

Irreplaceable loss

Algeria's powerful military chief Gen. Ahmed Gaid Salah, instrumental in pushing out the gas-rich country's long-serving president amid pro-democracy protests, has died



5 get death in Khashoggi killing

Saudi Arabia court sentences five people for death of Royal family critic



File picture of Hatice Cengiz, fiancée of Jamal Khashoggi who accompanied him to Istanbul.

THE SAUDI crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, had drawn international condemnation for the killing because several Saudi agents involved worked directly for him. The kingdom denies that Prince Mohammed had any involvement or knowledge of the operation. The trials of the accused were carried out in near total secrecy.

his Turkish fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, who waited for him outside. He never walked out and his body was never found. Agnes Callamard, a UN special rapporteur who authored an inquiry into Khashoggi's killing, later said the search for justice must not be left to the Saudi judicial system, which is "so vulnerable to political interference."

Jamal, fallen critic of royals



Riyadh, Dec. 23: Jamal Khashoggi, whose gruesome murder plunged Saudi Arabia into its biggest crisis since the 9/11 attacks, was a prominent journalist and critic of the ultra-conservative kingdom's government.

Khashoggi fled the country in September 2017, after Prince Mohammed was appointed heir to the throne and amid a campaign that saw dozens of dissidents arrested, including intellectuals and Islamic preachers.

It is hoped that South Korea's dream becomes helpful for China — Moon Jae South Korean President

Activity at N. Korea site, US alert

Seoul: South Korea has made a new satellite image of a factory where North Korea makes military equipment used to launch long-range missiles shows the construction of a new structure. The release of several images from Pyongyang comes amid concern that North Korea could launch a rocket or missile as it seeks concessions in new nuclear negotiations with the United States.

Mexico envoy caught stealing

Mexico City: Mexico's ambassador to Argentina resigned citing health problems following new allegations of shoplifting. A video from late October showed the diplomat attempting to steal a \$10 book. Ricardo Valero was recalled earlier this month by Mexico's foreign ministry amid the fallout from the Oct. 26 incident at a well-known Buenos Aires book store in which he can be seen on security camera footage taking the volume from a shelf and then hiding it inside the pages of a newspaper he tucked under his arm.

NZ volcano death toll touches 19

Wellington: The death toll from New Zealand's devastating White Island eruption has risen to 19, with police confirming on Monday another death in hospital. The toll includes two people whose bodies have not been recovered. A police spokesman said they were informed that a person had died late Sunday in an Auckland hospital. There were 47 people, mainly Australian tourists, on the island when it erupted on December 9, and 16 remain in hospital. Many are still in a critical condition.

TORRENTIAL RAINS IN LANKA HITS 64K, 3 DIE

Columbo, Dec. 23: Three people have died and over 64,000 affected in the latest spell of rain over the weekend in Sri Lanka. 1,706 people have been displaced in the rains and shifted to makeshift camps. The defence ministry said the Navy's Air Force and the Army have been deployed to rescue stranded people. Defence choppers have been pressed into service for the rescue operations, the daily reported.

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Justice 'trampled' in murder trial, says RSF

Paris, Dec. 23: Justice was "trampled" with the death sentence meter out Monday to five Saudis for the murder of journalist Khashoggi, Paris-based media rights watchdog Reporters Without Borders said.

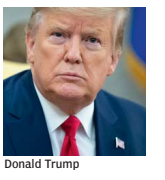
The group's secretary general, Christophe Deloire, tweeted that the sentences "can be interpreted as a means to permanently silence the suspects, a way to prevent them from speaking to better cover up the truth."

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into pieces by a 15-man Saudi squad inside the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul, according to Turkish officials.

Trump may not get swift acquittal

Washington, Dec. 23: The White House is projecting confidence that it will prevail in a constitutional spat with Democrats over the nature of the Senate's impeachment trial, which threatens to deprive President Donald Trump of the swift acquittal he seeks.



Donald Trump

The House voted to impeach Trump, who became only the third president in US history to be formally charged with "high crimes and misdemeanors."

House believes Pelosi won't be able to hold out much longer. "She will yield. There's no way she can hold this position," Marc Short, the chief of staff to vice president Mike Pence, said, adding, "We think her case is going nowhere."

Donald invites BoJo to US in New Year

Washington, Dec. 23: U.S. President Donald Trump has invited British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to visit him in the White House in the new year.

Trump's invitation was made after the British prime minister's election win this month. Britain wants to strike a new trade deal with the United States after it leaves the European Union at the end of January.



Britain PM Boris Johnson enjoys Christmas lunch with British troops in Estonia.

Moscow decks up for X-mas



People walk in Red Square decorated for Christmas and New Year celebrations, with the St. Basil's Cathedral in the background in Moscow, Russia.

EXISTENTIAL CRISIS ■ Doubts over the existence of the man designated caliph

Mystery shrouds identity of ISIS boss

Paris, Dec. 23: Just days after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was killed in a raid by US special forces in October, the Islamic State group announced the name of the man who has replaced him as leader.

But the true identity of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Quraishi remains shrouded in mystery, and with the organisation's strategy going forward.

There are even doubts that the man designated "caliph", or religious ruler, exists at all. Some suggest the group was caught off guard and announced a name as a holding move, to create the impression it is on top of things.

Trump announced to the world he had died "like a dog". Trump claimed that he knew "exactly" who the successor was, but a senior American official soon after said the new leader was a "complete unknown".

la tactics. If Quraishi is to avoid an internal leadership challenge, he will be forced to step out of the shadows, the experts say. "There's going to be a tension between his need to assert himself and be effective, and his desire for security," said Daniel Byman, a researcher at the University of Georgetown in Washington.

Start with what is right rather than what is acceptable
Prosperity is the best protector of principle

DECCAN Chronicle

24 DECEMBER 2019

CAA fire rages: Modi, Shah feel vulnerable

Prime Minister Narendra Modi sounded defensive during his rambling speech at Delhi's Ramliya Maidan on Sunday, when he sought to quell the nationwide protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Despite a brutal crackdown in the troubled states like Uttar Pradesh, or in Delhi where the police is directly under home minister Amit Shah's direction, these protests continue. The protests have shown that this government, invincible as it might have seemed with its brute parliamentary majority and an ensheathed political Opposition, can be taken on. Mr Modi and Mr Shah, despite their presumed support from the "silent majority", are obviously frightened by the recent show of people power. Mr Modi's speech betrayed this. He sought to assure Indian Muslims that they had nothing to fear. However, after five years of a relentless assault — likening Muslims to puppies under the wheels of a car/progress, lynching them on suspicion of cow slaughter, the incessant dog-whistling, the reading down of Article 370 in India's only Muslim-majority state, and even Mr Modi's recent identification of protesters "by their clothes" — no Indian Muslim will take the PM's words at face value. He said since he took over in 2014, his government had not mentioned the National Register of Citizens (NRC), which of course is a hold life in Assam in 2014 and you will find that it was mentioned — though indirectly.

Mr Modi added that the government's purpose was to identify infiltrators whom Mr Shah has previously called "the term Sabkar" and not Muslims born in India, or "sons of the soil". Everyone saw how the Assam NRC turned up fewer "infiltrators" than expected: of the 19 lakh "non-citizens" identified, less than half were Muslim. Yet that NRC was rejected and its administrator transferred. But they have not done an exercise to weed out "outsiders" will be either incompetent or sinister, or both.

Then there's the parliamentary record. On December 9, during the debate on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in the Rajya Sabha, he glibly categorically said the NRC would be implemented across the country. He has specifically mentioned the NRC in numerous rallies around India. Mr Shah has been quiet the past week or so. It's not because he and Mr Modi are playing "good cop bad cop" but they have different agendas. More likely the protests have scared them witless. Truly, a bully is a bully until the first pushback.

Clearly, Mr Modi doesn't really care about weeding out termites, etc, but about continuously winning the "next" election. The setback Sharad Pawar dealt him during Maharashtra's government formation and now the protests — by people holding up the "triranga" — have shown him he is vulnerable; that he can't take allies for granted; and that though his parliamentary majority is massive, it is not invulnerable. He is his own defender. His polemic of blaming the Congress and "Urban Naxals" (whoever they are) of spreading lies tells us one thing: that the single-point majoritarian agenda has its limits for an economically-hurting majority, and he knows it.

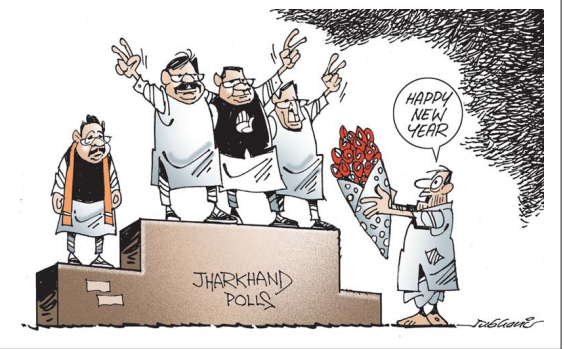
Jaishankar's conduct regrettable

When in Washington last week, external affairs minister S. Jaishankar cancelled an engagement with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee as it chose to include prominent Indian-origin Congressman Pramila Jayapal at the meeting, Indian diplomacy was shown in negative light.

Over decades, our diplomats have earned a name for dignified conduct. Even when the going was difficult, as in the aftermath of the Pokhran nuclear test, when this country was sought to be isolated by the West, our diplomats did not lose their cool. It is therefore surprising that the minister, who is a very seasoned diplomat and a former foreign secretary, should cancel a scheduled meeting simply because a critic of New Delhi's policy of curbs and detentions in Kashmir after the abrogation of J&K's special status was to be a part of it. Mr Jaishankar told the media he had "no interest" in meeting those who were "not objective", and did not have an "open mind". Was this his voice, or that of his masters in New Delhi? Is it not conceivable that the minister may have won over a critic if he went ahead with the meeting. Diplomacy's basic principle is to meet and persuade — especially critics. The minister sought to imply that he didn't wish to interact with those whose criticism was ideology-rooted. But the impression he left is that it's he who carried the burden of ideology.

Not long ago, the government hosted a clutch of European Parliament members of right-wing and far right parties in Strasbourg. They were given a guided tour. A British MEP of the Liberal Party was booed out because he wanted to travel freely in Kashmir. The whole venture was troublingly ideological. Coming off that experience, the minister's conduct appears defensive — aimed at dodging questions.

Subhani



India burns: Can't stop this thing we started



Palash Krishna Mehrotra

The placards Left. Institutions like Pune's PFI, Pune, seen as liberal bastions, were destroyed too. The police was clearly told to negotiate to peace with violence; the enemy had to be crushed. Where the police was asked to do differently, like Mumbai (because their masters, Maha Vikas Aghadi, were different), the protests passed off peacefully. The narrative of violence, in such a fluid context, is cleverly harnessed by the State. First it sends in its own people to infiltrate and join peaceful protesters, foment more violence. It then uses the violence it instigated to justify more brutality. It uses the violence to change the narrative.

As Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have shown, the Congress is a lambi-racke-ga-ghoda. It's embedded in the system. With or without Rahul, Indians vote for it when they are upset with things. It's a solid option. The Congress goes on despite itself. It's an author that long stopped writing, convinced that what he was writing was rubbish, but readers still keep buying the books.

