

# Video renews race debate in US

AP, South Carolina

The fatal shooting of a black man running from a white police officer inflamed the nation's debate over police use of force Wednesday, and the mayor and police chief of South Carolina's third-largest city said they were "sickened" by what a bystander's video revealed.

The officer, who has been charged with murder, was fired. But that did little to quell the outrage of an angry crowd at North Charleston's City Hall, and the officials were shouted down by protesters calling for justice.

The officer reported that he fired in self-defense after the suspect he pulled over Saturday for a broken brake light grabbed his stun gun. Police shared his version with the public and promised a full investigation.

But the officer's story quickly unravelled after a nervous bystander's shaky video was shared with the dead man's family and then the world.

It shows Patrolman Michael Thomas Slager firing repeatedly at Walter Lamer Scott as the unarmed 50-year-old tries to flee. The video begins with what appears to be a brief physical altercation over the officer's Taser, which falls to the ground shortly before the officer pulls out his Glock pistol and fires eight times. Scott then crumples to the ground about 30 feet away. Not once in the moments before or during the shooting can the officer be heard yelling "stop" or telling the man to surrender.

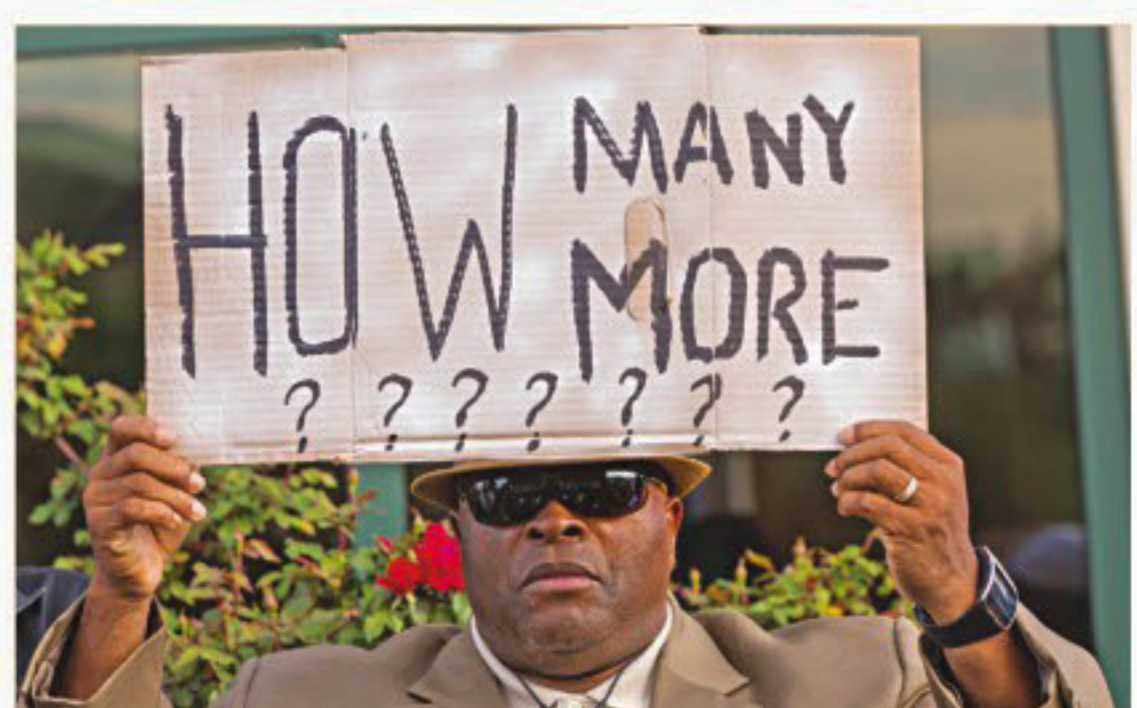
Scott's family appealed to keep protests peaceful, saying the murder charge shows the system is working in this case so far.

The shooting in North Charleston came amid an ongoing nationwide debate over issues of trust between law enforcement and minority communities. The incident came after grand juries declined to indict police in the killings of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner on Staten Island, New York.



## Another White Cop-black Man Shooting

**Clockwise, From top left, Barbara Scott, cousin of Walter Scott, the 50-year-old man who was killed after being fired at eight times as he ran away from an officer after a traffic stop (top picture on the right column), lays flowers with her mother Evaliana Smalls (L) at the lot where the incident happened in North Charleston, South Carolina; people participate in a rally to protest the killing outside City Hall in North Charleston. Video captured by a bystander showed officer Michael Slager, inset, shooting Scott as he ran away. Officer Slager has been charged with murder as a result of the incident.** PHOTO: AFP



# Boston bomber found guilty

AFP, Boston

Boston bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev faces the death penalty after a jury unanimously convicted him Wednesday of carrying out the worst attack in the United States since the 9/11 hijackings.

