

NEWSIN brief

Indonesia bus tragedy kills 27

At least 27 people have died and more than a dozen were injured after a bus plunged into a ravine in Indonesia, officials said yesterday.

Pakistan to rejoin US military training

The United States will allow Pakistan to rejoin a military training program suspended two years ago when President Donald Trump froze security aid to the country.

8 killed in Russian strikes on Idlib

At least eight people, including five children, were killed yesterday in Russian air strikes on a school in northwest Syria sheltering some three million displaced civilians, according to a war monitor.



India's federal cabinet yesterday approved funds for a census and population survey to be conducted next year, amid fears that the database could be used to build a controversial citizens register, against which there have been widespread protests.

'The masterminds walk free'

Khashoggi verdict condemned globally but backed by US

A Saudi court verdict that exonerated the crown prince's top aides over the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi has been globally condemned as a travesty of justice, but won the backing of ally Washington.

step" in holding the perpetrators accountable. But it was lambasted by Turkey, which called it a "scandalous" outcome that had granted "impunity" to those who had dispatched the killers, in an apparently veiled reference to Prince Mohammed.



as a "rogue" operation that did not involve the crown prince. But both the CIA and UN special envoy Agnes Callamard have directly linked Prince Mohammed to the killing, a charge the kingdom vehemently denies.

Twitter, calling the verdict a "mockery." The masterminds not only walk free. They have barely been touched by the investigation and the trial. Khashoggi, a 59-year-old Saudi insider-turned-critic, was strangled and his body cut into pieces by a 15-man Saudi squad inside the consulate, according to Turkish officials.

US tracking Santa - and any 'Christmas gift' from N Korea

While the North American Aerospace Defense Command stays alert for any signs of a North Korea missile launch - what officials in Pyongyang have described as a "Christmas gift" - it is also tracking the legendary figure who delivers presents to children across the world, the command said on Monday.

NORAD in recent years has been tracking North Korean long-range missile tests. Pyongyang warned Washington earlier this month of a possible "Christmas gift." That came after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un gave the United States until the end of the year to propose new concessions in talks over his country's nuclear arsenal and reducing tensions between the two long-time adversaries.



Russia tests 'sovereign' internet amid fears of online isolation

Russia carried out tests Monday to ensure the "security" of its internet infrastructure in case of a foreign cyberattack as part of measures that rights activists worry could also tighten censorship and lead to online isolation.

Apart from testing the safety of the Russian segment of the internet in case of an attack, authorities also tried to ensure the safety of mobile users and whether it was possible to intercept traffic and text messages, Sokolov said.



Zografyon Greek High School principal Yani Demircioglu, accompanied by school children and members of Greek Orthodox community, plays an accordion during a Christmas celebration at the main shopping and pedestrian street of Istiklal in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday.

Taliban kill 15 in attack on Afghan security checkpoint

Taliban militants ambushed a government checkpoint in Balkh province in Afghanistan's north, killing at least 15 members of the security forces, local officials said yesterday, the latest in an escalating series of insurgent attacks.

Nepal detains 122 Chinese for cyber crime, bank fraud

Police in Nepal have detained 122 Chinese men and women in its biggest crackdown on crime by foreigners entering the country on tourist visas, officials said yesterday.

WhatsApp wars divide families

With their parents bombarding them on WhatsApp with misinformation and even abuse over their stand on India's new citizenship law, young women are hiding their identities on social media to voice outrage and find alternative families.



and videos - it's really frustrating," says Priya. She used to hit back with links to fact-checking websites before his threats to end her education forced her to hide her political views from her parents.

Her father, she says, has no idea about her Twitter account, where she uses a handle that shields her identity. These WhatsApp wars have effectively upended personal relationships, says Anshul Tewari, editor-in-chief of Youth Ki Awaaz, a crowdsourced news website focussing on India's youth.

INDIA'S CITIZENSHIP LAW

100,000 Sri Lankan refugees not eligible

Nearly 100,000 Sri Lankan refugees living in India are not eligible for citizenship under a new law, sparking concerns they may be forced to return to the island nation they fled during a decades-long civil war, many with no homes to return to.

Queen admits 'bumpy' year in Christmas message

Queen Elizabeth II called 2019 "quite bumpy" in a Christmas message at the end of a chaotic year which saw Britain bitterly divided over its split from the European Union and her scandal-plagued son Prince Andrew withdraw from public life.