

ELSEWHERE



**Musharraf challenges verdict in treason case**

ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan's former military dictator General Pervaz Musharraf (retd.) has filed a petition against the special court's verdict convicting him of high treason and sentencing him to death, according to media reports. The petition highlighted that the "judgment contained a mix of anomalies and contradictory statements". PTI

**Indonesian Muslims rally for China's Uighurs**

JAKARTA  
More than a thousand Muslims marched to the heavily guarded Chinese Embassy in Indonesia's capital on Friday to protest China's treatment of its Uighur Muslims. The protesters, many wearing blue headbands reading "Save Uighurs," unfurled Indonesian and Uighur flags as they marched to the Embassy in downtown Jakarta. AP

**S. Korean court dismisses 'comfort women' plea**

SEOUL  
South Korea's Constitutional Court on Friday rejected a petition seeking the repeal of a 2015 deal with Japan, settling a bitter dispute over "comfort women" — Korean women enslaved for sex by the Japanese military during the Second World War.

**Brazil police probe attack on actors of film on Jesus**

RIO DE JANEIRO  
The Rio de Janeiro police said on Thursday they are investigating a video by a far-right group that claimed to have carried out an attack on a group of actors who had depicted Jesus as gay. The attack took place on Tuesday at the studio of the actors, whose film *Christ's First Temptation* began streaming on Netflix on December 3. AFP

## + ‘Climate change caused 15 disasters this year’

Calamities cost \$1 bn each, says a charity

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PARIS  
At least 15 natural disasters linked to climate change this year caused damage of over \$1 billion each and seven of them cost at least \$10 billion, British charity Christian Aid said on Friday.

This year is set to be the second hottest year in history and each of the disasters in the report has a link with climate change, Christian Aid said. "From Southern Africa to North America and from Australia and Asia to Europe, floods, storms and fires brought chaos and destruction," it said.

Assembling its report from official figures, estimates by NGOs and aid bo-

# 12 killed in Kazakhstan plane crash

Nearly 100 people were on board the aircraft that came down soon after take-off and slammed into a house

REUTERS  
ALMATY  
Twelve people were killed and dozens injured when a plane with nearly 100 passengers and crew on board crashed soon after take-off in Kazakhstan on Friday.

The Bek Air Fokker 100 got into trouble shortly after departing from Almaty, the Central Asian country's commercial centre, on a pre-dawn flight to the capital Nur-Sultan.

It lost altitude during take-off and broke through a concrete fence before hitting a two-storey building, Kazakhstan's Civil Aviation Committee said. It was not immediately clear what caused the crash.

"The plane tilted to the left, then to the right, then it started shaking while still trying to gain altitude," said businessman Aslan Nazaraliyev, who survived the crash. Investigators found scratch marks on the runway.

"Before crashing, the aircraft touched the runway with its tail twice, the gear was retracted," Deputy Prime Minister Roman



**Gone in seconds:** Police and rescuers working on the site of the plane crash near Almaty International Airport in Kazakhstan on Friday. •AP

Skykar told reporters. "A commission ... will establish whether this was pilot error or technical issues. The runway was in an ideal condition."

A survivor told a news website that she heard a "terrifying sound" before the plane started losing altitude. "The plane was flying at a tilt. Everything was like in a movie: screaming, shouting, people crying," she said.

Authorities initially put the death toll at 15 or more but later revised the figure to 12. They said 49 people were in hospitals, some of them in a serious condition.

### ‘Breach of rules’

The plane had been carrying 93 passengers and five crew, and the Interior Ministry said the captain was among those killed.

The Ministry said it was in-

vestigating a possible breach of flight operation and safety rules, a standard legal procedure. Kazakhstan's aviation committee said it was suspending all flights by carrier Bek Air and those of Fokker 100 aircraft pending the results of the investigation.

Mr. Nazaraliyev said he had been seated next to an emergency exit in row 15 and all the rows in front of him were torn off when the plane

broke in half on impact.

"We got out through the emergency exit ... I and other men started getting people out and away from the plane. Some were trapped by concrete debris from the building. There were moans and screams and it was dark," he said.

At the airport at Nur-Sultan, relatives of the passengers — some of whom were going to join their families for the holidays — were being briefed on their fate and offered flights to Almaty.

"Those responsible will face tough punishment in accordance with the law," Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev tweeted, expressing condolences to the victims and their families. He also ordered an audit of all Kazakh airlines.

Mr. Tokayev declared December 28 a national day of mourning and appointed Prime Minister Askar Mamin to head a commission to investigate the crash.

The crashed plane was built in 1996, the government said, and its most recent flight certificate was issued in May 2019.

## Israel's Netanyahu sweeps party poll

Vows to win March general election

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JERUSALEM  
Embattled Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told supporters on Friday he would win a March general election after scoring a landslide victory in the leadership primary of his right-wing Likud party.

