

# Taiwan’s top military official killed in crash

Air Force’s Gen. Shen Yi-ming was among 8 killed as chopper force-landed in a hilly area near Taipei

**REUTERS  
TAIPEI**

Taiwan’s top military official was among eight people killed on Thursday, after a helicopter carrying them to visit soldiers crashed in a mountainous area near the capital Taipei, the Defence Ministry said.

The main portion of the helicopter lay in a northern forest wreathed in mist, its blades shattered, as dozens of rescuers combed the wreck for survivors, pictures released by emergency authorities showed.

**Five survive**

The reasons for the crash, in the wake of a forced landing, were unknown, the military said in a statement, adding that the chief of general staff, Air Force General Shen Yi-ming, had died, while five of the 13 aboard survived.

Gen. Shen, who took up his post in July, was Taiwan’s highest-ranking general to die in the line of duty, President Tsai Ing-wen said, adding that she had asked the



**Major loss:** A rescue team searching for missing military officers after the helicopter crashed near Taipei on January 2. Air Force General Shen Yi-ming, inset, died in the crash. • REUTERS

Defence Minister to launch an investigation.

“We must find out the reason for the incident,” she told reporters in the north-eastern county of Yilan, where the helicopter had been heading after setting out from Taipei.

“Most importantly, (we) must ensure the stability of

our military and national defence.”

The Defence Ministry said it had dispatched a rescue team following the Black Hawk helicopter’s crash in New Taipei City, after aviation authorities lost contact with the craft at 8:07 a.m.

“Eight of our colleagues were killed,” a military spo-

kesman told a news conference broadcast live on television.

**Elections on Jan. 11**

The incident, which comes a week before democratic Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary elections on January 11, disrupted campaign events.

Ms. Tsai, who is seeking re-election, cancelled all campaign activities until Saturday, while opposition presidential candidate Han Kuoyu of the Kuomintang party called off campaigns until Friday. “Kuomintang urges related authorities to probe the incident as soon as possible and make a thorough check on the same type of aircraft to prevent the tragedy from happening again,” the party said in a statement.

The helicopter involved in Thursday’s incident was one of 60 UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters the United States sold to Taiwan in 2010, the official Central News Agency said.

Although the United States has no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, it is the island’s strongest international backer and main arms supplier.

The de facto U.S. Embassy in Taiwan expressed its condolences, saying it stood ready to assist in the aftermath of the tragedy, but without detailing what such help might entail.

# Relief for Netanyahu as SC refuses to rule on his eligibility

PM asks Parliament to grant him immunity from prosecution

**ISABEL KERSHNER  
JERUSALEM**

With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu under indictment, Israel’s Supreme Court on Thursday refused to weigh in on whether a prime ministerial candidate charged with serious crimes can be asked to form a new government.

The decision gave Mr. Netanyahu a temporary reprieve ahead of a general election on March 2 and staved off a potential showdown between the government and the judiciary.

On Wednesday, he took the contentious step of asking Parliament to grant him immunity from prosecution. Mr. Netanyahu is Israel’s first sitting Prime Minister to be charged with crimes and the first to run for re-election while under such a serious legal cloud.

Dozens of people from Israel’s high-tech industry and academia had petitioned the



Benjamin Netanyahu

court to resolve the question of Mr. Netanyahu’s eligibility, after he was indicted in November on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three corruption cases. He has denied any wrongdoing.

During the hearing, the judges made clear they felt it was premature to rule on the petition before the election – the third in a year – and they appeared far from eager to intervene at such a delicate time.

In their ruling on Thursday, the three senior justices

described the election period as a “kingdom of uncertainty,” adding a ruling would significantly depend on the results and which candidate comes out on top.

Under Israeli law, a Prime Minister charged with crimes can remain in office until a final verdict, in part to ensure legal authorities cannot topple a Prime Minister. The resignation of an Israeli leader automatically brings down the government. There is nothing in the law to stop Mr. Netanyahu, Israel’s longest-serving Prime Minister, from running for a fourth consecutive term in office, and there is no limit to how many terms he can serve.

