



'CAN'T STOP DEEPAKE PORN'

Scarlett Johansson believes fighting deepfake porn videos, which she has often fell victim to, is a "lost cause". Deepfakes are a type of explicit content where users can insert people's faces onto the bodies of others.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Kim Ki-duk

SOUTH KOREA
Star director's sex abuse libel case dropped

Seoul: South Korean prosecutors have rejected complaints by one of South Korea's top directors, Kim Ki-duk, 58, of criminal defamation against an actress who accused him of physical and sexual assault, and journalists who reported other allegations. An actress in 2017 accused him of sexual and physical abuse, saying he forced her into unscripted sexual scenes and slapped her repeatedly while shooting his 2013 award-winning film "Moebius", before replacing her with another actress. Prosecutors dropped the sex abuse charge citing lack of evidence but fined Kim \$4,600 for physical assault.

NEPAL
'Kids have to put cash in parents' bank accounts'

Kathmandu: Nepal is set to introduce a law that makes it mandatory for children to deposit 5 to 10 per cent of their income into the bank accounts of parents to ensure their well-being. Those failing to adhere to these provisions will face a penalty. The penalty amount will be deposited in the accounts of the parents.

SOUTH AMERICA
New treefrog species found in the Andes

Washington: Scientists have discovered a new treefrog species, with an extraordinary, enlarged claw-like structure located at the base of the thumb, that live on a remote tabletop mountain in the Andes. The discovery, described in *ZooKeys*, was made during a two-week expedition to a largely unexplored range in the eastern Andes.

RUSSIA
Chinese demand fuels 'mammoth rush' in Siberia

Yakutsk: There are at least 500,000 tonnes of mammoth tusks buried in Yakutia, an enormous region in Siberia covered by permafrost. But since China banned the import and sale of elephant ivory, exports of mammoth ivory rose to 72 tonnes in 2017, with over 80 per cent going to China.

USA
Man trapped in Burger King sues for free meals

New York: After Curtis Brooner spent an hour trapped in a toilet in Burger King, he was offered free meals for life. For the next 13 days, the 50-year-old ate for free at the restaurant every day — sometimes twice a day. Then a district manager ended the deal. Now Brooner has sued to force the chain to restore his free meals.

US lawmaker makes profanity vow to impeach Trump, he calls it poll ploy

MARY CLARE JALONICK & LISA MASCARO
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 4

ONE DAY into their new House majority, several Democrats are trying to jump-start the impeachment action that many in the party have been talking about for two years. President Donald Trump pushed back on Friday, saying they're only acting because they know they can't win the White House in 2020.

His spin on the contentious topic came as a newly elected Michigan Democratic congresswoman ignited a furore on Capitol Hill with a profanity-laden pledge to work to impeach Trump.

Representative Rashida Tlaib exclaimed at an event late Thursday that Democrats were going to "impeach the mother*****". Asked about it outside a Friday morning caucus meeting of House Democrats, Tlaib smiled and kept walking. A few minutes later, she tweeted: "I will always speak truth to power." She added the hashtag, "(hash)unapologeticallyMe."

Trump eagerly responded, intent on using the impeachment threat for political advantage.

"How do you impeach a president who has won perhaps the greatest election of all time, done



Rashida Tlaib

How do you impeach a president who has won perhaps the greatest election of all time, done nothing wrong" and has had the "most successful two years of any president".

DONALD TRUMP

nothing wrong" and has had the "most successful two years of any president", Trump tweeted Friday, claiming he's "the most popular Republican in party history".

Some members in the House are eager to move forward — like Brad Sherman from California and Al Green of Texas. Green introduced articles of impeachment against Trump on Thursday, the first day of the new Congress. AP

Trump condoles family of Indian-origin police officer killed by illegal immigrant

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 4

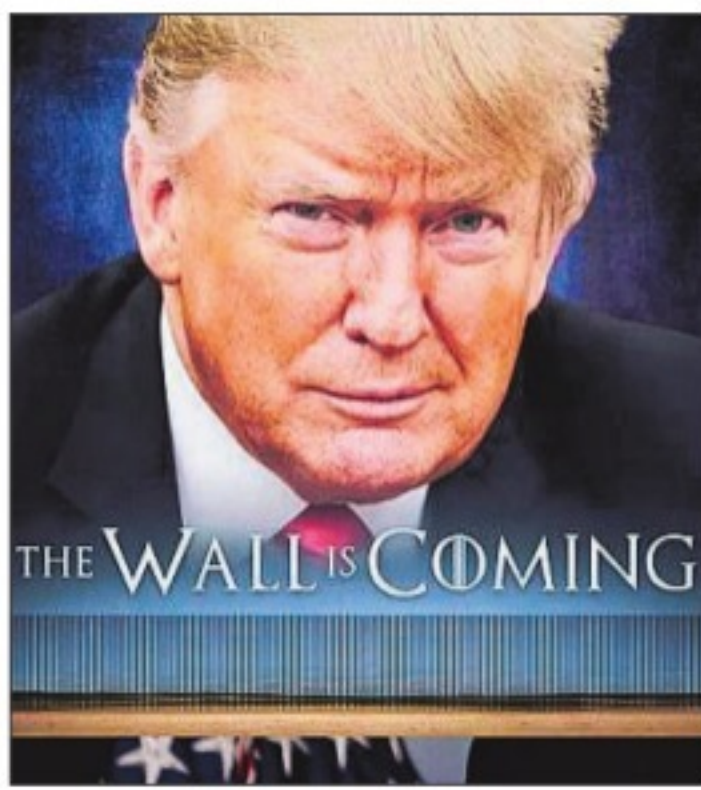
PRESIDENT DONALD Trump Thursday spoke with the widow and colleagues of Indian-origin police officer Ronil "Ron" Singh who was shot dead allegedly by an illegal immigrant last week in the US state of California.