This becomes an effective weapon against the Hindu Rashta's march. It can be and is halted in states which are Congress-controlled. So stop attacking the Congress for its obsession with Rahul's future, and focus on leadership in the streets in this important political moment. It still plays an incredibly crucial role in preventing the slide into a Hindu nation.

This slide though is inevitable. The BJP has no desire to dilute its hard core agenda. Not even Indians feel the idea of India is under threat. But, as the nationwide protests show, it won't be easy for the BJP. "All is Well" is a very different tune from "All is Well". The worry is that the anti-Muslim rhetoric and actions will spur self-radicalisation among the community. Muslim resentment can be tapped by wrong sources. Each violent manifestation can be harnessed by the Hindu Right to further its own agenda as they are doing now.

The best part of these protests is that they are cutting across city, caste, class, gender and religious lines. They have shown when the dark winter comes, people don't burrow further in their razais and duvets, but throw it off, and go to the streets and fight the cold.

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LETTERS

PM, HM NOT IN SYNC

It looks as though Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah are not in sync. The home minister tells in every debate and interviews that after CAA the NRC exercise will begin all over the country, where as the Prime Minister says that will not be done. It's not possible that they don't talk to each other, hence we have to take it as another lie. How long will they continue to fool the masses?
Ebrahim Arif
Hyderabad

SAVE DEMOCRACY

The CAA being talked about at a time when prices of commodities have touched the sky is nothing but diverting the attention of the gullible public. This Act is biased and is nothing short of putting one society against the other and is a threat to democracy in India.
Ambrose Arasan
Secunderabad

NRC UNJUSTIFIED

When the NDA government itself has failed to protect the Rafale deal file that was initially signed by the UPA government in 2012, then how is it possible for a common man to prove that he is an Indian citizen? Therefore, the idea to implement NRC by the government is unjustified.
Syed Amjad Ali
Hyderabad

VESTED INTERESTS

Indians must not fall for the machinations of political vested interests who are desperate to rekindle their shrinking vote banks. We need to understand why CAA became necessary. India's location, liberal values, economic growth and religious harmony drew many illegal immigrants to our shores. Since India has not signed the UN 1951 convention on the status of refugees and the 1967 protocol, we had not had a national policy to deal with refugees. Migration was dealt with under the Foreigners Act, 1946. This Act didn't distinguish between refugees and illegal migrants. At a time when European countries started viewing the refugee situation not on humanitarian grounds but from the security perspective, India is being humane by providing refuge to those persecuted on religious grounds. But then for how long?
A. Shravan
Domalguda, Hyderabad

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A. Rauf K. Khattak
America seems like it's on a war with truth in Afghanistan

In war, the truth is the first casualty. Over two decades, three US presidents, top generals and civilians told lies and half-truths to the American people and the world about the war in Afghanistan. Craig Whitlock, a *Washington Post* investigator, lifted the curtain after three years of a legal battle to make public the Lessons Learned report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). The government agency was entrusted with a project in 2014 costing \$11 million to diagnose policy failures in Afghanistan. Its report contains some 2,000 pages of unpublished notes and transcripts based on 428 interviews from 2014 to 2018.
A *New York Times* editorial on the topic reads: "For years military and civilian leaders said that the mission to rebuild Afghanistan was not only possible, but succeed-

ing. Yet in private, the men and women who ran the war acknowledged to the SIGAR what has long been clear to all but the most blinkered of officials: the war was lost. On October 11, 2001 President George W. Bush was asked if he could avoid being drawn into a Vietnam-like situation in Afghanistan. He confidently replied, "We learned some very important lessons in Vietnam... we will prevail." The time frame gave was from a few months to a couple of years. Years dragged on without results but the generals kept on making rosy pronouncements in public in order to manipulate public opinion. In September 2008, Army general Jeffrey Schlosser of the 101st Airborne Division said: "Are we losing the war? Absolutely no way. Can the enemy win it? Absolutely no way." In his interview to the *SIGAR*, Douglas Lute, a three-star general, admitted, "We were devoid of fundamental understanding of Afghanistan — we did not know what we were doing." The report unveils a torrent of criticism that refuted the official narrative of the war. There were clearly stated objectives in the beginning to end the war, but they were not met a repeat of September 11. The goals and mission kept changing as the war dragged on. There were so many priorities. It was as if there was no strategy at all. The interviews also revealed how many military commanders struggled to articulate what they were fighting, let alone why. Was Al Qaeda the enemy or the Afghan Taliban? Was Pakistan a friend or an adversary? The militant Islamic State group and the bewildering array of foreign fighters? The US government did not have the solution to this puzzle. It held US troops could not tell friend from foe.

The US allotted \$13 billion to build Afghanistan, more than it spent, adjusted for inflation, to revive the whole post-Second World War plan. "We lost objectivity. We were given money, told to spend it and we did, without reason," according to an unnamed respondent. In a single Afghan district, roughly the size of a US county, a mindboggling \$3 million daily was allocated for projects. The US government looked the other way when Afghan power brokers, allies, plundered with impunity. It destroyed the legitimacy of the government. Gen. Mark Britley publicly praised the Afghan Army and police force while knowing full well that the security forces were incompetent and rife with deserters. The police recruits were drug addicts or Taliban. There was reference to "stealing food" who had no idea how having stolen so much fuel from the bases.

\$9 billion were spent on fighting the opium problem. Instead of resulting in a flourishing market economy, flourishing drug trade developed. By 2006, US officials feared that narco-traffickers had become stronger than the Afghan government.
"There have been plenty of lessons to draw from the war in Afghanistan," said the *NYT*. But it also pointed out, "there's little evidence that the American government has learned them." In September 2019, the heaviest bombardment of the war was carried out by the US.
Indeed, "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." But again, as has been observed, "George Santayana might have better said that those who misinterpret the past are condemned to bungle the present."
By arrangement with Datan

A carpenter who makes guitars The state or condition of being an ally to people or groups that have historically been oppressed

Indians are the biggest migrants in the world

Abhijit Bhattacharyya

Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, India's extremely history-conscious national poet, would surely have composed more stanzas akin to this touching one: "He khonker oitih, ele prabhate kar chahiya, jhora shefasti potho bahiya" (O my guest-in-transition, how does one perceive the early morning search for the fallen sheaf flower, looking so helpless at its predestined path) — thereby catching the eternally varying mood and ambience of the 17.5 million strong Indian diaspora, spread worldwide, as reported by the International Organisation for Migration in its Global Migration Report 2020.

migrants, with 17.5 million living abroad, followed by Mexico's 11.6 million and 10.7 million Chinese. And second, these 17.5 million Indian migrants remit \$78.6 billion to their country of origin, followed by the Chinese (\$87.4 billion) and Mexicans (\$35.7 billion). The figure to note is this \$78.6 billion remittance, that clearly shows how much India's economy gains in bridging though partially the wide \$184 billion foreign trade-origin current account deficit. The migration of India's 17.5 million abroad, therefore, owes to economics, and the pros and cons of a better life and a better standard of living. There are three main factors which make individuals leave their homes and hearth. First, natural calamity like drought, flood, fire and earthquake. Second, man-made violence or bloodshed like war or civil war, which leads to unavoidable and inevitable un-scaled human pain. In 1947, the partitioned

Independence of India is one such instance. Third, overseas economic prospects, beyond one's own shoreline. During British times, the preferred and convenient destination for Indian fortune seekers was Southeast Asia, especially (then) Burma and Singapore, as the door to the West was virtually shut for native Indians. There, however, could be a fourth factor: adventure; which constituted a prelude to the "migration" of Western imperialists to rule over the four As — Americas, Asia, Australia and Africa. Before that, however, it was teaching, preaching ideologies, military, missionaries and machine-guns that did the squabbling work. In the use of force, as usual, emerged as the ultimate instrument for subjugation. As it happened in the 15th and 16th century when adventurers like Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Magellan forcibly threw open the doors of America, Canada and elsewhere for their monarchs to send representatives like traders/financiers, followed by flag-bearing fighters with swords. Argentina to Australia, Aden to Afghanistan, Canton to Calcutta, Madagascar to Macao, Surat to Shanghai and Hong Kong to Alexandria fell under Western powers and the settlement of their ruling

The world today appears to have woken up to an 'existential' threat of the 'migration' issue, with several semantics: 'Immigrant', 'infiltrator', 'refugee', 'asylum seekers', 'silent invaders'. class. That said, the fundamentals of contemporary migration, however, appear to be turning into a heavy mixture of the economics of empire with the emotion and fear of extinction as can be seen in some parts of the globe, in which India is also included. Who migrates? Why? How? Where? When? With what consequences? The world today appears to have woken up to an "existential" threat of the "migration" issue, with several semantics: "Immigration", "immigrant", "infiltration", "refugee", "asylum seekers and Africa. The different reasons for different

situations notwithstanding, the defining moment of "immigration or migration", however, today emanates from slogans of the "economics of invaders" and the "existential threat to the indigenous", without doubt. Take the 17.5 million Indian diaspora. Isn't it a fact that virtually all went abroad for better economic prospects? And some to make the lives of their families back home much better? Indeed, if one broadly categorises the types of migration by Indians, what emerges is that a large chunk of those going to study in the West tends to stay back either permanently or for the long term. Those going to the African countries, on the other hand, consist of businessmen, industrial entrepreneurs, white collar as well as blue collar workers in resource-rich nations from Libya to Nigeria to South Africa. Their number isn't small. In Europe, Britain remains the preferred destination for study, business, jobs and settlement. A shared language is inherently a strong bond and advantage. However, hitherto non-preferred and unexplored nations like Germany, France, Spain, Sweden and the Balkans too now attract Indians. The destination which continues to be the most powerful magnet of all nevertheless is

the United States, whether under Donald Trump or any other President. President Donald Trump or no Trump, any US university, good or bad, is in the eyes of ordinary, innocent and glibble Indians, "one of the best universities" of the US, or indeed the world. America remains "the land of opportunities" for most Indians. Hence, this "American craze" recently led to several cases of expulsion of sizeable numbers of Indian illegal immigrants. Nearer home, Middle Eastern/Western countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Qatar and the adjoining states still attract India's labour, service personnel, engineers, doctors, nurses and entrepreneurs. Traders doing import and export too constitute a big chunk. Nevertheless, another area to be watched is China, with special reference to import and export rather more of import from China than the other way around. Herds of Indian traders reportedly are found in wholesale markets of Chinese cities, with some fortune seekers in desperate search of, and access to, the matrimonial market for smoother trade and closer bonding leading to higher profits, despite a yawning gap in linguistic competence. Beyond Asia, Australia and

New Zealand are two attractive destinations for migration, no doubt, but dark clouds have started gathering across the globe in race relations. What the reasons are remain a complicated and puzzling issue, but one thing is certain. Migration for any diaspora, Indian or non-Indian in South Asia, is bound to emerge as more complex and turbulent in the days to come. One of the main reasons for this, this writer believes, is the population boom in all major South Asian countries. Countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan are undergoing demographic booms, even today, thereby leading to the supply-demand mismatch of land, water, resources to food items. There also are significant loopholes, across India, in the "national factor of corruption, added South Asia. The polity, "money" and "legal migration" have been the "open border" of the landlocked state of Nepal.