Mr. Netanyahu is accused of trading official favours worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Israeli media moguls in exchange for positive news coverage, as well as cigars, Champagne and jewellery. NY TIMES

# U.S. airlines face risk of extremist activity in Pakistan airspace: FAA

Exercise caution during flight operations, the regulator warns

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on Thursday warned American airlines and their pilots that there is risk involved in operating flights in Pakistan airspace due to “extremist or militant activity”, according to an official document.

“Exercise caution during flight operations. There is a risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in the territory and

airspace of Pakistan due to extremist/militant activity,” said the FAA, in a notice to airmen (NOTAM) dated December 30, 2019.

The NOTAM is applicable to all U.S.-based airlines and U.S.-based pilots.

The U.S. regulator said in its NOTAM that there continues to be a risk to U.S. civil aviation sector from attacks against airports and aircraft in Pakistan, particularly for aircraft on the ground and

aircraft operating at low altitudes, including during the arrival and departure phases of flights.

“The ongoing presence of extremist/militant elements operating in Pakistan poses a continued risk to U.S. civil aviation from small-arms fire, complex attacks against airports, indirect weapons fire, and anti-aircraft fire, any of which could occur with little or no warning,” it said.

# Turkey approves Libya military deployment

Ankara had received a request for support from the Tripoli-based govt.

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ANKARA**

Turkey’s Parliament passed a Bill on Thursday approving a military deployment to Libya, aimed at shoring up the UN-backed government in Tripoli.

The beleaguered Tripoli government has been under sustained attack since April by military strongman General Khalifa Haftar, who is backed by Turkey’s regional rivals – Saudi Arabia, Egypt

and the United Arab Emirates.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s office confirmed last Friday that a request for military support had been received from the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA).

No details have been given on the scale of the potential deployment, and Vice-President Fuat Oktay told state news agency Anadolu on Wednesday that no date had



**Military push:** Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan speaking at a symposium in Ankara on Thursday. • REUTERS

yet been set.

“We are ready. Our armed forces and our Defence Ministry are ready,” he said, adding that parliamentary approval would be valid for a year.

He described the Parlia-

ment motion as a “political signal” aimed at deterring Haftar’s Army.

“After it passes, if the other side changes its attitude and says, ‘OK, we are withdrawing, we are abandoning our offensive,’ then what should we go there for?”

The Bill passed easily through Turkey’s Parliament, by 325 votes to 184.

A UN report in November said several countries were violating the arms embargo on Libya in place since the overthrow of its long-time dictator Moamer Kadhafi in 2011.

# Lebanon receives Interpol arrest warrant for Ghosn

Former Nissan boss fled from Japan

**REUTERS  
BEIRUT/TOKYO**

Lebanon received an Interpol arrest warrant on Thursday for fugitive former Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn, while Turkey launched an investigation into his daring escape from Japan.

Ghosn has become an international fugitive after he revealed on Tuesday that he had fled to Lebanon to escape what he called a “rigged” justice system in Japan.

The Interpol red notice was received by Lebanon’s internal security forces and has yet to be referred to the judiciary, a Lebanese judicial source told Reuters.

Ghosn has deep ties to



Carlos Ghosn

Lebanon, the country of his childhood, where his investments include a stake in a bank, real estate and a vineyard.

Meanwhile, Turkish police has detained seven people as part of an investigation into Ghosn’s passage through the country.

# Austria’s unlikely coalition to unveil government programme

The Greens and the conservatives form coalition govt.

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
VIENNA**

Austria’s conservatives and their Green partners were set to present the government programme of their unprecedented coalition, a plan with right-wing leader Sebastian Kurz’s clear imprimatur that could set a European precedent.

The two parties announced late on Wednesday that they had agreed to govern together after key election gains in September following a corruption scandal that broke apart 33-year-old Mr. Kurz’s ruling coalition with the far right.

Mr. Kurz – who has styled

himself as a tough anti-immigration fighter – said his People’s Party (OeVP) and the Greens had “succeeded in uniting the best of both worlds” in protracted negotiations aimed at “protecting the climate and borders”.

**‘Daring experiment’**

“Historic accord fixed” ran the *Kurier* daily’s main headline on Thursday, while a column in the left-leaning *Standard* described the coalition as a “daring experiment” and a “political adventure”.

