THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2019 14 THE WORLD



MEANWHILE

PUTIN TAKES 1ST TRAIN OVER CRIMEA BRIDGE

President Vladimir Putin on Monday stood in the driver's cabin of a train for the official opening of a railway bridge that links annexed Crimea to southern Russia, with the launch drawing sharp criticism from Ukraine and the EU. During his ride, from Kerch in Crimea, Putin also spent time drinking tea with engineers on the \$3.6-billion project.



A law signed by Putin in May requires internet providers to install equipment to enable centralised control of traffic

RUSSIA

Moscow tests 'sovereign' Net amid fears of online isolation

Moscow: Russia carried out tests Monday to ensure the "security" of its internet infrastructure in case of a foreign cyberattack, measures that rights activists worry could also tighten censorship and lead to online isolation. A controversial law that allows the country to cut internet traffic from international servers came into force in November, but the communications ministry has denied the government is gearing up to isolate the Russian segment of the internet and said ordinary users wouldn't notice tests.

HONDURAS

Prison clashes leave 36 dead

Tegucigalpa: At least 36 people were killed in weekend clashes in Honduran prisons as the military and police try to regain control after a spate of murders linked to the criminal gangs plaguing the country. On Sunday afternoon, 18 gang members died in a clash between inmates at El Porvenir prison, 60 kilometers (40 miles) north of the capital Tegucigalpa. "Firearms, knives and machetes" were used in the brawl, which also left 10 wounded, Lieutenant Jose Coello, a spokesman for the National Inter-Institutional Security Force (Fusina), told local media. On Friday night, 18 prisoners died and 16 were wounded in a shooting at the prison in the port town of Tela,

Maryam Nawaz denied permission to travel abroad

northwest of the capital.

Islamabad: The Pakistan government has denied permission to PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz to travel abroad, saying those involved in any economic crime and institutional fraud could not be allowed to leave the country, according to a media report on Monday. Maryam, the daughter of Pakistan's former PM Nawaz Sharif, was placed on the no-fly list in August 2018. Maryam had sought permission for flying to London to look after her ailing father.

Saudi court sentences five to death in Khashoggi murder

BEN HUBBARD

BEIRUT, DECEMBER 23

A COURT in Saudi Arabia sentenced five men to death and three to prison terms over the killing of Saudi dissident writer Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul last year, the kingdom's public prosecutor's office said Monday.

The killing of Khashoggi, 59, a veteran Saudi media figure and columnist for The Washington Post, brought international outrage and battered the reputation of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and de facto ruler, Mohammed bin Salman.

The kingdom's handling of the case has also raised concerns. Turkey has accused Saudi Arabia of failing to cooperate in investigating the killing, which a United Nations investigator said could amount to obstruction of justice.

Khashoggi, who lived in Virginia, entered the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, to obtain paperwork he needed to marry his Turkish fiancee. Inside, he was confronted

Nepal arrests 97

'preparing to

commit major

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

nationals.

nancial crimes."

Kathmandu.

residences.

financial crimes'

KATHMANDU, DECEMBER 23

IN A massive operation in mul-

tiple locations around

Kathmandu on Monday, Nepal

police arrested 97 Chinese

about the activities of the ar-

rested, but said, "We have defi-

nite information that they were

preparing to commit major fi-

months after four Chinese na-

tionals were arrested for hack-

ing ATM machines in

Kathmandu where the arrested

persons had rented multi-storey

houses, which they were pur-

portedly using as offices and as

rested may have committee

crimes in several countries, in-

cluding China, but came to Nepal

to conducted organised crimes.

antecedents of the suspects, as

well as scrutinising around 400

computers that they seized

following Monday afternoon's

coordinated raids.

Police are investigating the

Police said some of those ar-

Police raided three places in

The arrests come four

Police declined to give details

Chinese nationals

The public prosecutor's office

At a protest against the killing of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Khashoggi was killed inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018. Reuters

by Saudi agents, who killed him and dismembered his body. His remains have yet to be found.

The kingdom never announced the suspects' names, and foreign diplomats who attended sessions of the trial were sworn to secrecy.

