

ELSEWHERE



**Lebanon issues travel ban for Carlos Ghosn**  
BEIRUT  
Lebanese prosecutors issued a travel ban for fugitive ex-Nissan chief Carlos Ghosn and asked him to hand in his French passport on Thursday, following an Interpol-issued red notice against him. The ban comes after Mr. Ghosn was interrogated by prosecutors about the charges he faces in Japan over financial misconduct. **AP**

**Five left-wing Ministers to serve in Spain govt.**  
MADRID  
Spain's new coalition government says that it will include five members from the left-wing, anti-austerity United We Can party. The Socialist Party of PM Pedro Sánchez has partnered with United We Can to give Spain its first coalition government since the restoration of democracy in 1978. **AP**

**18 UN troops, 2 civilians injured in Mali attack**  
BAMAKO  
Eighteen UN troops and two civilians were wounded on Thursday in a mortar attack on a military base in northern Mali, a UN official said, in fresh violence in the war-torn West African country. Mali has been struggling to contain an Islamist insurgency that erupted in the north in 2012, and which has claimed thousands of military and civilian lives since. **AFP**

**U.S. strike kills Taliban splinter group leader**  
HERAT  
U.S. airstrike killed a Taliban splinter-group commander and several other fighters in the western Afghan province of Herat, sources said on Thursday. Mullah Nangyalay split from the main branch of the Taliban after the 2013 death of founder Mullah Omar. **AFP**

# Iran plane crash: Ukraine to probe possible missile strike

‘A terrorist act, a drone collision and an engine blast are the other possibilities’

ANTON TROIANOVSKI  
KIEV  
Investigators will look into the possibility that a missile shot down the Ukrainian passenger jet that crashed in Iran, a senior Ukrainian official said on Thursday, but he did not rule out a range of other possibilities for the disaster that killed at least 176 people.  
The official, Oleksiy Danilov, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, said investigators were following up on unconfirmed reports that fragments of a Russian-made Tor surface-to-air missile – a system used by Iran – had been found near where the plane came down.  
Ukraine was negotiating with Iran to allow the investigators to search the crash site near Tehran for possible rocket fragments, he told Censor.net, a Ukrainian news outlet.  
The possibilities of a terrorist act, a collision with an airborne object such as a drone, and an engine explosion were also being examined as potential causes of the crash, Mr. Danilov said on his Facebook page.  
Ukraine brings unique experience to bear on the case: In 2014, after Russian-backed separatists took control of parts of eastern Ukraine, an anti-aircraft missile that international investigators later said was Russian-made, shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 there, killing all 298 people aboard.  
The Ukrainian airliner that went down on Wednesday morning had turned back toward the Tehran airport before it crashed in a huge explosion minutes after takeoff, according to an in-



**Heavy loss:** Relatives of the crew members of the Ukrainian plane that crashed in Iran mourn at a memorial service at the Boryspil International airport outside Kiev on Thursday. **REUTERS**

## ‘Iran may have downed plane’

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON  
The Ukraine airliner that crashed in Iran was most likely brought down accidentally by Iranian anti-aircraft missiles, U.S. officials said on Thursday.  
According to satellite data, one U.S. official said, the Ukrainian International Airlines Boeing 737-800

bound for Kiev was airborne for two minutes after departing Tehran when the heat signatures of two surface-to-air missiles were detected. That was quickly followed by an explosion in the vicinity of the plane, the official said. Heat signature data then showed the plane on fire as it went down.  
Two U.S. officials said

Washington believed the downing of the plane, which occurred at a time of rising tensions between Iran and the U.S., was accidental.  
U.S. President Donald Trump said the deadly crash could have been a mistake.  
Iran ruled out a missile strike as the cause of crash, saying such a scenario made “no sense”.

ital Iranian report released on Thursday. It said that the plane, a Boeing 737-800 bound for Kiev, was in flames before it hit the ground but did not send a distress signal.

**Damaged black box**  
A security camera captured the impact – first the pre-dawn darkness, then a series of blinding bursts of light in the distance, followed by a

storm of burning debris in the foreground.  
The plane’s “black box” flight data recorders were damaged by the fire, the Iranian report said. That raised the possibility that some of the information stored in them had been destroyed, but in other aviation disasters, investigators have been able to retrieve data even from damaged recorders. However, Iran has said that,

contrary to usual practice, the black boxes would not be sent to Boeing or the U.S.  
The priority “is to find out the causes of the tragedy,” President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said.  
A team of 45 Ukrainian investigators landed in Tehran on Thursday. Mr. Zelenskyy urged Canada – which lost 63 of its citizens in the crash – to participate in the investigation. **NY TIMES**

# EU Council chief defends Iran deal after Trump call to quit it

Council President says EU has its own interests and vision

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BRUSSELS  
The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, defended the crumbling Iran nuclear deal on Thursday after U.S. President Donald Trump urged Europe to quit it, but warned Tehran against “irreversible acts” that would sink the accord.  
The President of the European Council used a call with Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani to call for a de-escalation of tensions after Tehran carried out missile strikes on U.S. military bases in Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of one of its



Charles Michel  
top Generals.  
On Wednesday, Mr. Trump calmed fears of all-out war, but demanded that other parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal follow his lead and withdraw from the pact.  
The European parties –

Britain, France and Germany – have led efforts to save the deal, which has been crumbling since Mr. Trump pulled out in 2018 and reimposed sanctions, and Mr. Michel insisted that it remained vital.  
“The JCPOA agreement was an important achievement after 10 years of negotiations and remains an important tool for regional stability,” Mr. Michel’s office said in its readout of his call with Mr. Rouhani, adding that Mr. Michel had insisted that “the EU has its own interests and its vision” – implicitly distancing EU capitals from Washington.