Papers said the pact bore the conservatives’ stamp, with tabloid *Oesterreich* bill-

ing the OeVP as “powerful as never before”.

It is the Greens’ first entry into the Austrian government at a national level – and that in the unlikely marriage of conservatives and ecologists.

Observers say Germany and others may follow suit as parties seek to cater to voters’ increasingly populist sentiments as well as worries about climate change amid student protests following calls by activist Greta Thunberg.

In Austria’s September polls, the Greens got 13.9% while the OeVP got 37.5% of votes.

# Abu Dhabi Prince visits Islamabad to boost ties

It comes after Pak. skipped Malaysia event

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD**

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Thursday arrived here on a day-long visit, amidst criticism of the UAE for siding with Saudi Arabia to put pressure on Pakistan to skip a key conference of Muslim nations in Malaysia.

Prime Minister Imran Khan received the Crown Prince at the Nur Khan Airbase and personally drove him from the airport. It was for the second time that Mr. Khan drove his vehicle as he did during the Prince’s last visit in January 2019.

The visit comes in the wake of the controversy

created over Pakistan skipping the Kuala Lumpur summit to apparently appease Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Prime Minister Khan had confirmed Pakistan’s participation in the summit hosted by Malaysia, but skipped the event at the eleventh hour due to pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – key financial backers of the cash-stripped country.

The Summit from December 19-21 was seen by Saudis as an attempt to create a new bloc in the Muslim world that could become an alternative to the dysfunctional Organisation of Islamic Cooperation led by the Gulf Kingdom.

**ELSEWHERE**

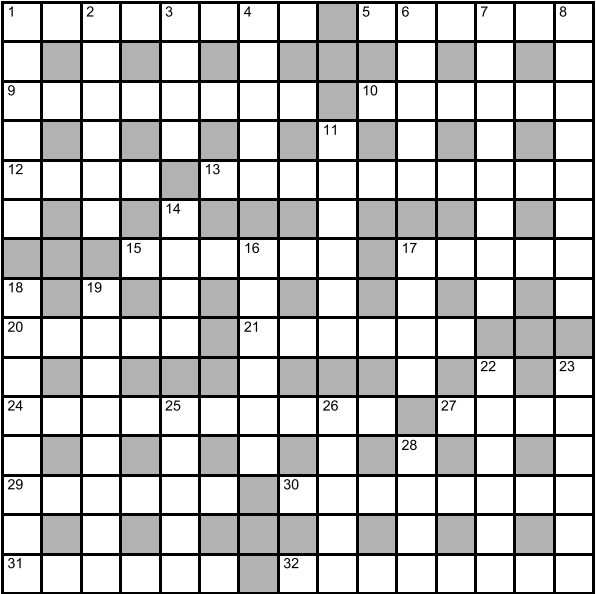
**Castro drops out of 2020 presidential race**

WASHINGTON

Julian Castro, the grandson of a Mexican immigrant who became San Antonio Mayor and a U.S. Housing Secretary, suspended his 2020 Democratic presidential run on Thursday after a candidacy overshadowed by more famous liberals. His departure from the campaign, a month or so ahead of early nominating contests in Iowa and New Hampshire, leaves 14 Democratic candidates in a still crowded field seeking the party’s nomination to take on Republican President Donald Trump in November election. REUTERS

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12823

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles

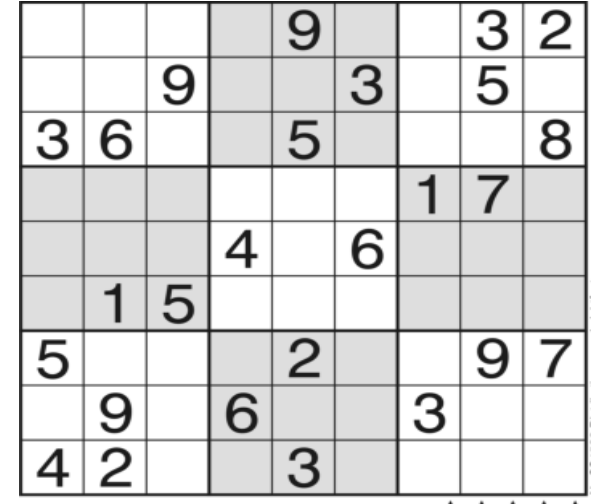


To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

- **ACROSS**
- 1 Training in notebook? (8)
- 5 Periodical, socially acceptable, figures in history (6)
- 9 Official record on substance used by engineer (8)
- 10 Judge heading for animal in pad (6)
- 12 A negligible amount for a book of interest to a vocalist (4)
- **DOWN**
- 1 For example, fancy limited exit (6)
- 2 Being noncommittal, Henry leaves, inching forward (6)
- 3 Pursue, without a bit of hope, the suit (4)