The writer is an alumnus of the National Defence College and is the author of China in India

Why lessons from the battlefield are often hard to apply in boardrooms

Away from the manger: of the Baby Jesus

Christopher Howse

Andrew Roberts

How can one person lead one hundred? That was one of the questions in my Cambridge entrance exams back in 1981, and although I can't now recall whether I tried to answer it, in the three hours we were given, it has fascinated me ever since. So when I was given the splendid opportunity of delivering nine Lehman Institute lectures on military history at the New York Historical Society three years ago, I used them to try to answer it, at least in terms of war leadership. What became apparent was what a total waste of time and effort most of the modern "leadership skills" industry is whenever it tries to apply the lessons of war leadership to anything else, and especially business. You know the kind of thing: "Attila the Hun's Top Ten Business Leadership Tips", "What Operation Overlord Can Teach You About Running Your Company", and so on. The leadership books, motivational speeches circuit, business videos and online courses are a multi-billion-pound industry, but they tend to impart next to nothing of genuine value when they use war leadership as a template. The ability to speak well in public, for example, is constantly promoted as important to leadership, although neither Napoleon nor Stalin were good orators. The leadership industry promotes the idea that it is important to be of upstanding moral character to motivate employees — witness the recent sacking of the CEO of McDonald's for dating a junior in the organisation. Napoleon's glance at history shows that to be

ludicrous. "Animal courage was Lord Nelson's sole merit," said David Lloyd George, when asked whether he was taking Mrs Lloyd George to the Paris Peace Conference, replied: "Would you take sandwiches to a banquet?" Like nuclear fission, war leadership is a powerful force that can be used for good or evil. It soon became clear in my researches for the lectures — which have now been turned into a short book, *Leadership in War* — that charisma is a totally artificial construct, something of a h****'s trick. No one is born charismatic, and if one is looking for the reasons that Adolf Hitler had charisma, one looks to Leni Riefenstahl's movies, Albert Speer's rallies, and Joseph Goebbels' propaganda rather than to anything inherent in the Führer himself. Since democracies can't censor the news in peacetime like they did in the 1930s, there is an existential struggle like the Second World War — war leadership is necessarily going to be a highly skilled art. In the kind of problems faced by a peacetime politician or a CEO in the age of Twitter and social media, Winston Churchill could simply censor the demoralising news of the sinking of the SS Lancastria with the loss of nearly 4,000 lives in June 1940, or the mass panic in Bethnal Green Tube station which killed 173 people in March 1943, or the massacre of 749 American soldiers at Stalag Luft III in 1945. No peacetime leader could do that.

The leadership books, motivational speeches circuit, business videos and online courses are a multi-billion-pound industry, but they tend to impart next to nothing of genuine value when they use war leadership as a template modern equivalent of more than 63 million in the same age. George Marshall was when he graduated top of his class at the Army Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, considered myself a general, and a man called upon to decide the fate of peoples." Margaret Thatcher was also 26 when she cut the Labour majority in Dartford in the 1951 general election. Hitler won the Black Wood Badge and his second Iron Cross aged 29, a year older than Eisenhower when he distinguished himself in his training of tank crews at Camp Colt. These moments of self-realisation about their capacities gave each of them tremendous confidence in their own abilities in their lives, yet few of the modern leadership manuals are written for people in their mid-twenties. "Study the life of Jesus," Churchill told an American student at the time of the 1953 coronation. "For therein lies all the secrets of statecraft." It is true, but therein does not necessarily lie all the secrets of successful business leadership, despite a huge industry trying to persuade you that it does. By arrangement with the Spectator

LOVING THE NOSE
THANK YOU - IT'S ORGANIC

BERNIE

On Christmas, experience God's free gift of peace

Dominic Emmanuel

Tonight, after eight (ideal) days at midnight, bells of cathedrals and churches in towns and villages around the world will start clinging loud and clear. The pealing of bells will coincide with the priest at the holy Mass, while recalling the greetings of the angels to the shepherds at Jesus' birth, will intone, "Glory to God in the highest and peace to people of goodwill on earth". I love wonderful music and choir during church services.

The uplifting melodies inspire people get into a spiritual disposition. Except that sometimes "Peace get further away from perfection, the wholly important twofold message of a) Glory to God in the highest and, b) peace to people of goodwill on earth, tends either to get sidelined or diluted. Again outside the church walls and into the wider world, "Glorifying God" for the gift of the "Prince of Peace" through His birth gets dissipated due to other human causes. It is the human instinct for survival that develops not to covetousness, greed and jealousy but sometimes takes worse forms like bitter conflicts, revenge, hatred and even bloody wars. In addition the "glory" and

"gratitude" owed to the almighty and the embracing subsequently, the Prince of Peace get further away from perfection, the wholly important twofold message of a) Glory to God in the highest and, b) peace to people of goodwill on earth, tends either to get sidelined or diluted. Again outside the church walls and into the wider world, "Glorifying God" for the gift of the "Prince of Peace" through His birth gets dissipated due to other human causes. It is the human instinct for survival that develops not to covetousness, greed and jealousy but sometimes takes worse forms like bitter conflicts, revenge, hatred and even bloody wars. In addition the "glory" and

instead of working for peace and unity in society, get pushed into discord and division". The constant due enter into conversation with God, with Jesus or with His mother Mary and basically cry out to confess the silent Christmas could mean for me personally and how could I go beyond the external festivities to the essence of this great love story between God and humanity? Shall we then all pray that all of us may experience "love and peace" that God decided to send Jesus' birth — in our hearts, this Christmas? And a Merry Christmas to you all from me.

Father Dominic Emmanuel, a founder-member of the Parliament of Religions, can be contacted at frdominoc@gmail.com

Badshah Khan arrives in city

By a staff reporter HYDERABAD, December 23. IN an incisive speech, made in a gentle Gandhian voice, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan today said that, if the Indian people continued to ignore Gandhian ideals, the consequences would be disastrous for the country. "You have forgotten Gandhian voice, the ideals he cherished. What is more regrettable is that Gandhiji's name is being utilised for selfish purposes," the Frontier Gandhi told a huge gathering at the Nizam College grounds, where he was accorded a civic reception by the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. Gandhi preached non-violence and religious tolerance. What happened to noble ideals? the Frontier Gandhi asked.

Today the pieces of wood lie in surroundings more theatrical than any theatre. In the vast space of St Mary Major, which retains its form from late antiquity as a Roman basilica or public assembly building with colonnades, there is a simple layer in the processium area. Above, the apse is covered with a Romanesque mosaic of the Virgin Mary crowned in heaven by her son Jesus Christ. Below this stands a magnificent baldachino, its dark columns spiralled in gilt wreaths, anchoring the high altar. Under this, visible in an excavated crypt, the baptismal font is a double marble staircase, is displayed the reliquary of the manger, in its own toy-theatrical alcove. The reliquary resembles a soap suds basin. It is decorated with Baroque silver swags. On the lid lies a cheery gilt image of the Baby Jesus, holding a chubby arm aloft as though waving. It's a long way from Bethlehem, where the pilgrim, ducking to enter the Church of the Nativity by a door built low enough to deter horsemen from charging in, goes down steps into a dark, lockless crypt to see a spot on the floor surrounded by a star of silver and inscribed: "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est."

By arrangement with the Spectator



Star power

Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg got the backing of actor Kevin Costner who pitched the small-town mayor as someone worth listening to in the crowded lineup of White House hopefuls

Deluge dampens festive spirit



Employees are seen using boats to help residents in and around the Little Venice Country Park and Marina in Maldstone, southeast of London, after flooding following heavy rain. Flood warnings remain in place across England. (Right), People carry their luggage as they waded through water during a high tide of 1.44 meters, near the Rialto Bridge, in Venice, Italy on Monday. Venice is facing more intense floods while it battles to recover from the exceptional high tide that hit it in November, causing massive damages.

'Do whatever it takes to end it'

Khamenei ordered crackdown on unrest

Tehran, Dec. 23: After days of protests across Iran last month, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appeared impatient. Gathering his top security and government officials together, he issued an order: Do whatever it takes to stop them. That order, confirmed by three sources close to the supreme leader's inner circle and a fourth official, set in motion the bloodiest crackdown on protesters since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.



The Islamic Republic is in danger. Do whatever it takes to end it. You have my order. —AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI, Iran's Supreme Leader

About 1,500 people were killed during less than two weeks of unrest that started on Nov. 15. The toll, provided to Reuters by three Iranian interior ministry officials, included at least 17 teenagers and about 400 women as well as some members of the security forces and police.

The toll of 1,500 is significantly higher than figures from international human rights groups and the United States. A Dec. 16 report by Amnesty International said the death toll was at least 304. The US state department, in a statement to Reuters, said it estimates that many hundreds of Iranians were killed, and has seen reports that number could be over 1,000.

The figures provided to Reuters, said two of the Iranian officials who provided them, are based on information gathered from security forces, morgues, hospitals and coroners' offices.

The government spokesman's office declined to comment on whether the orders came from Khamenei and on the Nov. 17 meeting, Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond to a request for comment for this story.

What began as scattered protests over a surprise increase in gasoline prices quickly grew into one of the biggest challenges to Iran's clerical rulers since the 1979

leader told the group, one of the sources said.

Khamenei said he would immediately stop them. Those who attended the meeting agreed to bring down the regime. "The enemies wanted to topple the Islamic Republic and immediate reaction was needed," one of the sources said.

The fourth official, who was briefed on the Nov. 17 meeting, added that Khamenei made clear the demonstrations required a forceful response. "Our imam," said the official, referring to Khamenei, "only answers to God. He cares about people and the Revolution. He was very firm and said those rioters should be crushed."

Tehran's clerical rulers have blamed 'thugs' linked to the regime's opponents in exile and the country's main foreign foes, namely the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia, for stirring up unrest. Khamenei has described the unrest as the work of a "very dangerous conspiracy."

A Dec. 3 report on Iran's state television confirmed that security forces had fatally shot citizens, saying "some rioters were killed in clashes." Iran has given no official death toll and has rejected figures as "speculative."

"The aim of our enemies was to endanger the existence of the Islamic Republic by igniting riots in Iran," said the commander-in-chief of the elite Revolutionary Guards Corps, Hossein Salami, last month.

Iran's interior minister said on Nov. 27 more than 140 government sites had been set on fire along with hundreds of banks and dozens of petrol stations, while 50 buses used by security forces were also attacked. —Reuters

IMRAN GOVT DENIES MARYAM TRAVEL PERMIT

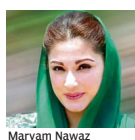
SHAFAQAT ALI I DC ISLAMABAD, DEC. 23

Pakistan government has decided not to lift travel ban on key Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) leader Maryam Nawaz, a close aide of Prime Minister Imran Khan said Monday.

PTI leader Dr Babar Ane said Maryam's application for removal of her name from the Exit Control List (ECL) had been rejected by the federal cabinet's sub-committee that deals with such cases.