LAMINE CHIKHI

ALGIERS, DECEMBER 23

ALGERIA'S POWERFUL Army

Chief, who masterminded the

state's response to mass protests

this year, died suddenly of a heart

attack on Monday, and a likely

successor quickly emerged from

the same old guard the demon-

Gaed Salah had become the most

visible figure in Le Pouvoir — the

"power", as Algerians describe

their secretive ruling elite, helping

to bring down long-time presi-

dent Abdelaziz Bouteflika in April.

strategy was to replace Bouteflika

and his allies while keeping the

essential structure of power un-

changed and allowing the

protests to continue, hoping to

As military Chief of Staff, his

Lieutenant General Ahmed

strators want swept away.

said Monday it had examined 31 suspects and arrested 21 of them. Of those, 11 were put on trial.

Five men were sentenced to death for their direct involvement in Khashoggi's killing. Three others were given a total of 24 years in prison for covering up the crime and violating

Algeria's powerful Army Chief

Ahmed Gaed Salah dies at 79

wait out the demonstrators.

Huge crowds continued to

flood the streets through much of

2019 to demand wholesale

change to the leadership, unap-

peased by Bouteflika's resignation

and the arrest of many of his aides

and allies on corruption charges.

formal leaders or organisation.

But among its main demands

throughout the weekly rallies has

been that the Army step away

from its central political role since

Algeria's 1962 independence

from France, with marchers often

chanting: "A civilian state, not a

military state". As the year wore

on, protesters also increasingly

called for Gaed Salah himself to

resign, especially after he pushed

hard for an election to replace

Bouteflika that they regarded as

illegitimate while the old guard

still held sway. **REUTERS**

The protest movement has no

'FAR FROM MEETING EXPECTATIONS'

The handling of the case has been widely criticised for leaving out top Saudi officials. Here's some reactions.

TURKEY

other laws.

EXPLAINED

Turkey, where the crime took place, said the verdict failed to deliver justice. The decision 'is far from meeting the expectations of both our country and the international community to shed light on the murder with all its dimensions and deliver justice,' the foreign

UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR Agnes Callamard, the UN

The kingdom did not provide

the names of those sentenced

but named three suspects who

were not among them.

Mohammed al-Otaibi, the Saudi

consul in Istanbul, and Ahmed

Asiri, deputy head of Saudi intel-

ligence, were found not guilty,

Critical moment

in political crisis

THE DEATH of the Gaed Salah

has come at a crucial time in

ery's response to the political

Following mass demonstra-

Abdelaziz Bouteflika, he quit

after Gaed Salah, as Army

Chief, called for his resigna-

Army's refusal to use force

against the protesters, had

figure among the protest

made him a highly regarded

movement. However, once he

took control of the country's

government, he refused to ac-

cept the protesters' demands

for major reforms. He called

an election that protesters de-

scribe as illegitimate. The new

president has sought talks to

end the crisis, but the protest-

ers want the Army to move

away entirely from politics

and don't recognise the new

president. This marks the lat-

est critical moment in the

country's political crisis.

tion. This, combined with the

the Algerian state machin-

crisis in the country.

tions against president

ministry said in a statement.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Amnesty International

special rapporteur on

has previously directly

to the killing, said the

sentence 'is anything

but justice'.

summary executions who

linked Prince Mohammed

criticised the verdict as a 'whitewash which brings neither justice nor the truth for Jamal Khashoggi and his loved ones'.

the prosecutor said.

Saud al-Qahtani, a top aide to Crown Prince Mohammed on whom the United States imposed sanctions over the killing, had not been tried.

The sentences announced Monday were preliminary and subject to appeal. **NYT**



Pakistan's anti-graft body arrests former interior minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PAKISTAN'S FORMER interior minister and senior PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal was arrested on Monday for alleged corruption in a sports complex construction

Igbal, 60, was arrested from the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) Rawalpindi office, where he had appeared to record his statement in the alleged corruption in the Narowal Sports City Project, Dawn reported.

The NAB will produce him before an accountability court on Tuesday for his physical remand. He served as interior minister from August 2017 to May 2018.

Igbal, who also served as planning and development minister and the deputy chairman of the planning commission, is charged with illegally using funds meant for a sports city in Narowal.

Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD, DECEMBER 23

project, according to a report.

The proposal to a group of ex-

But Marvin's mother, who was briefly reunited with her son him at must have manipulated into the ocean or elsewhere.

