14 THE WORLD

GLOBAL WARMING

GREENLAND ICE MELTING FOUR TIMES FASTER

Greenland's melting ice, which causes sea levels to rise, disappeared four times faster in 2013 than in 2003 and is noticeable across the Arctic island, not just on glaciers, researchers warned on Tuesday. "Increasingly, large amounts of ice mass are going to leave as meltwater, as rivers that flow into the sea," Michael Bevis, lead author of the research paper, said. He warned this would have major implications, causing additional sea level rise.



Abu Bakar Bashir has been linked to the 2002 Bali bombings

INDONESIA President backtracks on

unconditional release of cleric

Jakarta: Indonesia's President said a radical Muslim cleric linked to the 2002 Bali bombings would only be released from jail if he pledged loyalty to the state and its ideology, after news he would be freed unconditionally criticism. sparked President Joko Widodo had declared last week that Abu Bakar Bashir, 81, would be freed on humanitarian grounds, citing his age and poor health. A legal adviser to the President had said the cleric would be granted unconditional release. But Widodo said in a statement on Tuesday it would be "conditional release", a day after a minister said the decision was being reviewed.

CHINA

Beijing warns US, Canada against Huawei **CFO** extradition

Beijing: China on Tuesday warned the US and Canada that it would "take action" against them if they went ahead with the extradition of the CFO of Chinese telecom giant Huawei to America, and accused both the countries of abusing their extradition treaty. Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's chief financial officer, was arrested in Canada in December and faces extradition to the US, which alleges that she covered up her company's links to a firm that tried to sell equipment to Iran despite sanctions linked to its nuclear programme.

PHILIPPINES

New law would make 9-yr-olds criminally liable

Manila: A proposed law making its way through the Philippine Congress would consider children as young as 9 criminally responsible for their actions. The justice panel in the House of Representatives hurriedly approved amendments Monday to the country's juvenile justice law, which was signed in 2006 and set the minimum age for criminal liability at 15. The measure still awaits approval by the full House.

TURKEY

'Ankara planning international probe into Khashoggi case'

Ankara: Turkey is planning to launch an international investigation into the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi and will take further steps in coming days, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu was quoted as saying by state-owned media. Khashoggi, a royal insider who became a critic of Saudi Arabia's Prince Crown Mohammed bin Salman. was killed in the kingdom's Istanbul consulate

on October 2, 2018.

WORLD Death toll 14 as 2 ships with Indian, Turkish crew catch fire off Russia

Directorate General of Shipping in Mumbai says many of the 15 Indians aboard the ships survived

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MOSCOW, MUMBAI,

JANUARY 22

AT LEAST 14 sailors were killed and six others missing when two Tanzanian-flagged fuel ships carrying Indian, Turkish and Libyan crew members caught fire in the Kerch Strait separating Russia from Crimea, Russian rescue officials said Tuesday.

While the identities of those killed and missing are still not known, officials at the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) in Mumbai said that a good number of the 15 Indian seafarers who were on board the two ships have survived the accident.

While one ship was a liquefied natural gas carrier, the other was a tanker. The fire broke out as the two ships were transfer-



A rescue vessel during a fire-fighting operation following an accident involving two ships, which caught fire in the Kerch **Strait. near the coast of Crimea.** *Reuters*

ring fuel from one to the other. One of the ships, the *Candy*, had a 17-member crew, including nine Turkish citizens and

eight Indians.

GINGER GIBSON &

KAREN FREIFELD

ministration.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 22

DEMOCRATS IN the US House

of Representatives have quietly

tweaked a rule on taking secret

depositions that is likely to give

a boost to their investigations of

President Donald Trump, his

personal finances and his ad-

made since the Democrats took

over majority control of the

House earlier this month, will let

staffers of House investigative

committees take testimony from

subpoenaed witnesses without

with lawmakers' schedules, the

change will let staffers work

faster and range more widely,

said former staffers and sources

inside the committees that are

launching several inquiries into

underscored, legal experts said,

when attorney general nominee

William Barr indicated last week

that he was unlikely to release

the final report from Special

US SINGER Chris Brown was ar-

rested in Paris on Monday with

two other people on suspicion of

Brown, his bodyguard and a friend

were detained after a 24-year-old

woman alleged she was raped at

the singer's suite at the Mandarin

the men at a Paris nightclub ear-

The woman said she had met

Oriental hotel on January 15.