The sub-committee has decided against allowing a convict to leave Pakistan. There is no such provision in the law. If anyone wants this condition included then the matter will have to be taken up in parliament," said Dr Awan.

The cabinet sub-committee was directed by the Lahore High Court. He was very firm and said those rioters should be crushed. "Our imam," said the official, referring to Khamenei, "only answers to God. He cares about people and the Revolution. He was very firm and said those rioters should be crushed."



Maryam Nawaz

Crime gangs prey on Hong Kong protests

Hong Kong, Dec. 23: The Hong Kong seller of luxury watches looked on in horror as masked men wielding the biggest sledgehammer he'd ever seen smashed through the door of a neighbouring watch store, held a machete to the owner's throat, and sprinted out with hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of timepieces, and then scattered into the city's maze of streets.



Police investigate a robbery at a jewellery shop in Hong Kong on Monday.

Less than two weeks later, armed robbers attacked again. This time, the watch merchant was the watch seller who had witnessed the previous robbery. He says he grabbed an iron pipe he had handy for just such a confrontation and sprinted out to join the battle against the robbers who were smashing the front of Past & Future Timepieces with hammers, trying to get to the store's high-end watches, while other gangsters brandishing machetes formed a menacing shield around them.

"I heard 'Boom! Boom! Boom!' People shouting," said the merchant, who asked that he be identified only by his surname, Pan, because he feared for his safety. So much so that he now keeps a large metal cleaver in the drawer of his front desk and has protected his store with a new double door and toughened glass. The robbers came at the merchants with their knives and then, seemingly scared off, ran away, he said.

"All the shops came out to help. We've been united now," Pan said. They have to be. Hong Kong's 30,000-strong police force has been so stretched by a half year of anti-government protests that it is struggling to keep the peace. Armed robbers and burglars are seemingly exploiting policing vacuums caused, in part, by the redeployment of officers to riot-control duties. Police say the poor reputation of the semi-autonomous Chinese territory of 7.5 million people as an Asian haven of tranquility, with crime rates lower than other cities its size, is being eroded.

"We used to be a very safe city, six months ago, but somehow we face a lot of challenges," said Chief Superintendent Kwok Ka-chuen, a spokesman for the police force. Still, Hong Kong remains a city where visitors don't need to think twice about their safety. At night, it had six times fewer homicides last year than New York, seven times fewer burglaries and 88 times fewer robberies.

But the mass demonstrations that erupted in June over proposed extradition legislation and then mushroomed into a sustained anti-government movement pushing for full democracy and other demands have burned through police manpower. Officers have been diverted from crime prevention as police fought street battles with hardcore protesters. The police overtime bill has soared to \$128 million. —AP



We all seek to balance our work-life responsibilities as parents — Scott Morrison, Australian PM

Protesters invade Lyon station

Paris: Minor scuffles broke out on Monday between French protesters and police at Paris' Gare de Lyon station, as a nation-wide strike against plans by President Emmanuel Macron to change the country's pension system dragged on into a 19th day. TV station BFM showed pictures of police scuffling with a group of about 30 protesters at the Gare de Lyon, which is one of the capital's busiest stations. Two weeks of industrial action against Macron's pension reform, which would scrap special pensions for many public sector staff and make people work to 64 to draw a full pension, have crippled France's transport network.

China denies forced labour

Beijing: China denied accusations of forced labour at a Shanghai prison on Monday, a day after media reports that a young girl had found a message in a Christmas card saying it had been packed by inmates. The Sunday Times said the message in the charity card sold by British supermarket giant Tesco read, "We are foreign prisoners in Shanghai Qinqipu Prison China. Forced to work against our will. It said the message urged whoever received it to contact Peter Humphrey, a former British journalist and corporate fraud investigator who was imprisoned in the same jail between 2014-2015. Tesco suspended its Chinese supplier of the Christmas cards on Sunday and said a probe is on.

Gaza Christians get travel permit

Jerusalem: Israel announced that it will allow Christians in the Gaza Strip to travel to Jerusalem and the West Bank for Christmas. Until its notice before the holiday, it was unclear whether Israel would grant travel permits to members of Gaza's tiny Christian community to leave the Hamas-ruled coastal territory. COGAT, Israel's defense body responsible for Palestinian civil affairs, said the permits would be issued "in accordance with security assessments and without regard to age." COGAT had earlier said that Israel had not yet decided whether to issue the permits en masse and was considering individual permit requests. COGAT said it also was allowing 100 Christians from Gaza to travel abroad. In previous years, Israel has granted permits to Gaza Christians to visit religious sites and spend time with family in Israel.

TIGERS EXTINCT IN LAOS, FINDS NEW STUDY

Luang Prabang, Dec. 23: Are tigers extinct in Laos? That's the conclusion of a new study that found no evidence wild tigers still exist in the country.

What researchers did find during a five-year camera survey of the biodiversity-rich Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area was evidence of snares—lots and lots of deadly snares, which are designed to trap and kill any animals that stumble across them.

It appears that tigers have now paid the ultimate price for the snaring crisis that plagues Laos and the rest of Southeast Asia.

The loss of tigers in Laos was an avoidable, not unexpected, tragedy. The most recent worldwide tiger population estimates, released in April 2016, put the number of tigers remaining in the country at all of two. The observation of those last two Lao tigers came from the first year of the camera survey.

AVERTING DANGER ■ 700 homes in New Jersey's risk-prone neighbourhoods demolished to prevent danger

A slow-motion evacuation from climate change



A flood-prone forest grows now where there used to be houses in the Watson Crampton neighbourhood in Woodbridge, New Jersey. —AP

Woodbridge, Dec. 23: Housing is in high demand in the heart of the northeastern US. But in Woodbridge, New Jersey, the state has bought and torn down 145 homes since 2013 and returned the land to nature, with eight homes demolished this month alone. Dozens more are slated to be torn down in the near future. Some neighbourhoods in this town of over 100,000 residents just off the bustling New Jersey Turnpike are projected to be demolished. Residents in coming decades as global sea levels rise. Earlier this month, Patricia Kambach, 80, went inside rather than watch a crew demolish her longtime neighbour's home. Kambach has lived in her house on Lewis Street since John F. Kennedy was president. "I lived here 36 years and it's hard," said Kambach, as she watched an enormous excavator machine tear down her house. "A lot of people are taking the buyout because they are getting good price for their house. We don't have problems with the water," she said. Soon she will move out, and her home will be demolished. Buyouts of flood-prone properties have become a reality in numerous coastal states, as well as inland, Louisiana, Texas,

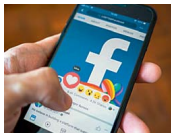
and elsewhere. "I am not going to write off the jobs of thousands of Australians by walking away from traditional industries," Morrison told the Seven Network, in one of several morning interviews rejecting calls for further action. "What we won't do is engage in reckless, job-destroying and economy-crunching targets which are being sought," he said, responding to calls for more climate-friendly policies. Morrison's conservative government has fiercely defended the lucrative coal industry in Australia, which produces a third of global coal exports and provides jobs in key swing electoral districts. Morrison's media blitz came as he sought to limit the political fallout from a much-criticised Hawaiian holiday — taken as bushfires destroyed an area the size of Belgium and unleashed toxic smoke into Australian cities. Conditions eased markedly on Monday, but authorities said almost 200 homes have been damaged by fires in South Australia and New South Wales. Bushfires are endemic in Australia, but scientists say several weather phenomena have come together to intensify this spring's summer bushfire season against the worst on record. —AFP

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Researchers say they found evidence that APT20 has been bypassing two-factor authentication (2FA) in recent attacks

SHORT TAKES



FB WON'T USE PHONE NOS TO SUGGEST FRIENDS

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 23

Following privacy concerns, Facebook is set to stop using your phone number for recommending friends in 2020.

According to a BBC report, users will soon have "a code sent to their mobile phones when logging in to make access harder for hackers".

The change is part of Facebook's \$5 billion settlement with the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and will come into effect from next year. Facebook last year confirmed the use of users' phone numbers for targeting ads and stopping using members' security phone numbers for advertising in June this year.

In March, the company faced backlash over its secure login process two-factor authentication (2FA) where it allowed users to add phone numbers, which can be searched by advertisers. In a statement, Facebook said it has been receiving questions about two-factor authentication and phone number settings on its platform.

Reports emerged this month that Facebook has joined hands with top retailers who are sending the social networking giant data on what the customers are buying in retail stores. Facebook, in turn, is targeting those customers with specified ads.

Not just online shopping, Facebook is able to target customers by in stores and target those customers with ads, according to a Business Insider report.

Facebook makes almost all its money by selling ads. In the third quarter (July-September) this year, Facebook's revenue was \$17.6 billion and ads contributed a whopping \$17.3 billion of the total revenue.

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Ola 'Guardian' safety feature now in 17 cities

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Ride hailing platform Ola on Monday said it will expand its AI-enabled safety feature 'Guardian' to 17 cities across India and Australia.

The 'Guardian' feature uses real-time data from rides to automatically detect irregular trip activity, including prolonged stops and unexpected route deviations.

"These alerts are flagged off in real-time to Ola's 24x7 Safety Response Team that immediately reaches out to customers and drivers to confirm if they're safe and offer on-the-call assistance until ride completion."

"After running a successful pilot across multiple cities in India and international markets, the 'Guardian' feature is going live in 16 Indian cities as well as Perth in Australia. Ola aims to take Guardian to more cities in the coming quarter," Ola said.

It added that Ola Guardian is based on artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities on the Ola platform which enables it to continuously learn and evolve from millions of data points to improve risk signalling and instant resolution.



Uninstall alleged UAE spy app now

Don't confuse with video-sharing TikTok

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 23

While the year may be drawing to a close, but yet another app finds itself in the centre of a controversy. In the centre of the latest controversy is a messaging app called ToTok, not to be confused with Chinese video-sharing social networking service TikTok.

The messaging app, in recent weeks, has seen a surge in its popularity as people are looking for alternatives to WhatsApp and other social media platform. However, The New York Times, citing US intelligence officials, said that the app was used by the UAE government to spy on its users.

The intelligence officials warned that ToTok isn't the secure platform it purports to be. Instead, it's likely a surveillance tool that can funnel data to the government of the United Arab Emirates.

Both Google and Apple have already removed the app from their respective stores, but the app, ToTok, will keep working — and potentially spying — if it's already installed on the phone.

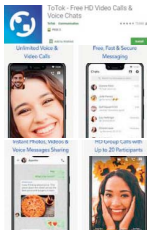
Russia carries out tests to ensure 'sovereign internet'

Moscow, Dec. 23: Russia carried out tests Monday to ensure the "security" of its internet infrastructure in case of a foreign cyber-attack, measures that 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 that the government is gearing up to isolate the Russian segment of the internet and said ordinary users would not notice the tests.

The ministry said that the drills are aimed at ensuring the "integrity" of the internet.

The law, which President Vladimir Putin signed in May, requires Russian internet providers to install equipment provided by the authorities to enable cen-



Despite the efforts to catch them during pre-screening, shady apps still slip into Google Play and Apple's App Store.

tralis control of traffic. They will also filter content to prevent access to banned websites.