> has been discussing ways to handle the crisis and to reassure fish-



DAY AFTER INITIAL RESULTS RELEASED

Afghanistan's incumbent President Ashraf Ghani arrives to speak after he won a slim majority of votes in preliminary results of presidential election, in Kabul on Sunday. Reuters

Afghan election runoff likely amid thousands of complaints: officials

OROOJ HAKIMI KABUL, DECEMBER 23

AFGHANISTAN'S ELECTORAL **Complaints Commission said** on Monday the election might go to a second round as it begins reviewing thousands of complaints a day after the preliminary result handed incumbent president Ashraf Ghani a narrow victory. The Independent Election

Commission (IEC) announced on Sunday a much delayed preliminary result of the Sept. 28 presidential vote which was marred by allegations of massive fraud, technical problems with biometric devices used for voting, attacks and irregularities. IEC said the total turnout

was over 1.8 million with Ghani securing 50.64 percent to win the first round of voting, beating his main rival Abdullah Abdullah who currently shares power with him in a unity government. However, if a review by the

Ghani's vote share to below 50 percent and no other candidate has a majority, a second round will be held between the two top contenders.

complaints commission reduces

Deen Mohammad Azimi, deputy head of the Electoral Complaints Commission, said

OF INITIAL RESULTS New Delhi: India on Monday

INDIA WELCOMES

ANNOUNCEMENT

welcomed the announcement of preliminary results of Afghan presidential election which showed incumbent Ashraf Ghani on course for a second five-year term. At the same time, India said it expected that the complaints related to the election process would be addressed through the prescribed legal procedure so that final results are declared in a timely manner. "We hope that the

Afghan leaders and other stakeholders will work together to further strengthen the democratic polity and to fight the serious challenges of terrorism facing the country," said Raveesh Kumar, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs. ENS

there is a "strong possibility" the election would go to the second round. "Looking at the scope of complaints and objections that needs a thorough review, there could be a run-off,' Azimi told *Reuters*. **REUTERS**

Japan govt proposes release of Fukushima water to sea or air

ASSOCIATED PRESS TOKYO, DECEMBER 23

JAPAN'S ECONOMY and industry ministry proposed on Monday the gradual release or evaporation of massive amounts of treated but still radioactive water being stored at the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant.

perts is the first time the ministry has narrowed down the various options available to those choices. It is meant to solve a growing problem for the plant's operator as storage space for the water runs out, despite fears of a backlash from the public. The draft proposal will be discussed further.

Nearly nine years after the 2011 meltdowns of three reactor cores at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Plant, radioactive water continues to accumulate as water used to keep the cores cool leaks from the damaged reactors and is stored in tanks so it won't escape



ermen and residents who fear possible health effects from releasing the radioactive water as well as harm to the region's image and fishing industry.

The water has been treated and the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., says all 62 radioactive elements it contains can be removed to levels not harmful to humans except for tritium.

There is no established method to fully separate tritium from water, but scientists say it is not a problem in small amounts. Most of the water stored at the plant still contains other radioactive elements including cancer-

causing cesium and strontium and needs further treatment.

Mystery of missing boy found in closet grips Germany at that point that he was being

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA FRANKFURT AM MAIN. DEC 23

THE CASE of a missing 15-yearold boy found in a closet at the flat of a suspected paedophile has gripped Germany, but his mother says she just wants to celebrate Christmas with her son.

Marvin had been missing for over two years when he was found hiding in a cupboard last Friday as police searched the home of a 44year-old man suspected of distribMarvin had been missing for over two years when he was found hiding in a cupboard last Friday

Gaed Salah was seen as Algeria's de facto strongman after

president Abdelaziz Bouteflika quit in April

uting child pornography. The stunning discovery in

western town of Recklinghausen has drawn comparisons to two shocking cases in Austria — of Natascha Kampusch, who was held by her kidnapper for eight years before she managed to escape in 2006; and of Elisabeth Fritzl, who was

kept in a cellar and repeatedly raped by her father Josef in an

ordeal that lasted 24 years. Marvin, who disappeared after saying goodbye to his carers at a youth shelter on June 11, 2017, is currently in psychiatric care.

