-laundering scheme

CHITHA SINGH
NEW YORK, FEB 13 (PTI): Five Indian-Americans among five people were convicted for their role in a \$2-billion multi-billion dollar money-laundering scheme, the US Justice Department has said.

Ravinder Reddy Gudipati, 61; Harsh Jaggi, 54 and Neeru Jaggi, 51, all from Laredo, Texas, were convicted of a money laundering conspiracy following a two-year trial.

Along with the Indian-Americans trio, Adrián Arciniega-Hernandez, of Nuevo Laredo, Mexico; Adriana Alejandra Galvan-Constantini, and Luis Montes-Patino, 57, both from Irving, Texas, were convicted.

Assistant Attorney General Brian Benzckowicz of the Justice Depart-

ment's Criminal Division. Harsh and Adrian were also convicted on two counts of money laundering and Neeru Jaggi was convicted on one count of money laundering. Gudipati was convicted on two counts of money laundering in addition to other counts.

Adrain, Galvan-Constantini, Montes-Patino, Gudipati, Harsh and Neeru were part of a complex money laundering scheme whereby money derived from the sale of drugs in the US was laundered through businesses in Laredo in order to return the proceeds to Mexican drug dealers.

According to evidence presented in court, from 2011 to 2013, Galvan-Constantini, Montes-Patino and other

Maldives' former president Abdulla Yameen charged with money laundering

COLOMBO, FEB 13 (PTI): Maldives' former president Abdulla Yameen, who is accused of using money stolen from state coffers, was charged with money laundering on Wednesday, according to a local media report.

The case stems from an allegedly shady deal to lease islands for tourist resort development and the discovery of USD 1 million in his bank account.

The case has been filed at the criminal court, the Prosecutor General's office tweeted on Wednesday.

Yameen, who lost presidential election to Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in September 2018 after a five-year rule, is accused of using money stolen from state coffers, police said last week, after wrapping up investigations, The Maldives Independent reported.

Under the 2014 anti-money laundering law, the offence carries a prison sentence between five to 15 years or a fine of up to USD 64,850.

Separate charges were sought over alleged false testimony to the Anti-Corruption Commission during its investigation into the theft of USD 90 million from the Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC), the paper said.

Yameen was questioned in December over USD 1 million deposited to his personal account by SOF, a local company that was used to funnel resort acquisition fees paid to the MMPRC.

"The SOF company which benefited from the funds stolen from MMPRC deposited USD 1 million to Yameen's

account at the Maldives Islamic Bank. Yameen was ordered to return the state funds, but the investigation found that he had profited by not handing over the money and by carrying out transactions," police said.

Yameen denies any wrongdoing. Last week, his legal team dismissed the charges as an attempt to influence the April 6 parliamentary elections.

"The ACC has so far been unable to prove that the USD 1 million transferred to Yameen's account in MIB by the SOF company was state funds earned through corruption," lawyers contended in a statement.

Yameen's former legal affairs minister Aishath Azima Shukoor is also facing charges of lying to the authorities and assisting with money laundering. It is unclear whether the PG office has raised charges against her.

Weeks after Yameen left office, his bank accounts were frozen with more than USD 6.5 million and local currency as police launched a probe into campaign contributions and the USD 1 million from SOF.

Yameen jailed or exiled most of his rivals during his turbulent five-year term. Suspecting a plot to impeach him, Yameen in February 2018 declared a state of emergency and arrested top judges as well as political opponents.

His rule dented its image as a honeymoon paradise and attracted alarm abroad. He decisively lost the country's presidential election to opposition leader Solih in October 2018.

Mexican drug lord 'El Chapo' found guilty by NY jury

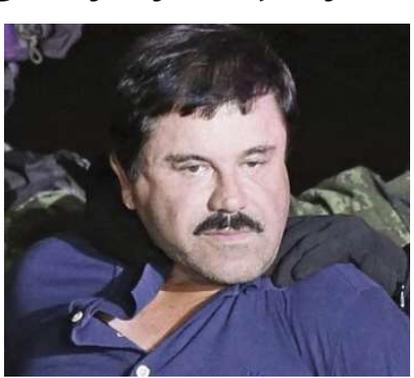
NEW YORK, FEB 12 (AP): Mexican mobster Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán was found guilty Tuesday by a New York jury of crimes spanning a quarter of a century -- head of one of the world's most powerful drug gangs.

The 61-year-old former head of the Sinaloa cartel -- famed for his dozen escapes from Mexican prisons -- faces a possible life sentence after being convicted of smuggling tons of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana into the United States.

He was also found guilty of money laundering and illegal weapons possession charges.