The importance of this was

Trump and his presidency.

By eliminating complications

a lawmaker being present.

The little-noticed change,

The other one, the *Maestro*, had a 15-member crew, including seven Indian nationals, seven Turkish citizens and an intern from Libya, Russian news agency

House Democrats turbocharge

Trump with US Vice President Mike Pence and acting

King Memorial in Washington on Monday. Reuters

Counsel Robert Mueller to law-

many months Russian meddling

in the 2016 presidential election,

any collusion between Moscow

and Trump's campaign, and ob-

struction of justice. If Barr is con-

firmed and holds back on

Mueller's report, the rule change

may help House investigators

rapidly replicate Mueller's work.

quirement will give much more

power to staff investigators in

different committees, which

"Dropping the member re-

Mueller has been probing for

makers in its original format.

Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt at the Martin Luther

committee probes on Trump

Tass quoted maritime authority officials as saying.

A senior DGS official told PTI that dozens of vessels were looking for survivors in the vicinity of the accident site.

"Some of our sailors have contacted their families back home about making it, while a few have been rescued after they jumped out of the blazing ships," the official said, declining to give an exact number.

Fourteen people were killed in the accident, Crimea's leader Sergei Aksyonov told reporters on Tuesday. "I cannot say anything about the cause of the fire. We currently have information about 14 dead sailors. Other sailors have not reached hospitals yet. Kerch hospitals are expecting to receive them, they will get medical assistance," he said.

Twelve people have been res-

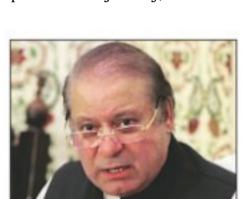
cued, while six are missing. Search and rescue efforts are underway.

"Presumably, an explosion occurred (on one of the vessels). Then the fire spread to another vessel. A rescue tug is en route," said a spokesman for the Russian Maritime Agency.

Some three dozen sailors managed to escape the burning ships by jumping off the vessels.

"As of 6 am, the status of the operation has been reclassified to search from rescue because there is no hope to find survivors," the spokesperson said.

In New Delhi, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said India is in touch with Russian authorities. "We have been informed that two ships caught fire while moving through the Kerch Strait after one of them was apparently rocked by an explosion on 21 January," he said.



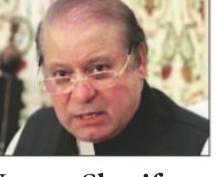
Nawaz Sharif shifted to hospital from jail

MZULQERNAIN

PAKISTAN'S FORMER prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who is serving a seven-year prison term in a Lahore jail, was rushed to a hospital on Tuesday after he complained of heart related complications.

Sharif, 69, was taken to the

"My father is not well. I wanted to go to the PIC, but my father stopped me to come because of security issues," Sharif's daughter Maryam said. "The authorities concerned have not yet provided with us the reports of the special medical board that earlier had examined Mian sahib. After pleading with jail authorities, we have also written to the Punjab Home department for the reports but to no avail," she said. A medical team that visited Sharif last week observed "he is not completely well". **PTI**



LAHORE. JANUARY 22

Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC) Lahore from Kot Lakhpat Jail.



The Army now accounts for less than 50 per cent of the total

China reduces Army

by half, increases size

number of Chinese troops, state media said. Reuters

PLA strategic shift:

of Navy, Air Force

KJM VARMA

BEIJING, JANUARY 22

CHINA'S MILITARY, the world's

largest force, has cut the size of its

land-based Army by about 50 per

cent and significantly boosted its

Navy and Air Force as part of an

"unprecedented" strategic shift

designed to transform the People's

Liberation Army (PLA) into a com-

Chinese military has significantly

boosted its Navy, Air Force and

new strategic units and down-

sized its land-based Army, the

Hong Kong-based South China

Morning Post reported quoting a

In a feature report highlight-

ing the "transformational

changes" made by the PLA,

Xinhua on Sunday said "this new

data is unprecedented in the his-

tory of the PLA — the Army now

accounts for less than 50 per cent

of the total number of PLA

troops: almost half of our non-

combatant units have been

made redundant, and the num-

ber of officers in the PLA has

has downsized its military by re-

trenching three lakh troops un-

der the military reforms initiated

by President Xi Jinping. But it still

remained the world's largest

military with two million per-

The statement indicated that

the four other branches of the

PLA — the Navy, Air Force, Rocket

Force and Strategic Support

Force, which is responsible for

areas such as cyberwarfare —

now together make up more

than half of the Chinese military,

overtaking the Army, which has

Russian police detain drunken

man who hijacked plane

sonnel in the ranks.