At his annual news conference last week, Putin defended Russia's internet policies, promising that the country was not "moving towards closing off the internet." "A free internet and a sovereign internet are two concepts that aren't mutually exclusive," he said.

The internet is the country's main forum for political debate and opposing voices as well as coordinating opposition demonstrations.

The new system is set to go online in 2021.

Internet providers need to ensure before that time that their networks have the technical means for "centralised traffic control" to counter potential threats.

The main providers have already begun installing the required equipment

including Deep Packet Inspection (DPI) which would allow Russia's Roskomnadzor internet watchdog to analyse and filter traffic.

Supporters of the legislation say the aim is to ensure Russian sites keep working if they are unable to connect to international servers or in the case of a threat from abroad such as cyberattacks.

But rights activists say it is another censorship bid following previous efforts in Russia to block services such as the LinkedIn professional networking site and the Telegram messenger service.

While Beijing has created what has become known as the Great Firewall of China to filter content and limit access to foreign websites, activists and analysts are divided if Russia has the resources to implement such a system. —AFP

App Store. While invasive marketing practices and criminal data collection are bad enough, apps that function as an espionage tool of governments are an even greater concern.

"Uninstall it yesterday," says Patrick Wardle, a security researcher at Janf specialized in Apple operating systems who formerly worked at the National Security Agency. On Sunday, he released a technical analysis of the messaging app.

First released on July 27, ToTok spiked in popularity in the UAE in August and then spread to other Middle Eastern countries and the rest of the world from there. The app had access to positive reviews, particularly from users in the UAE who were excited about its lack of restrictions. It was also ranked as a most popular app on Google Play and the App Store.

The app had at least 600,000 downloads across Android and iOS in November and was trending in the US in the last couple of weeks.

PREDICTIONS FOR SOCIAL NETWORKS IN 2020

When the decade began, tech meant promise. But somewhere along the way, the flaws of technology became quite apparent. The decade also marked social platforms continue to struggle with disinformation and its consequences. Here are a few predictions for social networks in 2020 and the decade ahead

Metrics keep going invisible

Following Instagram's lead, more social media platform will look ditch like count as it reportedly led to young people posting more.

Return of Human curators

In 2020, algorithms will once fade into the background as human editors return to the big aggregators. They're already working on Facebook's new news tab, on Apple News, and on editorial teams at Twitter and Snap. Even Google says it is beginning to take into account the quality of original reporting in its suggested news stories.

Newsletters

If you were flooded with spammy Newsletters now, then expect a deluge in the coming years. However, not all will be bad as new communities are likely to grow up around them in interesting new ways, led by companies like Substack.

Spilnternet

With the tech war in full flow, the split may finally happen. There's an American internet, a European internet, and a Sino-Russian-authoritarian internet, and they all appear to be rapidly pulling apart. Jason Barrett Prado predicts that this trend accelerates in 2020, limiting the potential size of any one social network.



Deepfake

Deepfake will become a menace. Worryingly, a deepfake app will go mainstream not only in the US but worldwide. Ben Cunningham (aka Facebook) predicts some machine-learning-based video editing app will take off in 2020, with its features eventually coming to the Instagram camera. Feels like a solid bet.

Immediately update your app on Android: Twitter

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 23



In 2019, social media platforms become everyone's favourite punching bag. Now, even as 2020 is being confirmed, the door Twitter can't seem to get ahead of controversies. Last week, Twitter, in a blogpost, confirmed to users about a new vulnerability in its Android app that allowed hackers to see the users' "nonpublic account information" and commander your account to send tweets and direct messages.

According to the post, the (recently patched) security issue could allow hackers to gain control of the app's millions of users' an account and access data like location infor-

mation and protected tweets "through a complicated process involving the insertion of malicious code into restricted storage areas of the Twitter app," potentially putting the app's millions of users' an account and access data like location infor-

support later elaborated that the issue was fixed for Android version 7.9.4 (released in November for KitKat) as well as version 8.18 (released in October for Lollipop and newer).

So if you use Twitter's Android app, you need to update to the latest version. Like, now.

However, Twitter's iOS app, you apparently wasn't affected in all this.

The blog post went on to say that there's currently no evidence to suggest any bad actors have exploited this bug, but "we can't be completely sure" so Twitter's taking a proactive response.

It's currently emailing users who are most at risk for this exploitation and providing instructions on how to update the app.

A tweet from Twitter

CHINA: SUGGEST POSITIVE CONTENT ONLY

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, DEC. 23

With the decade coming to an end, most cyber security experts predict that the upcoming decade will witness the end of the once centralised Internet. The Internet will be fractured into parts. Both China and Russia are leading example of such a scenario.

Now, according to media reports, China is once again tightening its grip on internet content, and this time the focus is on algorithms.

The Cyberspace Administration of China has published upcoming rules that dictate how internet companies manage content, including a push for recommendation algorithms that promote "positive" ideas while excluding "bad" material.

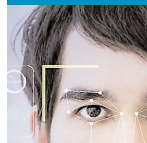
The measure explicitly forbids content that "endangers national security," leaks state secrets, subverts state power (and) undermines national unity."

In other words, internet companies can't challenge the political status quo.

The new rules are due to take effect on March 1st, and also call for tighter management of accounts, sign-ups, moderation and "rumors."

Governments have lately stepped up algorithms, although China's approach is very different than that from other countries.

FACIAL RECOGNITION YET AGAIN FAILS ON RACE



■ A US government study suggests facial recognition algorithms are far less accurate at identifying African-American and Asian faces compared to Caucasian faces.

■ African-American females were even more likely to be misidentified, it indicated.

■ It throws fresh doubt on whether such technology should be used by law enforcement agencies.

■ The National Institute of Standards and Technology (Nist) tested 189 algorithms from 99 developers, including Intel, Microsoft, Toshiba, and Chinese firms Tencent and DiDi Chuxing.

■ Amazon - which sells its facial recognition product Rekognition to US police forces - did not submit one for review.

■ The retail giant had previously called a study from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology "misleading".

■ That report had suggested Rekognition performed badly when it came to recognising women with darker skin.

■ When matching a particular photo to another one of the same face - known as one-to-one matching - many of the algorithms tested falsely identified African-American and Asian faces between ten to 100 times more than Caucasian ones, according to the report.

LEGO may help develop quantum computers

London, Dec. 23: In a first, scientists have cooled LEGO to the lowest temperature possible in an experiment which reveals a new use for the popular toy, and may be useful in the development of quantum computing.

LEGO is a line of construction toys consisting of colourful interlocking plastic bricks accompanying an array of gears, figurines and various other parts.

The pieces can be assembled and connected in many ways to construct objects, including vehicles, buildings, and working robots.

The researchers from the Lancaster University in the UK decided to place a LEGO figure and four LEGO bricks inside their

■ Scientists have already built basic quantum computers that can perform certain calculations; but a practical quantum computer is still years away.

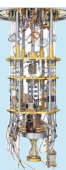
■ Most digital computers are based on the Turing Theory.

■ While computers have been around for the majority of the 20th century, quantum computing was first theorized less than 30 years ago, by a physicist at the Argonne National Laboratory.

■ Well, in a quantum Turing machine, the difference is that the tape exists in a quantum state, as does the read-write head. This means that the symbols on the tape can be either 0 or 1 or a superposition of 0 and 1; in other words the symbols are both 0 and 1 at the same time. While a normal machine can only perform one calculation at a time, a quantum machine can perform many calculations at once.

■ Paul Benioff is credited with first applying quantum theory to computers in 1981. Benioff theorized about creating a quantum Turing machine.

■ Our results are significant because we found that the clamping is not between the LEGO blocks causes the LEGO structures to behave as an extremely good thermal



insulator at cryogenic temperatures," Zmееv said.

Researchers said the design used 3D printed a new thermal insulator for the next generation of dilution refrigerators.

The use of plastic structures, such as LEGO, instead of the solid materials currently in use, means that any future thermal insulator could be produced at a significantly reduced cost.

Researchers said the next step is to design and 3D print a new thermal insulator for the next generation of dilution refrigerators. —PTI

quick BITES

INDICATORS	
Sensex	41642.66 +38.88
Nifty 50	12262.75 +0.05
S&P 500	3,225.67 +4.45
Dollar (₹)	71.23
Pound Sterling (₹)	92.15
Euro (₹)	79.02
Gold (10gm) (₹)	38,894.109
Brent crude (\$/bbl)	\$66.37 -1.32
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.598 -0.148
US 10-Yr T-Bill yield	+1.919 0.09

* As of Saturday

Niranjan takes over as Assocham prez

Hiranandani Group MD Niranjan Hiranandani has taken over as Assocham president. He succeeds Balkrishna Goenka. "New India is a centre of the vortex to achieve an ambitious mission of \$5 trillion economy. We are fully aligned with the goal set to achieve in tandem with double digit GDP growth rate inclusive of employment generation," Hiranandani said.

Sangita Reddy is new FICCI president

Sangita Reddy, joint MD, Apollo Hospitals has taken over as the President of Ficci for 2019-20. She succeeds Sandip Somany, vice CMD, HSIL. The new Disney Company APAC President and Star & Disney India chairman Uday Shankar has been elevated as Senior VP of Ficci, and Sanjiv Mehta, CMD, HSIL has joined FICCI leadership as VP, the chamber said in a statement.

Suzuki to roll out BS-VI Access in Jan.

Suzuki Motorcycle India on Monday announced it will roll out the BS-VI-compliant models of its vehicles from next month, with all-new Suzuki Access 125 scooter set to be the first offering to be launched under the new emission norms. The domestic automobile industry has to switch cover to BS-VI emission regulations from April next year.

Boeing ousts Muilenburg, names new CEO

Boeing on Monday replaced its embattled chief executive, Dennis Muilenburg, saying a change was necessary as it attempts to restore its reputation amid the protracted 737 MAX crisis. Boeing named board Chairman Brian West as chief executive and president, saying the company needed to "restore confidence" and "repair relationships with regulators, customers and all other stakeholders."

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Netflix lashes subscription price, others likely to follow

High Net costs spark price war among OTT players

Mumbai, Dec. 23: Netflix Inc. and its rivals are facing a price war in India as a jump in the cost of watching video on mobile phones threatens to slow demand in what is shaping up as a key growth market globally for streaming.

The country's three mobile phone companies hiked data tariffs by as much as 41 per cent earlier this month, leaving some customers in India, where most streaming is done on phones, with less to spend on entertainment services like Netflix, Apple Inc.'s TV+ service, which debuted there last month — and those of local competitors. Cheap broadband, a well-established film culture and a vast English-speaking population have helped India become a lucrative streaming battleground, with Netflix targeting 100 million subscribers in the country, almost 25 times the customer base as of this year. But an increase in data costs, coupled with a wider slowdown in the economy could make customers more sensitive to

how much they pay for content. Just as players like Apple and Amazon.com Inc.'s Prime TV+ service, which debuted there last month — and those of local competitors. Cheap broadband, a well-established film culture and a vast English-speaking population have helped India become a lucrative streaming battleground, with Netflix targeting 100 million subscribers in the country, almost 25 times the customer base as of this year. But an increase in data costs, coupled with a wider slowdown in the economy could make customers more sensitive to

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Amazon is already subsidizing its Prime offering through a package deal. "The price pressures add to what is already a cut-throat streaming market, with some 30 operators hawking online video services in the country. Yiu, a smaller streaming player run by Hong Kong-based PCCW Ltd, recently decided to exit the market because it lacks the cash to challenge bigger rivals. Mubi, a UK-based curated streaming service, became the latest to take a crack at the market.