In a three-month trial that unfolded like a real-life telenovela, Guzman's former beauty queen wife and a parade of lovers and henchmen -- the witness stand under the gaze of the onetime kingpin.

"Do not let him escape responsibility. Hold him accountable for his crimes. Find him guilty on all counts," JIS assis-



tant Mayo has been the largest narco-trafficker for decades in Mexico. He has never been arrested. He has paid hundreds of millions of dollars to stay free," Lichtman said.

The government, meanwhile, appealed to the jury not to let Guzman escape -- an allusion to his two spectacular jail breaks in Mexico, the last one in 2015 through a tunnel from a shower area in his cell.

The defense's strategy centered on attacking the credibility of the cooperating witnesses -- former secretaries, pilots, cocaine suppliers, Guzman's top trafficker in the United States, a manager, an accountant, a former communications chief, and even a former lover.

Pakistan can break India jinx in upcoming WC, says Moin

KARACHI, FEB 13 (PTI): Former Pakistan captain Moin Khan believes the present national team has the firepower to break its World Cup jinx against India and register the country's

World Cup because there is talent, there is depth and variety and Sarfaraz Ahmed has now gelled the squad well," Moin said on GTV News channel on Tuesday night.

But Moin, who feared

tion centre for asylum seekers, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Wednesday, a day after an embarrassing defeat in Parliament which passed a legislation that would give refugees easier access to mainland hospitals.

Morrison announced he would reopen the detention centre, which was closed last year, to cope with what he predicted would be an influx of transfers from Manus Island and Nauru.

"I am not at liberty to go into the detail of what they are, for obvious reasons. This Parliament has already tipped its hand enough to the people smugglers," he said.

"We have approved putting in place the reopening of the Christmas Island detention facilities, both to deal with the prospect of arrivals as well as dealing with the prospect of transfers," Morrison said.

The prime minister's announcement came after the opposition Labor party and independents voted on Tuesday to amend headline immigration laws to give doctors the right to transfer some 1,000 men and women from two Pacific detention centres if they need medical treatment.

The new legislation,

ily in polls ahead of an election due in May.

Morrison said he expected the new medical evacuation laws could restart the people smuggling trade and Australia needed to be ramp up its national security efforts.

"My job now is to do everything within my power, and the power of the government, to ensure that what the Parliament has done to weaken our borders does not result in boats coming to Australia," he said.

His announcement was made after he convened an urgent meeting of the National Security Committee of the Cabinet.

The prime minister said he had commissioned "a range of strengthenings" to Operation Sovereign Borders as recommended by security and intelligence agencies.

The federal government became the first one to lose a vote on its own legislation in almost 80 years on Tuesday.

The Labor secured the support of most of the crossbench to win the Lower House vote 75 to 74 on the first sitting day for 2019.

According to media reports, security agencies also briefed the opposition lead-

idea of the consequence they are playing with and "will unless a window of woe again" if it supports the bill.

The prime minister contended Shorten would be responsible for new boats arrived because "he led this project to weaken and compromise our borders."

Labor is accusing the government of a hysterical response.

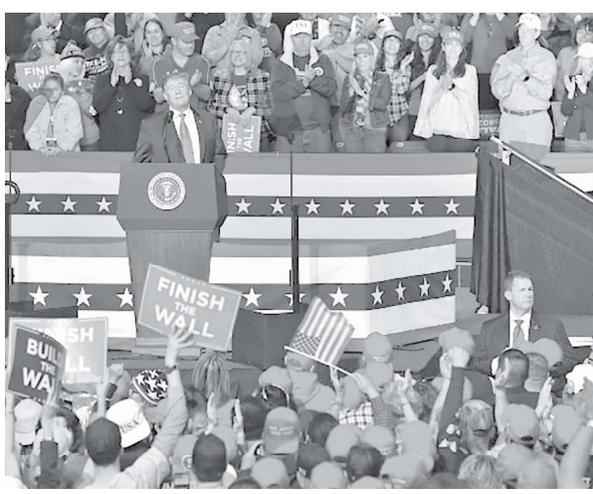
"What we have done is got the balance right. We want strong borders. We don't want vile people smuggling in business, exploiting people's misery," Shorten said.

"But we also want to make sure for people who have been in care, detained, for five and a half years in most cases, but they are subject to humane treatment. It is not Australia to have people in our care and not treat them properly and fairly," he said.

The new laws will apply to refugees and asylum seekers already on Manus Island and Nauru and Labor says it means there will be trigger for more people to get on boats.

The Christmas Island is an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean, lying south of Java in Indonesia.

BBC wants security review after cameraman attacked at Trump rally



WASHINGTON, FEB 13 (AFP): The British Broadcasting Corporation has asked the White House for a review of security arrangements after a BBC cameraman was assaulted at a Donald Trump rally.