Israel's longest-serving premier, who faces a corruption indictment as well as a third general election in 12 months, was expected to beat rival Gideon Saar in the leadership primary.

But the convincing margin of victory — by 72.5% to 27.5% — strengthens his position in the party he has dominated for 20 years. Around 57,000 Likud members voted on Thursday — a little less than 50% of those eligible.



Benjamin Netanyahu

"Now is the time to unite and bring a tremendous victory for the Likud and the right in the election," Mr. Netanyahu told a press conference.

"Most of the people support the right and support me to lead the government."

In what appeared to be a general election campaign speech, Mr. Netanyahu did not mention the defeated Saar once.

He thanked U.S. President Donald Trump, a close ally, for his support for Israel and said a Likud victory in the next election would bring more "historic achievements."

Likud and the centrist Blue and White party were deadlocked after elections in both April and September, with neither able to command a parliamentary majority under Israel's system of proportional representation.

Last month, Israel's Attorney General indicted the

prime minister for fraud, bribery and breach of trust over a series of corruption allegations he denies.

Blue and White leader Benny Gantz also used Friday's primary result as a rallying call for the general election.

He said Mr. Netanyahu's victory showed Likud members had "elected a leader facing three indictments, who is seeking to unravel the rule of law and secure personal immunity."

"These elections demand that we place a mirror in front of 'the Netanyahu party' and make the choice for unity, dignity and internal reconciliation."

### Third shot

Ofer Zalzburg, Israel analyst with the International Crisis Group think tank, said the result kickstarted the election campaign.

"Netanyahu is going for a third shot, hoping the next election will prove more successful," he said.

"This strengthens his position within the right wing who saw he is still able to achieve victories but it doesn't fundamentally change the arithmetic for the next election."

Early polls indicate that the March 2020 election could again result in stalemate.

# IS claims it executed 11 Christians in Nigeria

‘The killings were in reprisal for the death of former chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his spokesman’

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KANO  
Jihadists aligned to the Islamic State group have released a video claiming to show the execution of 11 Christians in restive northeast Nigeria.

The footage posted online late on Thursday by the IS-linked propaganda arm Amaq showed 11 blindfolded men being shot and stabbed by jihadists from the Islamic State West African Province

(ISWAP) at an undisclosed location. "This is a message to Christians all over the world," said a masked man in the one-minute video.

He claimed the killings were in reprisal for the death of IS chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his spokesman.

IS leader Baghdadi committed suicide in October to avoid capture during a U.S. special forces raid on his hideout in northwest Syria.

In recent months, ISWAP has intensified its attacks on Christians, security personnel and aid staff, setting up roadblocks on highways and conducting searches.

### Targeting civilians

The UN had on Tuesday condemned the "increasing practice by armed groups to set up checkpoints targeting civilians" in the northeast of Nigeria. On Sunday, the jiha-

dists killed six people and abducted five others, including two aid workers, when they intercepted vehicles on a highway on the outskirts of Maiduguri, the Borno state capital.

In a similar attack on December 5, ISWAP fighters disguised as Nigerian soldiers stopped and searched vehicles at a checkpoint near Maiduguri. The group claimed in a statement that

six soldiers and eight civilians, including two Red Cross workers, were among those abducted.

Last week, the group released a video showing 11 alleged hostages.

One of the detainees in the video who identified himself as a school teacher said all the 11 hostages were Christians and appealed to the Nigerian government to secure their release.

# Iranians laud protesters and vow to fight on

Many take their grievances against the govt. to cemeteries where the killed protesters are buried



**A grim picture:** A file photo of people walking near a burnt bank, after protests against increased fuel prices in Tehran •REUTERS

having it. Even before the end of the mourning period, the authorities began cracking down, beefing up security in cities across the country, renewing their disruption of the internet and conducting waves of pre-emptive arrests.

Then on Thursday, uniformed security forces and plainclothes militia deployed en masse across the country to keep people off the streets. They lined up on foot in riot gear at squares, and paraded through residential and commercial neighbour-

hoods in platoons of motorcycles and armoured vehicles carrying the Iranian flag and waving weapons, video shared on social media showed.

**‘Total calm’**  
"Tehran is under total calm and security," its chief of police Brig. Gen. Hossein Rahimi declared on Thursday. "Our enemies are constantly trying to instigate chaos and instability."