The jury took a day and a half to find the 21-year-old former student guilty on all 30 counts related to the April 15, 2013 attacks, the murder of a police officer, a car jacking and a shoot-out while on the run.

The Muslim immigrant of Chechen descent, who took US citizenship in 2012, stood in a dark blazer, occasionally fidgeting and hooking one hand into his trouser pocket as the clerk read out the verdict.

He now faces life in prison without parole or even the death penalty when he is sentenced by the same jury at the second phase of the trial, which could start early next week, Judge George O'Toole told the court.

Survivors, including the parents of eight-year-old Martin Richard who was killed in the attacks, crammed into the gallery to hear the verdict as a strict security cordon was set

up outside in the biting wind and sleet. Three people were killed and 264 others wounded, including 17 who lost limbs, in the twin blasts at the city's marathon nearly two years ago.

Tsarnaev went on the run and was arrested four days later, hiding and injured in a boat on which he had scrawled a bloody message apparently justifying the attacks to avenge the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Survivors welcomed the verdict and thanked the jury after a harrowing month-long trial of grisly videos of the horror after the attacks, and heartbreaking testimony from those who lost limbs and loved ones.

The attacks shocked the relatively small northeastern city of Boston and revived fears of terrorism in the United States after the September 11, 2001 strikes on New York, Washington and Pennsylvania.

Seventeen of Tsarnaev's convictions carry the death penalty, and the second phase of the trial is likely to prove far more contentious.

Massachusetts has not executed anyone since 1947, and Catholic bishops in the

state this week reiterated their opposition to the death penalty.

At trial, government prosecutors portrayed Tsarnaev as a callous terrorist who carried out the bombings to punish the United States, living a double life as a 19-year-old enrolled at University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth.

Tsarnaev's lawyers admitted that he planted one of the pressure-cooker bombs, but said he was a feckless accomplice, bullied or manipulated into taking part by his more radical elder brother, who was killed on the run.

The prosecution said he was self-radicalized as early as high school and was captivated by the teachings of US-Yemen cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed in a drone strike in 2011.

'America is the terrorist' The mother of the Dzhokhar Tsarnaev has branded America the "terrorist" in a message defending her son, it has been reported.

A family friend said Tsarnaeva, a Russian native, sent a note in Russian to him insisting that her son is "the best of the best," according to Vocativ.

"America is the terrorist and everyone knows it! My son is the best of the best. I embrace everyone and thank you!"



# US warns Tehran over aiding rebels in Yemen

Khamenei calls on Saudi Arabia to stop 'criminal acts'

AGENCIES

Washington yesterday warned it would not "stand by" while Iran supports rebels in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition pounded anti-government forces at the start of a third week of bombings.

Meanwhile, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday denounced air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition against Shia rebels in Yemen as "criminal acts".

"This move is not acceptable in the region and I would warn that they must stop these criminal acts in Yemen," he said, addressing the Saudi government in a statement on his official website.

In the most direct US criticism yet of Tehran's backing of the Shiite Huthi rebels, Secretary of State John Kerry said Washington

would not accept foreign interference in Yemen. He said the US would support any state in the Middle East that felt threatened by Iran, and would not "stand by" if Iran destabilised the region.

The US is backing a Saudi-led coalition seeking to drive back the rebels and restore President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, who fled the country last month. Iran has denied accusations it is providing military aid to the Houthis.

However, it dispatched two navy vessels to the Gulf of Aden, off the southern coast of Yemen, on Wednesday. Navy commander Rear Adm Habibollah Sayyari told state media the move was made with the aim of "safeguarding naval routes for vessels in the region".

Meanwhile, aid supplies have begun reaching Yemen after a

series of delays, as the humanitarian situation deteriorates amid continued fighting. One vessel brought 1.7 tonnes of medical aid for Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), and the other medical supplies and a surgical team from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Further aid from the ICRC is expected to be delivered by plane to Sanaa shortly.

The coalition has so far failed to stop an assault on the southern port city of Aden by the Houthis and allied military units loyal to ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The World Health Organisation says at least 643 people have been killed and 2,226 wounded in Yemen since 19 March. Another 10,000 people have been driven from their homes.

# Man shoots dead judge in Italy court

AFP, Milan

An armed man facing bankruptcy yesterday shot dead a judge and lawyer in a Milan court and wounded two other people before fleeing the scene.

The man, named as Claudio Giardiello, escaped on a scooter but was captured by police in Vimercate, a town some 25 kilometres outside Milan, the interior ministry said.