BBC cameraman Ron Skeans was attacked by a Trump supporter yelling anti-media slogans during the US president's rally in El Paso, Texas, late Monday.

Skeans was unhurt and the man, who was wearing a "Make America Great Again" hat, was restrained by a blogger for the pro-Trump outlet Frontline America.

"We are relieved

dia area was unsurprisingly," Danahar said.

"No one in law enforcement intervened before, during or after the attack."

Danahar dismissed a statement from the "Trump for President" campaign, which expressed appreciation for "the swift action from venue security and law enforcement officers."

"There was no swift action to prevent or interrupt the attack by any security agency," he said.

The White House Correspondents' Association condemned the attack.

"We are relieved

Paso event, said his cameraman was pushed and shoved by the unidentified assailant "after president repeated goaded the crowd of supposed media bias."

He said the man tempted to smash BBC camera.

"Happily, Ron fine," O'Donoghue said.

Trump paused remarks following the commotion in crowd and -- pointed at the media -- asked "alright? Everything alright? Everything alright?"

He resumed his attack on the press later in speech, referring to "totally dishonest media."

Trump frequently



FASHION FANS! Actors Chloe Grace Moretz & Michael B. Jordan are spotted sitting front row at the Coach 1941 runway show during New York Fashion Week.

Chadwick Boseman to star in Spike Lee's Netflix film

ANGELES, FEB 13 (PTI): "Black Panther" star Chadwick Boseman will set to collaborate with director Spike Lee on the film "Da 5 Bloods".

This is the first time Spike Lee is working with Boseman on Netflix. The story revolves around Vietnam veterans going back to the jungle to find their lost innocence and put their broken lives back together, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Delroy Lindo and Laurence Fishburne are also attached to star in the film. Spike Lee is working on

the script with Kevin Wilmott, who was also a writer on the script for Lee's Oscar-nominated "BlacKkKlansman". Boseman, meanwhile, is expected to return as Wakandan king T'Challa in "Avengers: Endgame". "Black Panther" has been nominated in seven categories at the Oscars this year while Lee's "BlacKkKlansman" is in the race with six nominations.



christ whose campaign forced the authorities in the US to change their policy towards turban of the Sikh community.

Directed by Jenna Ruiz, a student and actor from Indiana, the film is based on a true incident in 2007 when Sikh entrepreneur Gurinder Singh Khalsa, was denied boarding a flight in Buffalo, New York when he refused to remove his turban after successfully passing through each security measure at the airport.

Following this incident, Indianapolis-based Khalsa worked towards bringing the issue to the attention of the US Congress, which later resulted in headgear policies being changed in airports nationwide.

Khalsa was recently conferred with the prestigious Rosa Parks Trailblazer award for his campaign.

In the short film, Khalsa is made to choose between his religious beliefs and his flight to see his mother in her last days. "It is an honour to be able to show-



case a moment in history that led to change in our TSA (Transportation Security Administration) Policy regarding the removal of headgear, said Ruiz, who is pursuing bachelors degree in Nuclear Medicine Technology at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

this film will allow viewers to experience firsthand what it is like to be made to choose between religious beliefs and everyday life," she said.

Since her start in the film industry at the age of nine, Ruiz has had the opportunity to appear in multiple films, commercials, as well as write, shoot and produce several films and music videos.

"SINGH" has been filmed at the Indianapolis International Airport and is scheduled to be released next month.

I took this stand for all those who believe in religious liberty and freedom of faith," Khalsa had said earlier in a media statement.

"Incidents like this one happen for the greater good, where misunderstandings occur between people of different backgrounds and faith, strengthen our society," said Khalsa, who recently announced that he will enter electoral politics in America and will run for Council of Fishers.

Aziz Ansari opens up about accusation of sexual misconduct



NEW YORK, FEB 13 (PTI): A year after being accused of sexual misconduct, comedian Aziz Ansari has opened up about the incident during one of his pop up comedy shows in the city.

Ansari appeared at New York City's Village Underground and joked how a fan confused him for 'Patriot Act' host Hasan Minhaj on the street.

Once the fan realised his mistake, he told Ansari, "You had the whole thing come out last year - sexual misconduct?" to which the comedian jokingly responded 'No, no no, that's Hasan'.

But after the punchline, Ansari sat down to explain why he had kept a low profile after an initial statement on the story where a woman wrote about how she felt pressured to have sex with the comedian during a date.

Ansari said he had not spoken about the incident because he wanted to take time to process his thoughts.

"It's a terrifying thing to talk about. There were times I felt really upset and humiliated and embarrassed, and ultimately I just felt terrible this person felt this way. But you know, after a year, how I feel about it is, I hope it was a step forward. It made me think about a lot, and I hope I've become a better person," he said.