Corporal Singh, 33, of the Newman Police Department was shot and killed at a traffic stop on December 26 by an illegal immigrant named Gustavo Perez Arriaga when he was planning to flee to his native Mexico.

"This afternoon, President Trump spoke with the family and law enforcement colleagues of fallen Newman, California, police officer Ronald "Ron" Singh," White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said.

Singh was a native of Fiji and joined the force in July 2011.

"The President praised officer Singh's service to his fellow citizens, offered condolences, and commended law enforcement's rapid investigation, response, and apprehension of the suspect," Sanders said. PTI



TRUMP POST ON WALL: Taking a cue from Game of Thrones' iconic line, 'Winter is coming', Trump posted 'The Wall Is Coming' on his Instagram, a reference to the border wall with Mexico; (top) officer Ronil Singh. NYT



FARTHEST FOOTPRINTS: China's lunar rover leaves wheel marks after leaving the lander that touched down on the far side of the Moon on Thursday. These are the first 'footprints' on the far side of the Moon. AP

Iran to send warships to the Atlantic Ocean

REUTERS
LONDON, JANUARY 4

THE IRANIAN navy will send warships to deploy in the Atlantic from March, a top commander said on Friday, as the Islamic Republic seeks to increase the operating range of its naval forces to the backyard of the United States, its arch foe. Iran sees the presence of US aircraft carriers in the Gulf as a security concern and its navy has sought to counter that by showing the flag near American waters.

A flotilla will leave for the Atlantic early in the Iranian new year, starting from March, Iran's naval deputy commander said.

"The Atlantic Ocean is far and the operation of the Iranian naval flotilla might take five months," Rear-Admiral Touraj Hassani was quoted as saying by the state news agency IRNA.

He said Sahand, a newly-built destroyer, would be one of the warships. Sahand has a flight deck for helicopters and Iran says it is equipped with anti-aircraft and anti-ship guns, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles and has electronic warfare capabilities.

Hassani said in December that Iran would soon send two to three vessels on a mission to Venezuela.

A senior Iranian military official said last month that the navy could sail in the Atlantic near US waters since US aircraft carriers were allowed to move around in international waters near Iran.

Iran's navy has extended its

'Iran space missions cover for missile tests'

Washington: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned Iran Thursday against launching three spacecraft in the coming months, describing them as a cover for testing technology that is necessary to lob a warhead at the US and other nations. His statement seemed intended to build a legal case for diplomatic, military or covert action against the Iranian missile programme. It was surprising only because Iran has been launching modest space missions, mostly to deploy satellites, since 2005. NYT

reach in recent years, launching vessels in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden to protect Iranian ships from Somali pirates.

"By their continuous presence in international waters, Iranian naval forces aim to implement the orders of commander-in-chief of the armed forces (Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei), wave the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran, thwart the Iranophobia plots, and secure shipping routes," Hassani said.

Hackers leak data of lawmakers in Germany, but not of far right

MELISSA EDDY
BERLIN, JANUARY 4

TWITTER SHUT down an account on Friday that an unidentified hacker had been using for weeks to expose the personal details of dozens of German lawmakers across the political spectrum.

The leaks included personal emails, chats and contact details, and were posted on Twitter by an account named G0d. The breach targeted lawmakers from every major political party but one — the far-right AfD — as well as artists with leftist political leanings.

The leaked data was released through links published on Twitter in the form of an advent calendar, beginning with information about the German television comedian Jan Böhmermann on December 1 and ending with members of Chancellor Angela Merkel's party. NYT



STORM GATHERS OVER THAILAND

Tropical storm Pabuk approaches Thailand on Friday. The storm in three decades killed one person on Friday. Reuters

China tests its own 'Mother of All Bombs'

K J M VARMA
BEIJING, JANUARY 4

CHINA HAS developed a massive bomb, said to be the country's answer to the US-built 'Mother of All Bombs', the most powerful non-nuclear weapon, official media reported on Friday.

China's defence industry giant NORINCO for the first time showcased the aerial bomb, the country's largest non-nuclear bomb, state-run *Global Times* reported. It is dubbed as the Chinese version of the "Mother of All Bombs" due to its huge destruction potential that is claimed to be only second to nuclear weapons, the daily said.