In the last few years, the PLA

been reduced by 30 per cent."

state-run *Xinhua* report.

The two million-strong

prehensive modern force.

PLA revamp lets China flex muscles outside its borders

A RECENT Pentagon report had warned that China was rapidly modernising its military and that it could enable the country to impose its will in the region, in which it is involved in a number of territorial and other disputes. Reducing the number of troops in its Army, and boosting its Navy and Air Force will allow China to be better prepared for any conflict outside of its borders, Chinese state media quoted experts as saying. The country had also added a Rocket Force and a Strategic Support Force to its military in recent years, putting greater emphasis on warfare in the air, in space and also in cyberspace.

traditionally been the dominant unit of the PLA.

The expansion of the Navy in the past few years was massive as China now has one aircraft carrier, another undergoing trial and third in the making. **PTI**

US top court revives ban on transgender military service Tweaks rule on secret depositions to boost investigations

ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 22

THE US Supreme Court Tuesday revived the Trump administration's policy of barring most transgender people from serving in the military. In a brief, unsigned order, the justices temporarily allowed the ban to go into effect while the case moves forward.

The vote was 5-4. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan dissented.

The policy, announced on Twitter by President Donald Trump and refined by the defence secretary at the time, Jim Mattis, generally prohibits people identifying with a gender different from their biological sex from military service. It makes exceptions for several hundred transgender people already serving openly and for those willing to serve "in their biological sex".

Challenges to the policy have had mixed success in the lower courts. Trial judges around the nation issued injunctions blocking it, and the 9th Circuit US Court of Appeals, in San Francisco, is expected to rule soon on whether to affirm one of them. On January 4, the US Court of

Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit vacated a third injunction, that one issued by a federal trial judge in Washington. The appeals court said its ruling was "not a final determination on the merits." But it handed the administration at least a provisional victory.

The Supreme Court granted stays of two other injunctions, issued by US District Court judges in California and Washington State, both in the 9th Circuit.

Solicitor General Noel J. Francisco, representing the administration, told the justices that prompt action was required to ensure that the Supreme Court could rule before its term ends in June. **NYT**



rape, a French police source said. The arrests were first reported A woman alleged that she by Closer magazine, which said was raped at Brown's hotel

lier in the evening, according to

room in Paris on Jan 15.

the magazine.

Neither Brown nor his agents could not immediately be

reached for comment.

Brown, 29, whose previous legal troubles include assaulting singer Rihanna in 2009, remained in custody on Tuesday, a judicial source said.

will lead to increasingly dis-

persed and now unsupervised

authority for investigations,"

said Kristina Moore, a managing

director at FTI Consulting and a

former investigator for the

House Oversight Committee

when it was chaired by

rules represents a further ex-

pansion of the majority's over-

sight and investigations targets,

for which everyone in the pri-

vate sector needs to prepare,"

"This change to the House

Republican Darrell Issa.

Moore said. **REUTERS**

Brown pleaded guilty to assaulting then-girlfriend Rihanna in an incident that made headlines around the world when a photo of her bruised face was released.

In 2016, Brown was arrested in Los Angeles after a woman said he had pointed a gun at her. Brown denied any wrongdoing.

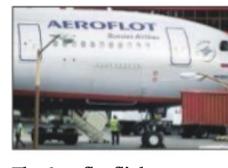
A rape conviction in France can carry a sentence of 15 years.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, JANUARY 22

RUSSIAN POLICE detained a drunken man who threatened the crew of an passenger plane flying Tuesday from a Siberian city to Moscow, forcing it to land shortly after take-off.

