



Mourners pray yesterday, for the victims of the mass shooting, during an improvised vigil in a parking lot of a shopping center in Virginia Beach, Virginia. A municipal employee sprayed bullets "indiscriminately" at the Virginia Beach Municipal Center, police said, killing 12 people and wounding four in the latest mass shooting to rock the US. PHOTO: AFP

Disgruntled worker kills 12

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arrived within minutes of the first shots, Cervera said, and the suspect was killed after a lengthy gun battle.

Virginia Beach police had trained for a mass shooting.

"You cannot replicate the intensity of an environment such as this," Cervera said.

The police chief said the gunman "immediately and indiscriminately" fired on his victims, but declined to comment on any possible motive.

According to local media, Craddock was 40 years old and had no serious criminal record.

The rampage in Virginia Beach was the worst mass shooting in the United States since November 2018, when a dozen people were slain at a Los Angeles-area bar and grill by a gunman who then killed himself.

Survivors of Friday's shooting recounted scenes of pandemonium and fear that erupted as gunshots rang out, and workers scurried frantically for cover. Some said they stacked desks against office doors to barricade themselves in.

Cervera has said he will only give the gunman's name once because city authorities want to focus on his victims.

Virginia Beach City Manager Dave Hansen identified the victims during the news conference and said that, except for the contractor, they had worked for Virginia Beach for between 11 months and 41 years.

"They leave a void that we will never be able to fill," Hansen said.

The four people who were seriously wounded in the shooting were still being treated at local hospitals. They included a police officer whose life was saved by his ballistic vest, Cervera said.

The bloodshed unfolded at Building Two of Virginia Beach's municipal center complex, where office space for more than 400 employees houses information technology, public works, planning and

Most farmers

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from whom the food directorate could buy the amount specified by the government. So, whoever could force their way early to the LSD could make a sale, and the rest did not.

Food Inspector Tariqul Islam, who was assigned at the Kalibari Road depot, said he was authorised to procure 242 tonnes of paddy from 484 listed farmers (500kg each), but the agricultural department sent them a list of 6,500 farmers.

"So, I followed the 'first come, first served' policy, and made the purchase after verifying their agriculture cards and the list," he said.

He acknowledged that many farmers failed to make sales.

Another listed farmer, Taibur Rahman, 52, of Jummapara in Lalmonirhat municipality, faced the same problem. He alleged that rice mill owners, businessmen and politically-connected people were able to sell, while "genuine" farmers like him could not.

Farmer Saminul said, "We, the marginal farmers, get deprived whereas politically-backed farmers, and businessmen are benefited."

A rice mill owner in Lalmonirhat town, Uzzal Hossain, said he sold 500kg of paddy to the government depot at the sadar upazila. "Many other rice mill owners, businessmen, even political people, sold theirs as they are also farmers," he said.

On Thursday, Amjad Hossain, 56, a farmer and Awami League activist at Gokunda village, sold 1,000kg of paddy at the Teesta depot in the upazila headquarters.

"I made the sale against two agriculture cards -- one is mine and the other is my wife's. My wife got the card as she works with me and thus also a farmer," he said.

Amjad harvested about 31 tonnes of paddy from five bighas of land, he said.

However, Amjad's co-villager and farmer Naser Ali, 58, failed to sell his paddy at the Teesta depot on the same day. "I saw political people and businessmen crowding the supply depot, and the food inspector preferred them over us," he said.

When asked, the food inspector at the Teesta depot, Harunur Rashid, said, "I was allowed to buy only 115 tonnes of paddy

Top yaba dealer's

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Md Firoz ordered the law enforcers to seize the houses and properties of the three after hearing the case.

Prior to that Criminal Investigation

North-bound trains

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aware but do nothing about it," Rifat Khan, a private university student said.

The Nilphamari-bound Nilsagar Express also ran three-and-a-half-hours behind schedule. It had also been delayed by one hour and 40-minutes on Friday.

Meanwhile, the rail authority was forced to change the entire train, including the locomotive and carriages, of Rangpur Express, which saw a seven-hour delay on Friday. Yesterday, the train had left Kamalapur after a one and quarter hour delay.

The change resulted in passengers facing problems in finding their seats. Many passengers, who had bought tickets for AC seats, did not get those and had to go by normal seats.

Earlier on Thursday, the same train got delayed by three to four hours due to a technical glitch in one of its bogies, a railway official said.

The delay increased on Friday, thus forcing the authority to change the entire train.

Besides, the Khulna-bound Sundarbans Express left after an hour's delay, while the Chattogram-bound Chattala Express was delayed by half an

hour.

Around 10:30am yesterday, Kamalapur Railway Station Manager Mohammed Aminul Haque said four among 17 trains had been delayed.

He told reporters that the pressure of passengers caused the trains to reach the station late and so it could not leave on time either.

About Rangpur Express, he said they tried their best to replace the seats on the train. They have to replace AC seats with first class chairs as the new train had two AC chair coaches less than the original one.

On Friday, Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan visited the railway station and apologised for the delays on the first day of Eid.

NO MAD RUSH AT GABTOLI

Eid holidaymakers' rush at city's Gabtoli bus terminal was thin yesterday, with several bus services cancelling their trips due to shortage of passengers.

Staffers of at least four southern-region bound bus services said shortage of passengers had led them to cancel 14 trips.

Sanjeeb Babu, counter master of Hanif Paribahan at Gabtoli Bus Terminal, said they cancelled

six trips since morning due to a shortage of passengers, while five buses left for their destinations with many seats vacant.