# MPs approve Brexit Bill, U.K. set for Jan. 31 exit

It will now go to the House of Lords

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON  
Britain passed a major milestone on the road to Brexit when the House of Commons on Thursday approved a Bill authorising the country’s departure from the European Union at the end of the month.  
Lawmakers voted by 330-231 to pass the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, which sets the terms of Britain’s departure from the 28-nation bloc. The comfortable majority won by Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservatives in an election last month secured the Bill’s passage despite the opposition of smaller parties.  
The Bill was approved af-

ter three days of debate that brought none of the frayed tempers, late-night sessions and knife-edge votes that marked previous rounds of Brexit wrangling over the past year.  
After passing through Parliament’s unelected House of Lords – which can delay but not overturn the result in the Commons – the Bill should become law in time for the U.K. to leave the EU on the scheduled date of January 31 and become the first nation to quit the bloc.  
Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay said he welcomed the “constructive scrutiny” of the Lords but hoped the Upper House would not try to delay the Bill.

# British royals feel hurt by the way Harry and Meghan quit

No consultation before stepping back from their senior role

REUTERS  
LONDON  
Britain’s royal family is hurt and disappointed by Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle’s surprise announcement that they will step back from their senior roles and spend more time in North America, a royal source said.  
Prince Harry and Ms. Markle’s decision to step away from royal duties sent shock waves through the royal family as neither Queen Elizabeth nor Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, had been consulted on the announcement, made on Instagram.  
The Queen, who has devoted her life to the public duty of monarchy since she became queen in 1952, and other senior members of the family felt hurt and disappointed by the move, a royal source said. “We have chosen to make a transition this year in starting to carve out a progressive new role within this institution,” the royal couple said in their statement. “We intend to step back as senior members of the Royal Family, and work to become financially independent.”



**Part-time royals:** A file photo of Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle in west London. **AFP**

commented on the decision. British tabloids said the announcement had left senior royals such as Prince Charles and Harry’s brother, Prince William, incandescent with rage. The Queen and senior royals have called on aides to find a “workable solution” to the future of Prince Harry and his wife in the royal family within “days, not weeks”, U.K. media reported on Thursday.

**‘Queen is furious’**  
“MEGXIT” read *The Sun*’s front page headline. The *Daily Mail* said Queen Elizabeth was furious about the move. While the manner in which they have tried to exit the spotlight cast on the world’s most famous family drew criticism, Prince Charles has long sought a slimmer and leaner royal family.  
The haste of their decision, though, raises questions for a family which had in Queen Elizabeth’s words a “quite bumpy” year that included her son Prince Andrew’s decision to step down due to his relationship with disgraced U.S. financier Jeffrey Epstein.  
Royal commentators drew parallels with the abdication crisis of Edward VIII

who gave up the throne in 1936 to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson and lived out his life in France.  
**Use of public money**  
Opponents of the monarchy were scathing and even supporters questioned how one could be a part-time royal. “This really is wanting to have your cake and eat it,” said Graham Smith, head of Republic which wants to abolish the monarchy.  
“They have said they will dip in and out of royal duties as it suits them but won’t stop taking public money until they find other sources of income.”  
Ms. Markle, known for her role in the TV drama *Suits*, could return to acting in the U.S. though it is unclear how that would be viewed by the Palace. “Perhaps she’d have to be careful about what roles she’d do because she is a member of the royal family, so she couldn’t do too many racy sex scenes for instance,” said royal biographer Penny Junor.  
Prince Harry and Ms. Markle, an American divorcee, met on a blind date but fell in love in Botswana and married in May 2018.