The Russian Investigative Committee said that the man told the Aeroflot crew that he was armed and demanded the diversion of the plane after it



The Aeroflot flight was en route to Moscow. Reuters file

had taken off from the Siberian city of Surgut. The plane landed in the city of Khanty-Mansiysk,

He threatened crew, forcing flight to land soon after take-off about 230 kilometres to the west.

The plane stood on the runway in Khanty-Mansiysk for more than an hour before law enforcement officials went onboard. The airport was evacuated and the area cordoned off. Aeroflot said no one was hurt.

The investigators said the man has been identified as a Surgut resident who has a past conviction for property damage. He will now face charges of hijacking.

NETFLIX, MARVEL MAKE DEBUTS IN BEST PICTURE CATEGORY

Roma, The Favourite lead Oscar nomination with 10 nods

JAKE COYLE NEW YORK, JANUARY 22

OSCAR VOTERS on Tuesday showered Alfonso Cuaron's Roma and Yorgos Lanthimos' The Favourite with a leading 10 nominations to the 91st Academy Awards, while two dominant but contentious Hollywood forces — Netflix and Marvel — each scored their first best picture nomination.

Though many expected A Star Is Born, Bradley Cooper's tear-inducing revival of one of Hollywood's most oft-remade show-business myths, to top the nominations, Cooper was surprisingly overlooked as director and the academy instead put its fullest support behind a pair of indies by international directors.

With the black-and-white, Spanish-language Roma, Netflix scored its first best picture nomination, a prize the streaming giant has dearly sought. Marvel, too, joined the club with Ryan Coogler's Black Panther, the first superhero movie ever nominated for best picture.

Cuaron tied the record for most decorated Oscar nominee for one film with four individual nods for Roma, a deeply personal exhumation of his Mexico City childhood. Cuaron was nominated for direction, cinematography, original screenplay and best picture. Only Orson Welles and Warren Beatty have matched the four-nod feat.

Just as rewarded Tuesday was Lanthimos' period romp, which resounded most in the acting categories thanks to its trio of ac**BEST PICTURE** ■ A Star Is Born **■** BlacKkKlansman

■ Black Panther **■** Bohemian Rhapsody ■ The Favourite

■ Green Book **■** Roma

DIRECTOR

■ Vice

■ Alfonso Cuarón (*Roma*)

■ Yorgos Lanthimos (The Favourite) ■ Adam McKay (*Vice*)



AND THE NOMINEES ARE...

won Best Actor and Actress at this year's Golden Globes.

(BlacKkKlansman) ■ Pawel Pawlikowski (Cold War)

■ Spike Lee

ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE ■ Christian Bale (*Vice*) ■ Bradley Cooper

(A Star Is Born) **■** Willem Dafoe (At Eternity's Gate)

■ Rami Malek (Bohemian Rhapsody) **■ Viggo Mortensen** (Green Book)

ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE

■ Yalitza Aparicio (*Roma*) ■ Glenn Close (*The Wife*) **■** Olivia Colman (The Favourite)

■ Lady Gaga (A Star Is Born) ■ Melissa McCarthy (Can You Ever Forgive Me?)

tresses: Olivia Colman in the best actress category, and Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone in supporting.

The acting categories played out largely as expected with a few notable differences. Along with Lady Gaga and Colman, the best actress nominees are Yalitza Aparicio (Roma), Glenn Close (*The Wife*) and Melissa McCarthy (Can You Ever Forgive Me?).

In best actor, the expected front runner Christian Bale was nominated for his transformation into Cheney in *Vice*, along with Cooper, Willem Dafoe (At Eternity's Gate), Rami Malek (Bohemian Rhapsody) and Viggo Mortensen (*Green Book*).

The lead-up to Tuesday's nominations was rocky for both the film academy and some of the contending movies. Shortly

comedian Kevin Hart was forced to withdraw over years-old homophobic tweets that the comedian eventually apologised for. That has left the Oscars, one month before the Feb. 24 ceremony, without an emcee, and likely to stay that way. Some film contenders, like

Green Book and the Freddie

after being announced as host

Mercury biopic Bohemian Rhapsody, have suffered waves upon waves of backlash, even as their awards tallies have mounted. The Oscars last year had hit a

new ratings low, declining 20 per cent and averaging 26.5 million viewers on ABC. Though ratings for award shows have generally been dropping, the downturn prompted the academy to revamp this year's telecast. **AP**