Accounts and videos that emerged from the country despite the information clampdown suggested, however, that Iranian protesters made their presence known, if generally in small groups, at cemeteries and in the streets of several cities,

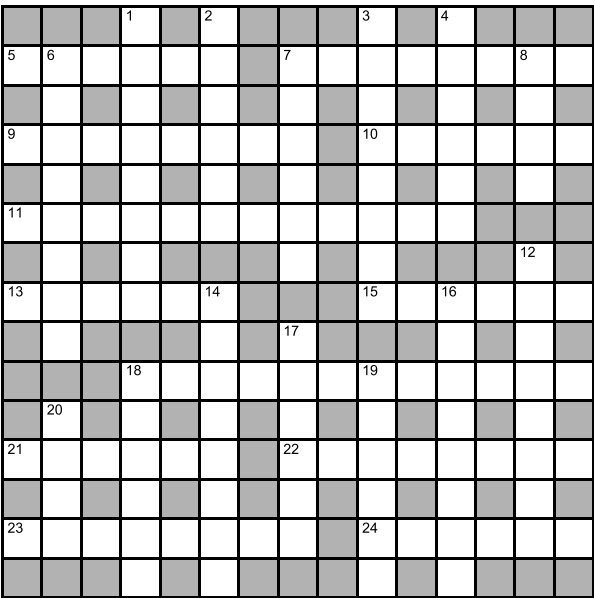
including Karaj, Isfahan, Mashhad, Behbahan, Malard, Najafabad, Yazdan Shahr and Shahriar. There were unconfirmed reports of 50 arrests. They gathered to honour the dead, and as they did so, some chanted slogans against Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, calling him a "murderer".

The protests, which began on November 15, broke out hours after the government raised gasoline prices by 200%.

Already struggling under the burden of economic sanctions imposed by the U.S., Iranians took to the streets in what became the broadest unrest seen in the country in decades. NY TIMES

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12818

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



### ■ ACROSS

- 5 Corrupt — owning houses at residential part of city (6)
- 7 Tries to join in the middle of unrestrained leaderless practice (8)
- 9 Complete stop by noted criminal (3-2-3)
- 10 Mistakes made by God starting to take long time to cover (6)

### ■ DOWN

- 1 Tread of pedestrian was loud, household animals also rose up (8)
- 2 Get close to listener please... (6)
- 3 Device with silver-tip's hot, gets more glowing (8)

(set by Bruno)

- 4 Quite nonchalantly, setter slipped out to chase female (6)
- 6 Police cruiser with air conditioner's normal to be seen around (5,3)
- 7 Spoke of Darius' organisation (6)
- 8 Loud landmark spot (4)
- 12 Unaware what I would do with a 5x5 grid? (8)
- 14 Minarets in Islamabad rising around — leaning to the left (8)
- 16 Store displaying many a set of crafts (8)
- 17 This is worn? Right! (1-5)
- 18 Long and hot cargo vessel with prow missing (6)
- 19 Job of Gates perhaps, encourage technology leaders? (6)
- 20 An immature version of North Indian boy? (4)

## SUDOKU

				2	9			
4			8			9	6	
		1	3	7				
3							4	5
	6	4				7	3	
5	1							8
				8	7	4		
	9	7			2			6
			9	1				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12817	Solution to yesterday's Sudoku
P V H R A C H E A N I M A T E D C A R T O O N I E V F C O W V R A W D E A L U S U A L L Y C A T E R E A E R C B L U E F O X E S H U S K Y A N I E E R H U E S P L O T C H D E A D S E A I I E R R H R C A T E R E C E P T I O N H A L F W I T L E G G I N G E O A I J G N A A B S T R A C T P A I N T E R T T D S H O O B	2 3 7 9 8 4 1 5 6 5 1 4 3 6 2 8 9 7 9 6 8 7 5 1 4 2 3 8 7 9 5 2 3 6 1 4 3 2 1 6 4 9 7 8 5 6 4 5 8 1 7 2 3 9 4 9 6 2 3 8 5 7 1 1 8 3 4 7 5 9 6 2 7 5 2 1 9 6 3 4 8

## FAITH

### Education, values & skills

The study system of yore was designed to inculcate a comprehensive set of values and life skills in children from different walks of life. During the period of study, children were entrusted in the hands of a guru and had to stay in his dwelling away from home. They were taught both Samanya dharma, the universal values and code of conduct applicable to all, and Vishesha dharma, or professional ethics and skills, pertaining to the livelihood that each one inherits by birth, as a brahmin, a kshatriya, a vaisya and so on, pointed Swamini Satyavratnanda in a discourse.

The focus was on ethical and moral disciplines such as yama, cultivating of moral values such as truthfulness, ahimsa and self-control; niyama, acquiring regular habits of study and worship; asana, sitting quietly in order to achieve tranquillity; pranayama, taking breathing exercises in order to gain control of the mind; pratyahara, freeing the mind from the thrall of the senses; dharana, concentrating; dhyana, meditating and Samadhi, rising to the super conscious state. Side by side, professional training was given to make each one competent to pursue one's livelihood. In God's creation, people are born in specific varnas, based on the gunas or qualities they had developed in their previous births, and also the type of activity or work relevant to their background.

For instance, a brahmin is trained in the Vedas, as also in the method of performance of rituals and yagnas. A kshatriya gets trained in archery and such skills that help him follow the kshatriya dharma, as also a Vaisya, his specific skills and so on. Moreover, it is shown that learning is a continuous process, and the wise person directs what he has learnt to ultimately reach God and get freed from samsara.



To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