# Trump ‘statue of liberty’ burned in Slovenian town

The wooden structure was built to criticise populist politics

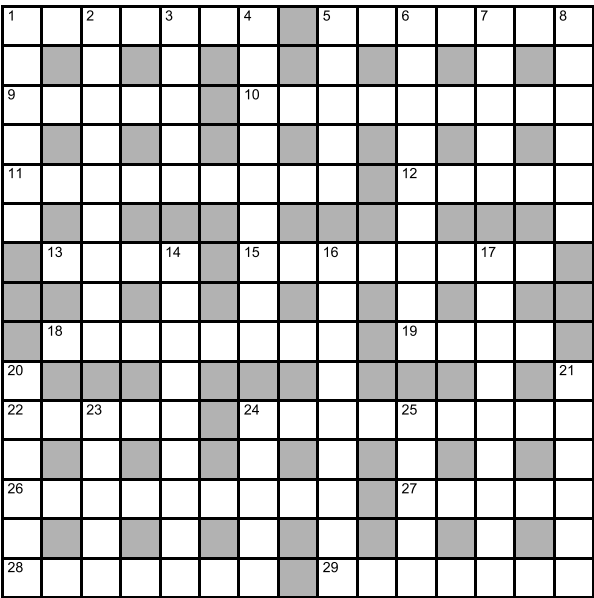
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LJUBLJANA  
Suspected vandals on Thursday burned a wooden statue of U.S. President Donald Trump built last year by a group of villagers to criticise populist politics, local authorities said.  
The statue of Mr. Trump, complete with his trademark mane, blue suit, white shirt and red tie was built last August. The statue was moved in December to Moravce, where vandals damaged it by drawing a moustache on its face in a clear reference to Hitler. On Thursday, unidentified vandals set the statue on fire.



The wooden sculpture resembling U.S. President Trump on fire in Moravce, Slovenia, on Thursday. **AP**

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12829

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



- (set by Arden)
- 12 Sick? Get the hell out, get relieved (5)

13 Game not hard, may be kind of taxing (4)

15 A point on line is criminal conversation (8)

18 Check if able to get inside bottle (8)

19 Crown paste? (4)

22 Duplicating a hit (5)

24 The entire workforce has to return by end of August to get a share (9)

26 Harry enraged at the dog (5,4)

27 Cowboys did it, only to follow the game (5)

28 Regret over some writing, perhaps (7)

29 Bar public transport, Arden’s left (7)
- 4 Psycho turned insect into a crawler (9)

5 Cap before pouring into empty bucket (5)

6 Military moves like bird on flight (5,4)

7 Bloodsuckers pierce from top to bottom (5)

8 End of photography – winding slide returns (6)

14 Endless mirth leads to massacre (9)

16 Extremely difficult to control unit, rules are broken (9)

17 Spooner’s issue with a horny one in port (9)

20 Harry offers token resistance (6)

21 Idle time in school calendar (6)

23 Multipurpose use, support with guts (5)

24 A day time motto... (5)

25 Water rationing – gained some ground (5)

- ACROSS
- 1 Odd/even accepted by iron lady (7)

5 Huge effort to suppress – nothing but intolerance (7)

9 Follow writers, as outstanding leaders leave (5)

10 Mind getting feel of the architectural design? (9)

11 Seed covering in part of Chennai (9)
- DOWN
- 1 As simple as every hidden delight (6)

2 Golfer’s curse heard in another place (9)

3 Irrigation – measures taken by American (5)

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12828	Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku
C O N T E M P T S A M P A N H O B M L G M A E A L G E B R A A N A G R A M N G A S W S M A C R I E R T U M E S C E N T E N G I A S O S M E S A I N E C O W D F U N D I N G E N R I C A V N E U R A L G I A E E R I E A M R E T R M R R O E D E E R I D A H O A I N N Y O L U A O S T E A L I N T E G R A L	6 7 5 2 3 1 4 9 8 8 4 2 7 9 6 5 3 1 3 1 9 4 5 8 2 7 6 9 6 4 8 7 2 1 5 3 1 8 7 3 4 5 9 6 2 2 5 3 1 6 9 8 4 7 7 9 8 5 1 3 6 2 4 4 2 6 9 8 7 3 1 5 5 3 1 6 2 4 7 8 9

## FAITH

### Humility, an ennobling trait

The Tiruppavai celebrates the glory of the Supreme Lord as much as that of a true devotee. Its emphasis is on the eternal quality of the relationship between them which, when internalised by the latter, equips him with absolute humility, pointed out Sri Rajahamsam Swami in a discourse. The Gopis in Ayarpadi are all soaked in thoughts of Krishna. They never tire of recalling His feats and His master plans by which He outwits Kamsa’s wily attempts to murder Him.  
Andal shows that along with this devotion, it is important to realise that no one is infallible and that all are liable to faults. So, in one verse, when one Gopi accepts that she is at fault, and accepts this truth graciously and honestly, it generates the ennobling trait of humility. When one is humble, one finds that shortcomings and failures are inherent in human nature and one does not succumb to the sense of ego and pride. The true devotee knows his limitations and is also aware that this bhakti bhava in him is owing to the compassion of the Lord. In his inner self he is honest about it. One who is endowed with the bhava of humility is indeed the most fortunate person. For in him devotion and virtue can grow and thrive.  
One who lacks humility loses all and is lost in the cycle of birth. In this context, Bharata exemplifies the virtue of absolute humility that is rooted in his faultless integrity. When Rama is exiled and Dasaratha dies, he is driven to a situation when though guiltless, he faces blame and censure from all. But such is his mental maturity that springs from his spontaneous love for Rama that he deals with this plight with tremendous dignity. He invokes on himself all kinds of punishment if he is guilty. But finally instead of blaming others, he blames himself for all this.