The dead were named by the Italian media as judge Fernando Ciampi and lawyer Lorenzo Alberto Claris Appiani, both shot on the third floor of the building after Giardiello managed to get a gun past security.

A third person was found dead inside the building after apparently suffering a heart attack, possibly brought on by the shooting, emergency services said.

Two people were injured in the shootout and one is in a serious condition.

Valerio Maraniello, who once acted as a lawyer for the shooter, told AFP his ex-client was "an aggressive person, a little paranoid."

"He was always convinced people were trying to cheat him. He never listened to advice," he said, adding that he was "not completely surprised" by the deadly attack.

Interior Minister Angelino Alfano, who was in Milan for a national committee meeting on public order and safety ahead of the 2015 Milan expo which opens in May, was called on to investigate security at the court.

The sound of shots sparked panic, with lawyers bolting for the exit while police officers went floor to floor searching for the gunman, who was initially thought to be still inside the building.



**US President Barack Obama tours the Bob Marley Museum led by tour guide Natasha Clark (3rd-L) in Kingston, Jamaica, on Wednesday. Obama, the first sitting US president to set foot on the island since 1982, is in the country to meet with a regional block of Caribbean nations and possibly offer them an alternative to cheap Venezuelan oil amid a spat with Caracas. He heads late April 9th to Panama, where he may have a landmark meeting with Cuba's communist President Raul Castro.** PHOTO: AFP

# Scientists claim HIV breakthrough

BBC ONLINE

The first human trial of a new type of HIV therapy suggests it could be a promising weapon in the fight against the virus.

Reports in the journal Nature show infusions of so-called broadly neutralising antibodies could suppress the amount of HIV in a patient's blood.

The approach uses clones of immune proteins taken from a rare individual who has natural control of the disease. Scientists hope with further work this could bolster current treatments.

People naturally mount a defence against the virus by producing an army of protein based weapons - antibodies. But in most cases these are not powerful enough to defeat it.

The international research team harvested copies of unusually potent ones, capable of neutralising many different strains of HIV.

Patients given the highest concentrations were able to fight the virus for some time, dampening the replication of HIV in their blood.

The strength of this protection varied - in some it lasted more than four weeks.

In the journal the authors said: "Our data establish that passive infusion of single broadly neutralising antibodies can have profound effects on HIV viraemia in humans."

But because of the virus's ability to mutate rapidly, in some patients it was able to outwit the therapy by changing structure over time.

To overcome this scientists suggest using this treatment alongside current drugs or together with other antibodies.

# I am with stupid

Embarrassment for Ecuador leader after photo gaffe

BBC ONLINE

Unfortunately for one South American leader, he didn't take a closer look at the child's T-shirt before the photo was taken. A casually dressed Rafael Correa managed half a grin as he looped an arm around his young supporter. But the boy's T-shirt had "I'm with stupid" printed on it in English - and an arrow which in the picture is pointing directly at the Ecuadorian president.

After the picture - shown right - was posted online, "#IamWithStupidMashi" quickly became one of Ecuador's top trends (Correa uses the Twitter handle @MashiRafael). . .



# Statue row blots Mandela's vision for SA

REUTERS, Cape Town

South Africa's University of Cape Town removed a statue of British imperialist Cecil Rhodes yesterday, a symbolic step that exposes persistent racial divides two decades after the end of apartheid.

The statue at the university, one of Africa's top academic institutions, has been covered up for the past few weeks as both white and black students regularly marched past with #Rhodesmustfall placards calling for its removal.

They believe it is a symbol of the institutional racism that prevails in South Africa two decades after the end of oppressive white-minority rule.

"This is just the first step," sociology student Wandile Kasibe told Reuters. Behind her a crane was being readied

to remove the statue, unveiled in 1934, at 5 pm (1500 GMT).

"The statue is just a symbol," she said, adding that the aim of the pro-



tests was to encourage the completion of the country's transition from the colonial era.

The demonstrations have triggered similar reactions elsewhere, with a statue outside parliament of Afrikaner Boer war hero and former prime min-

ister of the Union of South Africa, Louis Botha, vandalised with paint.

They have prompted a backlash from white activists, who say they mask unreported racism towards a white minority they say takes the blame for the failures of the black-led African National Congress (ANC) party that has ruled since 1994.

The toppling of statues and national symbols of perceived oppression have marked seminal moments during revolutions, from the fall of the Berlin Wall, to the tearing down of busts of Vladimir Lenin in Ukraine and Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

In South Africa, however, the end of apartheid was intended to be a period of peaceful reconciliation and forgiveness encapsulated in the late Nelson Mandela's vision of a unified "Rainbow Nation".