While the effect of higher mobile phone tariffs may ripple across the industry, services that draw higher-income Indians who can easily afford the latest smartphones are somewhat insulated, said Mihir Shah, India vice president at Media Partners Asia in Mumbai. Free services like TikTok and social media video sites will take a more direct hit as it becomes more expensive to watch on wireless devices. He said. In aggregate, streaming services will continue to grow, even as costs rise, he said. — Bloomberg

Sebi slaps ₹5 lakh fine on Karyv for non-disclosure

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Capital markets regulator Sebi on Monday imposed ₹5 lakh fine on Karyv Financial Services Ltd for making requisite disclosures after delay of nearly seven years.

Sebi found that three promoters of Regalia Realty in order to obtain project loan for the company, created encumbrance on the shares held by them by way of a pledge in favour of Karyv Financial Services to secure repayment of the loan.

"By virtue of the pledge being invoked, Notice shareholding in Regalia Realty increased from 0 per cent to 55.56 per cent and the said disclosure under Regulation 29(1) of SAST Regulation and Regulation 13(1) of PIT Regulation was made on December 26, 2018 to company and stock exchange i.e. after a delay of 6 years and 11 months," Sebi said. The capital market regulator thus imposed the monetary penalty on Karyv Financial Services and subsequently shares of the firm amounting to 55.56 per cent of its total share capital were transferred in its favour.

60,355 India priority patents published

A total of 60,355 India priority patents were published in the country between 2016 and 2018, up from 54,461 publications in 2015-17, according to Clarivate Analytics India Innovation report. The share of India priority publications within the overall patents published in India has grown from 25 per cent in 2016 to 34 per cent in 2018, indicating a steady growth in inventive idea of local origin and the importance of India as a market to protect IP, it said.

Besides, through two separate orders, Sebi levied a fine of ₹2 lakh each on Divine Trust Pvt Ltd and Sonia Finvest Pvt Ltd for failing to pay the ₹1 billion for respect to reduction in their shareholding in Secure Earth Technologies Ltd. — PFI

P2P platform loans capped at ₹50 lakh

Mumbai, Dec. 23: To protect consumers interest, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday said that on a peer-to-peer lending (P2P) platform the permissible exposure of a lender to a borrower should not exceed ₹50 lakh at any given point of time.

"On a review, it has been decided that the aggregate exposure of a lender to all borrowers at any point of time across all P2P platforms, shall be subject to a cap of ₹50,00,000 provided that such investments of the lenders on P2P platforms are consistent with their net-worth," the RBI said in a notification. The lender investing more than ₹10 lakh across P2P platforms will procure a certificate to P2P platforms from a practising Chartered Accountant certifying minimum net worth of ₹50 lakh.

On fund transfer mechanism, it said: Escrow accounts to be operated by bank promoted trustee for transfer of funds need not be mandatorily maintained with the bank which has promoted the trustee.

As per the guidelines, the transfer of funds under P2P lending happens through an escrow account mechanism, which is operated by a bank promoted trustee. It requires at least two escrow accounts, one for funds received from lenders and pending disbursements and the other for collections from borrowers, be maintained. It also mandates that all the transactions through bank accounts, and cash transaction are strictly prohibited. — PFI

Modi holds 1st meet of panel on growth

New Delhi, Dec. 23: The Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth held its first meeting on Monday as the government looked at boosting spending to bring back a sputtering economy from a quarter to a half.

Sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the first meeting, which was set up in June after the BJP won a second term in office. No details were immediately known. The panel has four other members — Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman and Piyush Goyal. The meeting came against the backdrop of GDP growth slowing to a six-year low of 4.5 per cent in the July-September quarter as the twin engines of investment and exports sputtered.

Adding to the woes is a slowdown in consumption. This was the sixth consecutive quarter when the growth rate fell. Alongside CCIG, a Cabinet Committee on Skill Development and Employment headed by Modi was also constituted in June. It has 10 members also include agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar, petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan, skill development minister Mahendra Nath Pandey, labour minister S.K. Gangwar, housing and urban development minister Hardeep Singh Puri and HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal.

RoC moves NCLAT to drop 'illegal' in order

ASHWIN J. PUNNEN MUMBAI, DEC. 23

The Registrar of Companies (RoC) Monday moved the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) requesting it to cancel the order and remove the word "illegal" with respect to the conversion of Tata Sons from a public company to private company.

It also stated that its decision on conversion following Cyrus Mistry's exit was not done in a hurry and was done after proper scrutiny and due diligence. The appellate tribunal has said the action taken by the RoC to allow the firm to become a private company was against the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and "prejudicial and oppressive" to the minority member (Mistry group).

The petition filed by RoC was mentioned on Monday before NCLAT, which has directed to list the matter on January 2, 2020, for hearing. In its petition, the RoC had asked "to carry out the requisite amendment in paragraphs of the judgement dated December 18, 2019 to correctly reflect the conduct of RoC Mumbai as not being illegal and being as per the provisions of the Companies Act along with the rules."

The RoC also said it has acted in a "bonafide manner" in converting the status of Tata Sons as "there is no major threat to the public interest in the operation of the judgement dated July 9, 2018 of Mumbai NCLT at the time when this intimation was filed by Tata Sons Ltd."

Passing an order on December 18, NCLAT had directed for the reinstatement of ousted Cyrus Mistry as Chairman of Tata Sons. In that order, the appellate tribunal has also quashed the conversion of Tata Sons — the principal holding company and promoter of Tata firms — into a private company from a public firm and had termed it as "illegal."

The Company (Tata Sons) shall be recorded as "Public Company". The RoC will make corrections in its record showing the company as "Public Company," said National Company Law Appellate Tribunal. After Mistry was sacked, Tata Sons had received its shareholders' approval to convert itself into a private limited company from a public limited company, which could be passed with the board's approval. Tata Sons Ltd was initially a 'Private Company' under the Companies Act, 1956 on the basis of average annual turnover of less than ₹20 crore. NCLAT had held the character of a deemed 'Public Company' with effect from February 1, 1975, the order said.

holding company and promoter of Tata firms — into a private company from a public firm and had termed it as "illegal."

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Emaar to sell view from world's tallest tower for \$1b

Dubai, Dec. 23: Emaar Properties is selling the observation decks of the world's tallest skyscraper the Burj Khalifa, four sources told Reuters, potentially raising \$1 billion for Dubai's biggest developer amid a real estate downturn.

Two of the sources said Emaar had appointed Standard Chartered to advise it on the sale of the popular "At The Top" tourist attraction. Emaar, which the Dubai government has a minority stake of 29.2 per cent, and Standard Chartered declined to comment. At over 828 metres, the Burj Khalifa is twice as tall as New York's Empire State Building and nearly three times the height of the Eiffel Tower. At The Top is a popular tourist destination in Dubai, which attracted 2.5 million overnight visitors in 2018. The viewing decks make about 600-700 million a year, a banking source said. A financial source estimated they could be worth around \$1 billion. The sales process began in November, both of these sources said, declining to be named as the deal is not yet finalised. Dubai is a regional hub for tourism, foreign trade and business services, but has faced a slowing real estate market for most of the decade. To top up a real estate planning commission in September to regulate projects and avoid conflicts of interest between semi-government and private firms. — Reuters

FSSAI set to ban sale of junk food near schools

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Food regulator FSSAI is likely to finalise within the next two months its proposed regulations to ban sale as well as advertisements of junk foods in school campuses and within 50 metres of school campuses. The regulations, Mr Agarwal said on Monday. The Food and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) had in November issued draft 'Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and healthy diets for School Children)

Regulations, 2019'. It had sought comments from stakeholders in 30 days. "We have received comments from various stakeholders and we are now compiling these suggestions. A technical committee will look into these suggestions," Mr Agarwal said. He said it would take around 1-2 months to finalise the regulations and then the same would be sent to the health ministry for the final approval. — PFI

Smaller cities become bigger targets of cyber criminals

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 23

The faster penetration of the Internet amidst low awareness about cybersecurity has turned netizens of smaller cities soft targets for cyber criminals. Ransomware attacks, cloud computing breaches and detection of machine learning systems could be some of the main cyber security threats expected in 2020.

Guwahati, Lucknow, Bhubaneswar and Jaipur witnessed a massive 45 per cent, 44 per cent, 43 per cent and 40 per cent of

cyber criminals who are becoming more and more sophisticated. It is not only IT companies and enterprises in these areas but also to consumers who are becoming heavy cyber users because of low Internet data cost, and easy and affordable availability of devices which can be exploited," said J Kesavardhanan, founder and CTO of K7 Computing.

The infection rate in Hyderabad was 41 per cent up from 38 per cent recorded in the previous quarter. Bengaluru and Pune experienced 39 per cent and 35

per cent of cyber attacks, similar to the previous quarter. Despite a 20 per cent decrease in infection rate from the previous quarter, Chennai remained most vulnerable at 46 per cent. Kolkata recorded 41 per cent, Ahmedabad 37 per cent and Mumbai 30 per cent.

Exploitation of loop

holes continued to be a major threat that impacted both Windows and iOS systems. Weaknesses and vulnerabilities were found in the iMessage service that exists in iPhone and Siri components. Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) based attacks remained the dominant type of cyber threats. While USB storage device based threats remain the top malware risk for Windows users, the most vulnerable at 46 per cent. Kolkata recorded 41 per cent, Ahmedabad 37 per cent and Mumbai 30 per cent.

According to Sophos, in

2020, ransomware will raise the stakes by changing or adding traits to conventional anti-ransomware protection. Further, small missteps in the cloud will end up exposing large businesses. The greatest vulnerability for cloud computing is simple misconfiguration. As cloud systems become more complex and more flexible, operator error continues to increase risk. Over the next year, we expect to see more incidents where cybercriminals attempt to trick machine learning detection and classification

models, and even leverage machine learning to generate highly convincing fake content for social engineering attacks. Finds Joe Levy, CTO, Sophos. SoC will be the most fundamental game-changing technology to impact the cybersecurity landscape — maybe ever. 5G promises fast content for social aspects of life through the network with game-changing speed and lower latency, but it will also introduce significant security risks with new potential entry points that will expose organisations to new types of attacks.





Retirement

Seasoned South Africa pacer Vernon Philander will retire from international cricket following the upcoming Test series against England

Bumrah's back, Shami rested

Dhawan returns to limited-overs squad as selectors rest Rohit

New Delhi, Dec. 23: A fit-again Jasprit Bumrah will headline India's pace attack in the limited-overs series against Sri Lanka (T20) and Australia (ODIs) in January next year while vice-captain Rohit Sharma was on Monday rested from the series versus the islanders. Bumrah was out with a stress fracture but has now got the go-ahead of Indian team physio Nitin Patel to play Gujarat's next Ranji Trophy game in Surat. Senior opener Shikhar Dhawan is also back in both the squads, while pacer Mohammed Shami got a break from the T20 series.