Although the respective bus services who cancelled made alternative arrangements -- either by returning tickets or arranging seats on another bus on the same route -- passengers of the cancelled bus trips alleged that they were not informed prior to the cancellation.

"They have returned the money. But I am not sure whether I will get a ticket of another suitable bus service with a preferred seat," Monowar Hosssain, a student of a private university, said.

The buses that did depart left on time. Torrential rain in the morning, however, and shortage of passengers forced several bus services to delay their trips by 15 to 30 minutes, staffers of different bus services said.

Meanwhile, Badiuzzaman Badal, senior vice-chairman of Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carriers') Association, said the number of passengers going by waterways started to increase from Friday and will reach peak on June 3.

"We have completed all our preparation to take people home," he added.

Blast at Russian explosives plant injures 42

AFP, Moscow

A blast at a major explosives plant in central Russia yesterday injured 42 people and damaged nearly 200 buildings nearby, said local officials, Russian news agencies reported.

The explosion happened at the "Kristall" factory in Dzerzhinsk about 400 kilometres (250 miles) east of Moscow, in the Nizhny Novgorod region.

A local health ministry official quoted by the TASS news agency said 42 people had suffered light or moderate injuries, an increase on earlier estimate.

Of the injured, 14 had to be hospitalised, but no one had been killed, said the spokesman.

Earlier, health ministry officials told news agencies that the wounded had "shrapnel wounds of mild and moderate severity" and that they were receiving medical assistance.

The force of the blast damaged five factory buildings and 180 houses nearby.

The deputy governor of the Nizhny Novgorod region, Dmitry Krasnov, told Russian state television that two people were missing.

Russia's Investigative Committee said it had opened an investigation into potential violations of industrial safety at the plant.

Local emergency services told news agencies that more than 300 people and 50 technical vehicles were taking part in cleaning the plant following the explosion.

Representatives of Kristall told Interfax that five people were working in the area where the explosion occurred and were safely evacuated.

There was no information yet on where the injured were at the time of the blast.

Local fire fighters told agencies they had no information about any more people still inside the plant, which was set up in 1953.

All they wanted

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"But we didn't use any anti-government placards. Rather, our placards said: 'Ensure fair price for crops'; 'Buy crops directly from farmers' and so on."

Registrar Nuruddin Ahmed said he did not know anything about the protest or the placards and that he only followed the directives of the university's disciplinary board.

Contacted, Ashiquzzaman

Bhuiyan, proctor and a member of the disciplinary board, said they issued the notice to the students for forming the human chain "without taking their permission and carrying anti-government placards".

To give an example of anti-government activities, he said, "One placard read: The throne will burn if crops burn."

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said the notice

was "offensive".

"It shows the university authorities have forgotten their responsibilities."

Every citizen has a right to protest, he said, adding, "Those who see a student protest demanding fair prices of rice as an anti-state activity have become essentially blind. This notice makes that very clear."

[Our Faridpur correspondent contributed to the story.]

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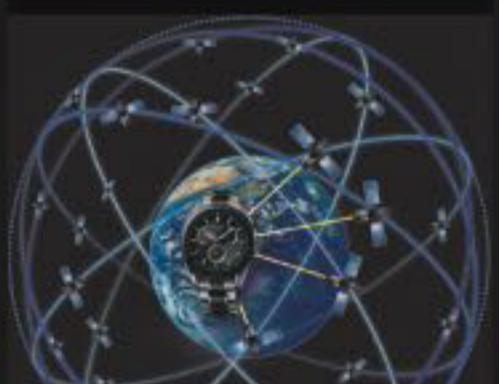
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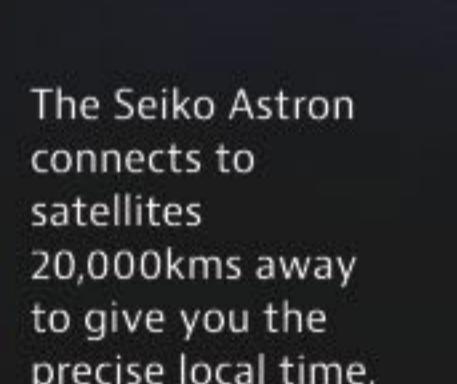
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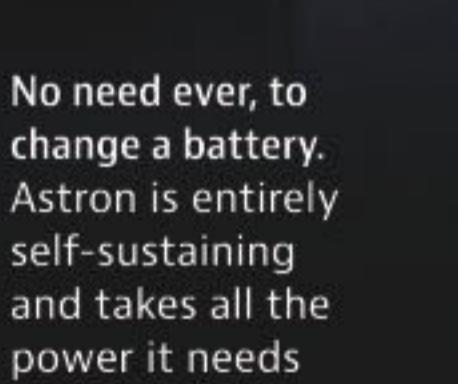
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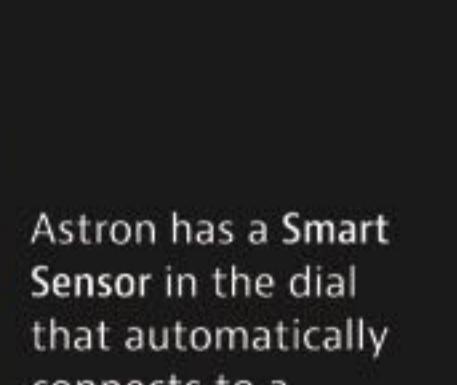
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