The bomb was airdropped by an H-6K bomber and caused a gigantic explosion, showed a

EXPLAINED
Joining 3-nation club, Beijing's answer to America

LAST YEAR, the US made the first-ever battlefield use of GBU-43B, a 21,000-pound bomb known as the "Mother Of All Bombs". US President Donald Trump had picked Afghanistan as the testing ground — the target Islamic State terrorists. By giving its own bomb the same nickname as the American one, China is declaring that it has an answer to the US bomb. But the Chinese weapon is smaller and lighter than its US counterpart. Russia, too, has also developed what it calls the "Father of All Bombs", which is both bigger stronger than the US one.

promotional video released by China North Industries Group Corporation Limited (NOR-

bomb's destructive powers have been shown in public, state-run *Xinhua News Agency* reported.

Judging from the video and the size of the H-6K's bomb bay, the bomb is approximately five to six metres long, Beijing-based military analyst Wei Dongxu told the *Global Times* Thursday.

"The massive blast can easily and completely wipe out fortified ground targets such as reinforced buildings, bastions and defence shelters," Wei said.

It can also be used to clear a landing zone for troops on helicopters to rappel down, in case the area is covered by obstacles such as forests, Wei noted.

Wei said that the Chinese bomb is smaller and lighter than the US one, enabling it to be deployed on the H-6K bomber. PTI

'StarTalk' season on hold amid sex misconduct claims against Tyson

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LOS ANGELES, JANUARY 4

THE CURRENT season of Neil deGrasse Tyson's "StarTalk" series is on hold amid sexual misconduct claims against the prominent astrophysicist.

The *National Geographic* channel said Thursday new episodes of the science-based talk show won't air until an investigation involving Tyson is completed, which could be within the next few weeks.

Last December, National Geographic Networks and Fox said they would examine claims that Tyson behaved in a sexually inappropriate manner toward



Neil deGrasse Tyson

two women.

Tyson was host of "Cosmos: Possible Worlds" on Fox in 2014, and a new edition of the series

was set to air in March on the network and on *National Geographic*.

He has denied an accusation that he groped a woman and denied making sexual advances toward a production assistant at his home. Tyson apologised for making the assistant feel uncomfortable.

He has said he will cooperate fully with an impartial investigation. "StarTalk" began its fifth season in November, airing a handful of episodes before putting the show on hold. Guests for the previously announced 20 episodes include former Vice President Al Gore, *A Song of Ice and Fire* author George R R Martin, and actors Jack Black and Jeff Goldblum.

PRE-COLUMBIAN DEITY

Aztec temple of 'Flayed Lord' found; priests wore skins of dead

ALANYUHAS
NEW YORK, JANUARY 4

ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN Mexico say they have found the first temple dedicated to a deity called the Flayed Lord, an important god in the Aztec Empire whose worshippers were said to wear the skin of sacrificial victims.

Artifacts related to the god were found in the central state of Puebla, at a site built by the Popoloca people, Mexico's

National Institute of Anthropology and History said in a statement Wednesday. The Popolocas built in the area over several centuries, beginning around A.D. 900, and were assimilated into the sprawling Aztec kingdom.

At the temple, which the institute said was probably built between AD 1000 and 1260, the archaeologists found artifacts related to the god, Xipe Tótec, including two stone skulls and a stone torso that had an extra hand

hanging off its left arm. Scientists said the extra hand suggested the god was wearing the remains of a sacrificial victim.

Noemí Castillo Tejero, the archaeologist who led the project, was not available for an interview, but the institute said that the excavation at the complex, called Ndachjian-Tehuacan, had also uncovered two altars nearby, in a layout that appeared to match Aztec accounts of rituals associated with the cult of Xipe Tótec.

Those accounts, from around



Astone carving depicting Xipe Tótec, the Flayed Lord. AP

the time of the Spanish invasion in the early 1500s, say that worshippers of Xipe Tótec sacrificed people, usually prisoners of war, by having them fight a series of combatants in a kind of gladiatorial ritual — or by killing the prisoners with arrows. The worshippers then flayed the victims, and priests were said to have worn their skin.

"Part of the logic there is that this was, among other things, connected to renewal and the re-emergence of life, probably some-

thing like snakes sloughing off their own skins," said John Henderson, a professor of anthropology at Cornell University who was not involved in the research.

The deity himself is often portrayed as wearing the skin of a sacrificial victim, Henderson said, and he was impersonated by actual priests who also wore skins. The temple, he and other experts suggested, may have been used to store such skins.

Henderson emphasised that a long period passed between the

use of this building and the written descriptions of the rituals, and that the Aztecs — who took control over the region around AD 1450 — oversaw a complicated, cosmopolitan empire that adopted other cultures, languages and ethnic groups, such as the Popoloca people.

Various depictions of Xipe Tótec, for instance, have been found around Mesoamerica, though until now archaeologists had not found a temple that seemed dedicated to him. NYT