The comedian said a friend had told him how his story had made him rethink all of his own past dates.

"If that has made not just me but other guys think about this, and just be more thoughtful and aware and willing to go that extra mile, and make sure someone else is comfortable in that moment, that's a good thing," Ansari said.

"The Parks and Recreation" star said the incident gave him a perspective on his life even though he was scared that he would not be able to do comedy.

"There was a moment where I was scared that I'd never be able to do this again," Ansari said.

Harrison Ford blasts Trump, other world leaders over climate change threat

DUBAI, FEB 13 (PTI): Veteran actor Harrison Ford has taken a dig at US President Donald Trump over the country's decision to opt out of Paris climate agreement, saying those who deny the threat of climate change are on the "wrong side of history".

During his speech at the final day of the World Government Summit here on Tuesday, Ford said the world needs to protect nature as humans are facing the "greatest moral crisis of our time".

"All of us, whether rich or poor, powerful or powerless, will suffer the effects of climate change and ecosystem destruction if we're faced with the greatest moral crisis of our time," he said.

"The land and the sea are the legacy we will leave to future generations... We must intervene and act before it is too late. We need to protect nature because nature does not need people, but people need nature," he added.

According to Arab News, the 76-year-old veteran, famous for playing cult characters such as Han Solo in "Star Wars" franchise and the title character of "Indiana Jones" series, started his speech with a dig at Trump without even taking his name.

"Around the world elements of leadership including in our own country to preserve their state and the status quo, deny, denigrate science. They are on the wrong side of history," he said.

In 2017, Trump had announced that the US would be exiting Paris climate pact, saying it would pose a "burden" on the US economy.

REQUIRED FOR CANADA

Nurses, Caregivers, Chef-Waiters-Butchers-Bakers, Driver, Farm Workers - Meat Packers IT PROFESSIONAL

Walk for Interview & Resume Submission
7SEA OVERSEAS CONSULTANCY
 Paribahan Nagar, Opp. Webel IT Park, Matigara, Siliguri
 Email ID: sevenseainfo8@gmail.com
sevenseasconsultancy5@gmail.com
 Contact No. +9170764 21789 / +9183487 14807

ARIES: No need to rush it, Aries. As the moon in your security-seeking second house forms a helpful trine to potent Pluto, look within and make sure you've got a stable framework for your dreams. If you want to go for the gold, you have to play by the rules. Don't let restlessness get the best of you. You may have to take a few steps backward in order to get yourself on track and playing by the books.

TAURUS: Don't abandon self-care simply because it's a busy Monday. With a metamorphic trine between the Taurus moon and potent Pluto, you may finally feel mo-

shift in a proactive direction. If you fixate on the negative, you'll miss the opportunities that are all around you. Set a limit for cathartic venting time so you don't drown in the drama.

CANCER: IToday's powerful connection between the moon and alchemical Pluto infuses all your collaborations with magic. The only catch? That also means that you'll have to take a step back and listen to your intuition before you leap. You have a vision, Cancer, and an exciting one at that. The thing is, you don't want to steamroll your collaborators with your plans. Ask for feedback and drink it in.

LIBRA: Honesty is one of your best qualities, Virgo—as long as you don't crush people's egos with your critiques. Under today's penetrating moon-Pluto connection, you won't do a very good job of pretending to be pleased. But it is possible that the person who has "failed" you might need a little more guidance or training in your precise methodology?

VIRGO: You've been making progress on all your "new year, new you" plans, Libra, but in the process, have you neglected your inner circle? Today's intimacy-boosting trine between the moon and soulful Pluto sends a Code-RED alert to check in with your loved ones. Give

to run out of fuel!
SAGITTARIUS: Get organized, Archer! Until you have an efficient system figured out, you'll only be spinning your wheels (and maybe getting stuck in a rut—eek!). If you're already operating at max capacity, take stock of your tasks: What can you outsource? Which projects need your attention today, and what can you put off until tomorrow? Take a critical look at your calendar for the rest of the week. Instead of juggling everything at once, dedicate blocks of your schedule to specific action items!

CAPRICORN: Today's transformation-

emergency couples' therapy session!
AQUARIUS: Are you at wit's end, Aquarius? Today's revelatory trine between the moon and perceptive Pluto shines a light on the ways in which you've been holding yourself back. Don't be afraid to try new things, especially if they might help you climb out of any ruts you've fallen into. It can be scary to break out of trenchant routines, even an imaginative Aquarius. But you won't be alone this time: An influential female friend or mentor will support your exploration of new frontiers!

PISCES: Is trouble brewing with an