- (set by Gridman)
- 13 In restaurant dish is not fine (10)
- 15 Classifying some secretarial work (6)
- 17 Apply force on part of media (5)
- 20 Not beginning to clash with head of opposition in meeting (5)
- 21 Rex gets into aspect of kind of book useful to traveller (6)
- 24 View American booklet (10)
- 27 Exhort son to avoid sudden swell (4)
- 29 Wind player is wearing modern boot (6)
- 30 Master put out core of veda and moved steadily (8)
- 31 Girl gets a learner’s prayer book (6)
- 32 Wife with double hesitation is an unsettling type (8)
- 4 The woman has a measure of radiance (5)
- 6 Unnaw missed including name (5)
- 7 Vehicle collapsed in shifting dune remains to be found (8)
- 8 Big contract renter’s endless generosity (8)
- 11 Went ahead with good, easy rules at first for the business book (6)
- 14 Poem that that man heard (4)
- 16 Effect of mischievous child’s move (6)
- 17 “Concession withdrawn” – tribals’ head gets mail (4)
- 18 Question anchor back in drinking chamber (4,4)
- 19 Go, Sir! Our turn is harsh (8)
- 22 Simple text for Victorian queen (6)
- 23 One walking has no time for university lecturer (6)
- 25 Father’s beginning to try a foreign course (5)
- 26 Extreme in foul traces (5)
- 28 First part of motel closure? Correct! (4)

## SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12822								
C	H	A	S	T	I	T	Y	N
A	M	H	A	O	T	W	I	T
H	V	A	T	A	R	S	A	I
N	Z	T	K	Y	O	S	A	
G	L	I	T	E	D	U	C	A
I	N	H	S	R	I	E	Y	
N	A	G	A	S	T	R	E	T
G	A	T	H	E	R	A	A	Y
F	A	T	H	E	R	A	A	Y
A	R	L	I	S	L	I	X	E
S	K	I	L	L	I	O	N	
H	P	L	O	N	S	S	L	I
I	M	P	L	O	R	E	H	O
O	E	N	D	O	E	I	N	
N	O	D	D	E	R	E	D	E

## FAITH

### True jnana

Nammazhvar speaks of Lord Narayana as the One who imparted knowledge. The Lord was the Acharya to all the Azhvars, and it is the Acharya who gives us knowledge. So, it was only logical that Nammazhvar should refer to the Supreme One as the giver of knowledge, said Kidambi Narayan in a discourse. And the knowledge that the Lord gave to the Azhvars was complete. Incomplete knowledge is what most of us have. We mistake a rope for a snake, and this kind of knowledge is vipareeta jnana. The Lord, who has infinite auspicious qualities does not resort to half measures. He ensures that those who have the benefit of being conferred knowledge by Him have it in full measure.

Jnana is that which helps us understand what we do not know. We can all claim to have some knowledge about a lot of things. But how relevant is this to us at all times? For instance, if we see a light burning in a neighbour’s house, we can easily tell that a light is indeed burning there. But of what use is such knowledge? How is a light in a neighbour’s house going to help us? True jnana is that which benefits us. We may argue that worldly knowledge benefits us, in which case why would that not be enough? Certainly, worldly knowledge is of use in life. But is the same knowledge useful at all times? Jnana about something which is in tune with our swarupa is what is important to us, because it is not limited by time or space.

Sage Parasara, in Vishnu Purana, says that jnana should show us something superior, something without flaws. And who else but the Lord is superior to everyone and is also without blemish? Nammazhvar lauds his lofty qualities, and says that He is the only One who can give us knowledge that we need, knowledge that enlightens us about Him.