"Jasprit Bumrah is back in both the teams for Sri Lanka and Australia and we have rested Rohit Sharma and Mohammed Shami for the Sri Lanka T20s. Shikhar Dhawan is also back and Sanju Samson will be the back-up opener in T20s," chairman of selectors MSK Prasad told reporters at an informal gathering after squad selection here.

India will take on Sri Lanka in three T20 Internationals from January 5, followed by three ODIs against Australia from January 14. However, it was bad news for the fast bowler Deepak Chahar, who has aggravated his back injury and will be out till the start of next year's IPL, is injury means that Navdeep Saini will continue to be in the squad.

"Against Australia, we have all three openers available - Shikhar, Rohit and KL.



Shaw named in India 'A' squad for NZ tour

New Delhi, Dec. 23: The in-form Pritivi Shaw on Monday took another step towards an India comeback after being named in the 'A' squad for the tour of New Zealand. Shaw has been in sublime touch since returning from an eight-month doping ban last month. The youngster made a spectacular double hundred in Mumbai's Ranji Trophy-opener against Baroda.

Though India have a settled opening pair in Rohit Sharma and Mayank Agarwal, 20-year-old Shaw could make the Test squad for the New Zealand series as a reserve opener. After picking the India A squad for the tour of New Zealand, selection committee chairman MSK Prasad made it clear that they want Shaw to get as much "game time as possible".

Shaw had made a memorable debut last year, scoring a hundred against the West Indies in Rajkot. Test specialists like R. Ashwin, Ajinkya Rahane, Umesh Yadav and Ishant Sharma will get much needed match time in New Zealand ahead of the two-Test series.

3 Ravindra Jadeja's improvement with the bat is very important for Team India. — Sourav Ganguly, BCCI president

SHORT TAKES

Ishant, Shikhar to play Ranji

New Delhi: Senior pacer Ishant Sharma and veteran opener Shikhar Dhawan will turn up for the beleaguered Delhi side in their next Ranji Trophy encounter against Hyderabad starting December 25. Ishant was given rest for a couple of Ranji Trophy games as a part of BCCI's workload management programme and he will now try to get back into the groove before the New Zealand Test tour. As far as Dhawan is concerned, he had a deep gash on his knee while playing in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and had to get 25 stitches. The left-hander has now been declared fit by the National Cricket Academy (NCA) and will get some game-time before the international games. "Ishant and Shikhar will be playing for Delhi. My colleague Sarandeep Singh will be watching that match," said Prasad, who is flying to Surat on Tuesday to watch Jasprit Bumrah's comeback to competitive cricket. Bumrah, who was out of action due to stress fractures, will feature in Gujarat's game against Kerala. — PTI

PCB takes a dig at India security

Karachi: Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman Ehsan Mani has called India a "far greater security risk" than his strife-torn country, where Test cricket returned for the first time after the 2009 terror attack in Lahore. Mani made the remarks after his team celebrated Test cricket's return to Pakistan with a 263-run mauling of Sri Lanka. No major team has toured Pakistan since the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan team bus near Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore in 2009, which left eight dead and six visiting cricketers injured. "We have proved that Pakistan is safe, if someone isn't coming then they should prove that it's unsafe. At this time, India is a far greater security risk than Pakistan," Mani was quoted as saying. The former ICC chairman called the ongoing Sri Lanka a turning point. "No one should now doubt security arrangements in Pakistan after successful Sri Lanka Test series." — PTI

Against Australia, we have all three openers available - Shikhar, Rohit and KL Rahul.

— MSK PRASAD, BCCI chief selector



Kohli declares 2019 'great year' for India

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Virat Kohli declared it a "great year" for India cricket after ending 2019 on a high with a series-clinching win over the West Indies. Kohli declared it a "great year" for India cricket after ending 2019 on a high with a series-clinching win over the West Indies. Kohli declared it a "great year" for India cricket after ending 2019 on a high with a series-clinching win over the West Indies.

India captain's masterful 85 set up a successful 316-run chase on Sunday to end the series with a 2-1 series triumph. Kohli said after his team's win in Cuttack. "We've kept chasing the ICC trophy. We've kept chasing the ICC trophy. We've kept chasing the ICC trophy." — AFP

MSD completes 15 years in international cricket

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Two-time World Cup winning former India captain MS Dhoni on Monday completed 15 years in international cricket, a milestone that has come at a time when he is on a sabbatical from the game. The dasher in Ranchi, who made his debut against Bangladesh under Sourav Ganguly's captaincy in 2004, has been one of country's most impactful cricketers with 1796 runs across all formats for India.

However, the past few months have been marred by speculations of his retirement. His last Test match in India colours was during the lost World Cup semifinal against New Zealand in July where he was run out following a half century.

Karachi, Dec. 23: Pakistan celebrated the return of Test cricket for the first time in over 10 years with a convincing 263-run win over Sri Lanka in the second Test in Karachi on Monday, taking the series 1-0. It was just a 14-minute and 16-ball formality for Pakistan set a daunting 476-run target for the tourists on Sunday after they were starting at defeat on 212/7 at close of play. Befittingly it was Naseem Shah who at the return of 307 days became the second youngest bowler to take five wickets in a Test innings.



MSD completes 15 years in international cricket

INDIA SQUADS

T20 SQUAD: Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Anshu Pandey, Sanju Samson, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Shivam Dube, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Navdeep Saini, Jasprit Bumrah, Washington Sundar

ODI SQUAD: Virat Kohli (Captain), Rohit Sharma (vice-captain), Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Kedar Jadhav, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Shami.

India 'A' squad for two tour matches and three one-day games: Pritivi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill (Captain), Suryakumar Yadav, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Axar Patel, Rahul Chahar, Sandeep Warrier, Ishan Porel, Khaleel Ahmed, Mohd. Siraj

India 'A' squad for first four-day game: Pritivi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Pritivraj Panchal, Abhimanyu Gaswami, Shubman Gill, Hanuma Vihari (Captain), KS Bharat (wicket-keeper), Shivam Dube, Shahbaz Nadeem, Rahul Chahar, Sandeep Warrier, Avesh Khan, Mohd. Siraj, Ishan Porel, Ishan Kishan

India 'A' squad for second four-day game: Pritivi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Wriddhiman Saha (wicket-keeper), Hanuma Vihari (Captain), KS Bharat (wicket-keeper), Shivam Dube, R. Ashwin, Shahbaz Nadeem, Sandeep Warrier, Avesh Khan, Mohd. Siraj, Ishan Porel

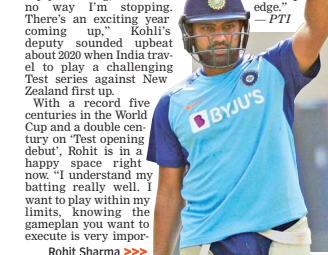
Rohit vows not to slow down in '20

Cuttack, Dec. 23: Not being able to win the ODI World Cup is Rohit Sharma's sole regret in a phenomenal 2019 during which he "understood" his batting better than ever. Sharma's white-ball vice-captain scored a record 2442 runs as an opener across formats with 10 centuries and 10 Sri Lankan legend Sanath Jayasuriya's previous feat.

This was also the year when Rohit rediscovered himself as a Test opener with a fabulous series against South Africa. "Extremely grateful for the year I have had. A World Cup victory would have been nice but as a team, throughout the year whether red ball or white ball cricket, the team came together really well," said Rohit, who won another 'Man of the Series' award for his aggregate of 258 runs in three ODIs against the West Indies.

"Personally, I have enjoyed batting, but there's no way I'm stopping. There's an exciting year coming up," Kohli's deputy sounded upbeat about 2020 when India travel to play a challenging Test series against New Zealand first up. With a record five centuries in the World Cup and a double century on "Test opening debut", Kohli is in a happy space right now. "I understand my batting really well. I want to play within my limits, knowing the gameplan you want to execute is very important."

Rohit Sharma >>>



Rohit Sharma vows not to slow down in '20

Pakistan make triumphant home return

Karachi, Dec. 23: Pakistan celebrated the return of Test cricket for the first time in over 10 years with a convincing 263-run win over Sri Lanka in the second Test in Karachi on Monday, taking the series 1-0. It was just a 14-minute and 16-ball formality for Pakistan set a daunting 476-run target for the tourists on Sunday after they were starting at defeat on 212/7 at close of play. Befittingly it was Naseem Shah who at the return of 307 days became the second youngest bowler to take five wickets in a Test innings.



Pakistan celebrate after winning the Test series against Sri Lanka.

BRIEF SCORES

Pakistan 191 & 555/3 decl. bt Sri Lanka 271 & 212 in 62.5 overs (O. Fernando 102, N. Dickwell 65, Naseem 5/31). day began in a dramatic manner when Naseem dismissed Lasit Embuldeniya off the very first ball, catching his gloves on the way to wicket-keeper Mohammad Rizwan. From the other end leg-spinner Yasir Shah had Oshada Fernando caught in the slip for his overnight score of 102. Oshada's 180-ball knock had 13 boundaries. Naseem wrapped up the match by trapping Vishwa Fernando with the fifth ball of the next over, triggering jubilation among the Pakistan players who all played their first Test series all home. — AFP



Action time

Former Manchester United and England defender Gary Neville urges players to walk off if racially abused after Antonio Rudiger incident

3 We did something magical — to beat Juve twice in two weeks is incredible.

— Simone Inzaghi, Lazio coach after winning the Italian Super Cup

SHORT TAKE

City's Aditya karting champion

Chennai: Bengaluru's Karthik Muthusamy and Hyderabad's Aditya Raja held on to their nerves to emerge on top in their respective categories in the grand finale of the JK Tyre FMSCI National Karting Championship Sodi Kart 4 Stroke at the ECR Speedway on the outskirts of Chennai. Karthik took just 4:25.61 minutes to complete 12 laps to claim the Senior Category title. Mohammed Ridhaf of Cochin finished second with a time of 4:27.534 minutes while Pratham Kumar of Lucknow finished third with a time of 4:30.051 minutes to grab the third place. Aditya Raja of Hyderabad came out on top in the Junior Category with a time of 4:31.965 minutes, while Delhi duo of Jasmehar Jubbal and Muskan Jubbal finished second and third with a timing of 4:33.074 minutes and 4:38.149 minutes respectively. Meanwhile Tapasya reshar in supreme, clocking a time of 4:40.180 minutes to win the JK Tyre 4 Stroke Ladies Class Open. Ashi Hanspal of Mumbai finished behind her with a time of 4:49.550 minutes while the third place went to Ahmedabadi Isha Sharma (4:50.060). — Agencies

Clijsters eyes March comeback

Brussels: Kim Clijsters, who retired for a second time in 2011, confirmed on Monday that she was making a comeback starting in Mexico in March. "A few more weeks of patience and I'll be ready to go," the Belgian four-time major winner said in a video posted on social media. "The absence has been long enough." Clijsters first retired in May 2007, before returning in August 2009 after giving birth to her first child. The 36-year-old originally planned to return to competition in time to play in January at the Australian Open, a Grand Slam she won in 2001. But she was held up by a knee injury. She said on Monday that the problem "wasn't fully healed yet" but in "a few more weeks" "I'll be ready to go". Clijsters indicated that she planned to return in Monterrey (March 2 to 8) and then in Indian Wells (March 11 to 22) and Charleston (April 4 to 12). Clijsters has won the Indian Wells tournament (2003 and 2005). She has 41 career titles, including three US Open (2005, 2009 and 2010) and one Australian Open. She turned professional in 1997 and reached the world No. 1 ranking the first time in 2003 and most recently in February 2011 during her first comeback. — AFP

HOT SO SPECIAL.