"I want to visit him for

Christmas, to celebrate a little

with him." his mother Manuela

B., 53, told Germany's best-selling tabloid *Bild*. A police spokesman on

Monday said the decision on when Marvin can go home "is up to the doctors, not the police".

Many questions remain answered in the case that German media have dubbed an "Advent miracle" — including how the boy ended up at the flat and if he could have left at any time.

Police said in a statement that the officers who discovered him "did not see any indications on Friday, doubted he was there entirely out of free will. "The man whose place they found

held against his will".

him," she told *Bild*. "I could go crazy thinking about what's been done to him." She said Marvin was found wearing the same clothes as on the day he vanished, and said he

For years, a government panel looked like "a broken old man".

BORN RICHARD ALPERT, HE RETURNED HOME AS A WHITE-ROBED GURU AFTER A TRIP TO INDIA, AND WROTE OVER A DOZEN BOOKS

Baba Ram Dass, proponent of LSD and new age enlightenment, dies at 88

DOUGLAS MARTIN

DECEMBER 23

BABA RAM Dass, who epitomised the 1960s of legend by popularising psychedelic drugs with Timothy Leary, a fellow Harvard academic, before finding spiritual inspiration in India, died on Sunday at his home on

Maui. He was 88. The death of Ram Dass, who was born Richard Alpert, was announced on his official

Instagram account. Having returned from India

epaper inc

as a bushy-bearded, barefoot. white-robed guru, Ram Dass became a peripatetic lecturer on New Age possibilities and a popular author of more than a dozen inspirational books.

The first of his books, Be Here *Now* (1971), sold more than two million copies, and established him as an exuberant exponent of finding salvation through helping others.

He started a foundation to combat blindness in India and Nepal, and supported reforesta-

tion in Latin America. He was particularly interon the internet and make tapes.

foundation to help people use death as a journey of spiritual awakening and spoke of establishing a self-help line, "Dial-a-Death", for this purpose. In the late 1990s, Ram Dass

ested in the dying. He started a

suffered a cerebral hemorrhage that left him partly paralysed, unable to speak and needing a wheelchair. From his home in Maui, Hawaii, he learned to "surf the silence" at first, he said, but over time and painstakingly he reacquired a halting form of speech and was able to lecture



His first book. Be Here Now. sold over 2 million copies

Richard Alpert was born in Boston on April 6, 1931. His father, George, a lawyer, was a founder of Brandeis University

and president of the New Haven Railroad, Richard had a bar mitzvah, but said he had no religious convictions as a youth. He graduated from Tufts

University as a psychology major in 1952 and studied for a master's degree in the subject at Wesleyan,

only to flunk the oral exam. Nevertheless, Alpert, as he was known then, was accepted as a PhD candidate at Stanford and earned his doctorate, staying on afterward to teach. That was fol-

lowed by twin appointments, in

psychology and education, at

Harvard. It was at Harvard where

he crossed paths with Leary. Leary was researching on

psilocybin, the main psychoactive ingredient in some species of mushrooms.

After taking a dose of psilocybin with Leary, Alpert recalled, he felt supreme calm, then panic, then exaltation. He believed he had met his own soul. "It was OK to be me," he said he had realised.

The Harvard work led to many news articles, but it also provoked criticism. In May 1963, both Leary and

Alpert were fired — Alpert for giving drugs to an undergraduate, and

Leary for abandoning his classes. Alpert went to India in 1967.

Events led him to Neem Karoli Baba, who was called Maharajji by his followers. Maharajji appeared to read Alpert's mind by telling him that his mother had recently died of spleen disease — information he had told no one in India, he said. The experience sparked a spiritual upheaval in Alpert, who forever after considered Maharajji his guru. It was Maharajji who gave Alpert the name Ram Dass, and

added the prefix. Baba. In 1968, Maharajji told Ram Dass to return to the United States.

bearded — his father, he said, told him to get in the car quick "before anyone sees you." He moved into a cabin on his father's estate in New Hampshire. Soon, as many as 200 people were showing up to chant with him. Ram Dass's biggest public success came in 1971, when the

When he got off the plane in

Boston – barefoot, robed and

Lama Foundation published Be Here Now, originally issuing it as loose pages in a box. It has had more than three dozen printings, with total sales exceeding two million. **NYT**