Lampard outwits Mourinho amid crowd racism at Spurs

London, Dec. 23: Frank Lampard outwitted Jose Mourinho as Chelsea powered to a 2-0 win at Tottenham on Sunday that featured a double from Willian, a red card for Son Heung-min and allegations of racist abuse.

Billed as a showdown between Mourinho and Lampard, an explosive London derby showed the student is more than a match for the man who served as his mentor during their time together at Chelsea. Blues boss Lampard pulled a tactical masterstroke as he cleverly changed his team's formation, leaving Tottenham manager Mourinho unable to respond as Willian opened the scoring with a blistering strike and increased Chelsea's lead with a penalty before half-time.

Tottenham's South Korean star Son was sent off for a needless kick at Antonio Rudiger in the second half as Chelsea swept to a sweet victory over their former manager.

With top four rivals Manchester United losing at Wembley earlier in the day, it will be a happy festive period for Lampard's fourth placed side, who sit six points clear of seventh placed Tottenham after ending a run of four defeats from their last five Premier League games.

There was little Christmas cheer for Tottenham, who may have to answer for the

RACISM INQUIRY CALL AFTER MATCH HALTED

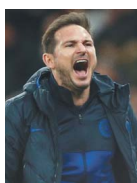
London, Dec. 23: The Professional Footballers' Association called for a government inquiry into racism in football after Chelsea's 2-0 Premier League win at Tottenham on Sunday was marred by alleged racist comments from the crowd, the latest in a string of recent incidents in European football.

Chelsea manager Frank Lampard said the problem needed to be dealt with strongly and Tottenham promised "a thorough investigation" after referee Anthony Taylor halted play during the second half when Antonio Rudiger complained of hearing monkey noises from spectators.

Moments earlier the Chelsea defender had been involved in a second-half clash with Son Heung-min that saw the

South Korean sent off. Shortly after the stoppage, an announcement made over the public address system warned that "racist behaviour among spectators is interfering with the game" and Taylor spoke to both managers, Lampard and Jose Mourinho. Two further public address announcements followed after play was resumed.

— AFP



Chelsea manager Frank Lampard celebrates their win. — AP

THE RESULT

**Tottenham 0
Chelsea 2**
(Willian 12, 45+4 pen)

early stages and took the lead in the 12th minute. With Tottenham too slow to mark up, Willian took a short corner to Matteo Kovacic and when the Brazilian received the return pass, he

adroitly side-stepped Serge Aurier before curling a superb finish into the far corner of Paulo Gazzaniga's net.

There was an extra edge about Willian's celebrations given the abuse of Alonso as he sprinted to pose in front of the Tottenham fans.

Aware of Chelsea's frailties at the back, Lampard had switched to a five-man defence and dropped Jorginho in a move that allowed N'Golo Kante to return to his preferred deep-lying midfield role.

The tactical tweak worked a treat and Tottenham's only decent chance of the entire match was wasted by Harry Kane, who fired over from Moussa Sissouko's cross.

With the supply lines to Kane shut down, Lampard's team deservedly doubled their lead in first-half stoppage-time. — AFP

'WHEN WILL THIS NONSENSE STOP?'

It's just such a shame that racism still exists in 2019. When will this nonsense stop?

I really hope that the offenders will be found and punished soon, and in such a modern football ground like the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium with dozens of TV and security cameras, it must be possible to find and subsequently punish them.

If not, then there must have been witnesses in the stadium who saw and heard the incident.

I don't want to involve Tottenham as an entire club into this situation as I know that just a couple of idiots were the offenders.

It is really sad to see racism again at a football match, but I think it's very important to talk about it in public. If not, it will be forgotten again in a matter of days (as always).

— Antonio Rudiger, Chelsea defender who complained of hearing monkey noises from spectators

SUPER CUP



Lazio players celebrate after winning the Italian Super Cup against Juventus at King Saud University Stadium in Riyadh on Sunday. — AP

Inzaghi's men beat Juventus to claim Italian Super Cup 'Magical' Lazio 5-time champs

Riyadh, Dec. 23: Lazio won the Italian Super Cup for a fifth time on Sunday, defeating Cristiano Ronaldo's Juventus 3-1 in a game played in the Saudi Arabia capital of Riyadh. "We did something magical tonight," said Lazio coach Simone Inzaghi.

Lazio, the only team to have defeated Juve in Serie A this season, were in front through Luis Alberto after 16 minutes.

Paulo Dybala levelled just before the break after a shot from Ronaldo was parried away by goalkeeper Tommaso Strakosha. Despite boasting the attacking talents of Ronaldo, Dybala and Gonzalo Higuain, it was the Roman side who looked more likely the next to score.

Bosnian international Senad Lasic restored Lazio's advantage in the 73rd minute with an impressive volley.

Daniilo Cataldi added a third in the fourth minute of stoppage time from a free kick after Juve's Uruguayan midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur had been sent off.

Lazio had already defeated Juve 3-1 at the Stadio Olimpico in Serie 'A' two weeks ago, until Sunday that was the only defeat suffered by Maurizio Sarri

in his time as coach of the Italian champions. "We did something magical — to beat Juve twice in two weeks is incredible," Inzaghi told Rai Sport.

"I think this was another deserved victory for a strong team that always believed in our ideas."

Their Serie 'A' meeting in Rome was a world away from Sunday's proceedings in the King Saud University Stadium where women supporters were allowed to attend.

Ronaldo was the main reason the fans came to into his party but he took the occasion on board with their famed black and white shirts sporting Arabic designs.

"We are sorry we lost a trophy but we still have many competitors at stake in the next five months," said Sarri.

"There is anger but crying over it does not solve the problems."

Juve are no strangers to Saudi Arabia having won the Super Cup in Jeddah in January this year, beating AC Milan 1-0.

The Turin giants had been looking to win the trophy for a ninth time.

Juventus will now turn their attentions to defending their Serie 'A' title.

They are currently level at the top of the table with Inter Milan. — AFP



Chelsea's Willian (right) celebrates with teammates after scoring against Tottenham in their EPL match in London on Sunday. — AFP

'BFI did not tell Nikhat to skip Nationals'

GANDHARY KAMALA | DC HYDERABAD, DEC. 23

"Boxing Federation of India (BFI) wanted me to play the League so I didn't play the Nationals and that's why I am right now the fourth-choice boxer for the trials in the 51kg. I was told by the BFI that I was in the League," Nikhat Zareen said on Tuesday in the National Capital Region.

On being asked, why from BFI told her not to compete at the Nationals? She replied, "I didn't participate in the Nationals because R.K. Sacheti sir (BFI Executive Director) told me to play in the League. He asked everybody if they wanted to play but when it came to me, he just ordered. I didn't play the Nationals and that's why I am right now the fourth-choice boxer for the trials in 51kg," she added.

"Whatever Nikhat said about BFI not giving her a chance to choose between the League and the Nationals is incorrect. We were at the meeting that hap-

pened in early November—this year — at the Indira Gandhi stadium in New Delhi. An option of competing at either the Nationals or the League was presented to Nikhat too like other boxers from Sacheti or rather the BFI. Nobody from the Federation forced her to skip the Nationals. It was purely her choice," an amused Santiago Nieva, High Performance Director of BFI, said in an exclusive interview to this newspaper from Sweden.

"In a meeting comprising Sacheti, Nikhat, myself and a couple of others, right before the men's national camp, we told Nikhat she completely her choice when it came to picking the event. In fact, Nikhat even asked for our opinion before she could decide between the Nationals and the League," Santiago recollected.

"In the end, she chose the League over the Nationals. For her to cry foul is not correct as she chose the League and the Nationals is incorrect. Maybe she said those things



as she was not able to find the right words to express her opinion at that point of time," Argentina-born Swaid added.

Nikhat said she is disappointed because the BFI had assured her the spot if she fared well against Mary Kom on December 17, 2019. Adding, "I was looking forward to the bout with Mary Kom but unfortunately it's not happening today

first, Nikhat second, Jyoti who won gold at the Nationals in third and Ritika, who set off for silver, is fourth. The seeding for the trials has been done purely on merit unlike her claims of being a fourth-choice in the 51kg. There is no favouritism," the High Performance Director asserted.

However, when this newspaper tried to reach Sacheti for his response on the controversy, he refused to comment.

Of the 18 men's boxers who made the cut for the Olympic trials in various weight categories, 11 were not a part of the Nationals. And of the 12 boxers from the Olympic weight categories, who competed in the Nationals, only seven made the cut while five were left out due to various medical concerns.

Clearing the air, Santiago said, "Jayesh Desai got knocked out by Naveen Boora in the men's 69kg final. Jayesh has to undergo certain medical treatments before he can step back into

a ring. While Rohit Tokas, who moved up from 64kg to 75kg category early this year, has injured his knee pretty badly. He has to undergo a knee surgery. Meanwhile, Arshdeep Singh, who lost to Sachin Kumar in the 81kg title bout, left the national camp with an injury. Sumit Sangwan on the other hand won gold in the 91kg category in the Nationals but decided to move down a weight category and has been named in the 81kg category. But Sumit will only be able to compete, if the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) clears him off the doping charge. Brijesh Yadav and Satish Kumar have been included in the trials cause of their performances at the World Championships and their progress in the national camp." The women's trials will be held on December 27 and 28 at the Indira Gandhi Stadium, New Delhi, while the men's trials will be organised in Bellary, on December 29 and 30.

ATALANTA TOO HOT FOR AC MILAN

Milan, Dec. 23: Slovenia international Josip Ilicic scored two terrific goals as Atalanta demolished AC Milan 5-0 in Serie 'A' on Sunday to climb up to fifth and hand the fallen Italian giants their heaviest defeat since 1998.

It was an "embarrassing" performance by the seventh-time European champions, said club manager Zvonimir Boban.

Atalanta fans even taunted Milan with shouts of 'Serie B, Serie B' confidently predicting relegation for their storied rivals this season.

Atalanta captain Papu Gomez fired the hosts ahead on 10 minutes when he gathered the ball on the left wing and drifted into the area before blasting beyond Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Marco Pissicci, on loan from Chelsea, added a second on the hour in Bergamo when he flicked in a flashing drive from Robin Gosens.

Ilicic made it 3-0 with a clinical finish after a Pissicci assist and the Slovenian attacker struck again on 72 minutes when he curled a majestic strike into the top corner from 20 yards. Luis Muriel then replaced Ilicic and scored with minutes of his introduction, pouncing on hesitation from Donnarumma to round out a resounding victory. — AFP

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