

NEW ZEALAND MOSQUE ATTACK

Anger as suspect pleads not guilty

AFP, Christchurch

The man accused of shooting dead 51 Muslim worshippers in the Christchurch mosque attacks in March smiled yesterday as his lawyers entered not guilty pleas to multiple murder and terrorism charges.

Brenton Tarrant's barrister told Christchurch High Court his client was pleading not guilty to all charges, prompting anger from survivors and relatives of those killed in the March 15 attacks.

The self-proclaimed white supremacist appeared in court via audio-visual link from a maximum-security prison in Auckland for the brief hearing.

Tarrant, a 28-year-old Australian national, was committed to stand trial next year on 51 counts of murder, 40 of attempted murder and engaging in a terrorist act.

His smiling demeanour enraged survivors still reeling from the worst massacre in modern New Zealand history, who had packed the courthouse's public gallery for a glimpse of the accused.

Tarrant allegedly opened fire in the packed Al Noor mosque during Friday prayers, then travelled across town to continue the carnage in the suburban Linwood mosque, while livestreaming his actions on social media.

The court heard that mental health assessments had found Tarrant was fit to stand trial.

The judge set a trial date of May 4, 2020, with proceedings expected to last at least six weeks, although some lawyers warned the case -- sure to be one of the biggest-ever in New Zealand -- could go twice as long.



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, China's President Xi Jinping, Kyrgyzstan's President Sooronbay Jeenbekov, Russia's President Vladimir Putin, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan, Tajikistan's President Emomali Rakhmon and Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev pose for a family photo during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bhutan to pay highest salaries to teachers, medical staff

In a move earning it praise, Bhutan has announced that salaries of teachers, doctors, nurses, and all medical staff will be hiked to make them the highest paid civil servants in the country. Under proposals newly approved by the lower house of parliament, monthly pay for teachers of 10 years' experience will double to 40,000 ngultrums (\$570) and they will now get perks including allowances. Medical professionals in the nation of 750,000 people will also get a raise, with those with nine years' experience set to be paid 37,000 ngultrums, up from 28,000 ngultrums. For many individuals who seek employment in the civil service, teaching is one of their last options and they will only join the profession if they do not qualify for other posts. The new decision is likely to change the situation now and it will also help retain experienced teachers in the sector.

KSA repatriates Lankans linked to Easter attacks

Five Sri Lankans wanted in connection with the Easter bombings that killed 258 people were arrested in Saudi Arabia and repatriated yesterday, police said. Correcting his earlier statement that the men were seized in Dubai, police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said the suspects were taken into custody in the Saudi city of Jeddah. Among them was Mohamed Milhan, a senior leader of the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NTJ) jihadist group, which was held responsible for the April 21 bombings, Gunasekera said. Sri Lanka has been under a state of emergency since the attacks which also left 45 foreign nationals dead and wounded nearly 500 people.

NEWS IN brief

IS says it killed 20 Nigerian soldiers

AFP, Maiduguri

Islamic State's West African branch claimed responsibility for an attack on a Nigerian army base in northeastern Borno state and said its fighters had killed 20 soldiers. The assault, which raised questions about government claims to have almost defeated the insurgents, took place in the town of Karetu on Wednesday.

Bombardment kills 28 in northwest Syria

AFP, Beirut

Regime and Russian air strikes and shelling have killed at least 28 people including seven civilians in embattled northwest Syria, a war monitor said yesterday, despite a ceasefire announced by Moscow. The civilians were killed in regime air strikes and shelling on the south of Idlib province and the north of Hama province Thursday. Russian and regime air strikes also killed 21 jihadist and Islamist fighters in the same region the same day.

Field narrows to six in race to become UK PM

AFP, London

The field of contenders vying to become Britain's next prime minister narrowed to six yesterday when Health Secretary Matt Hancock withdrew from the contest accepting that he has little chance of winning the race. Former foreign secretary Boris Johnson topped the secret ballot of Conservative MPs by a landslide, winning 114 of the 313 available votes. In Thursday's vote, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt came second with 43 votes, while Environment Secretary Michael Gove was third on 37.

Modi talks tough on terror

Says countries sponsoring terrorism must be held accountable

NDTV ONLINE

In a stern message directed at Pakistan at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek yesterday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that countries sponsoring, aiding and supporting terrorism must be held accountable. India stands for a terrorism-free society, he said.

Underscoring the aim of the SCO to strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism, PM Modi called for a global conference to combat it.

Countries will have to come out of their narrow purview to unite against terrorism to fight it, PM Modi said in the presence of his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan.

"During my visit to Sri Lanka last Sunday, I visited the St Anthony's church, where I witnessed the ugly face of terrorism which claims the lives of innocents anywhere," he said.

Following the meeting yesterday, all member countries of SCO had come to a consensus on a statement against terrorism, the Foreign Ministry said. "[They] are coming out with a joint declaration. It is a strong statement endorsed by all the member countries," it added.

PM Modi arrived in the Kyrgyz capital on Thursday for the two-day SCO summit. The SCO is a China-led

8-member economic and security bloc to which India and Pakistan were admitted in 2017.

According to the sources, Modi and Imran Khan ignored each other and decided not to initiate exchange of pleasantries during the summit.

During Modi's bilateral meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit on Thursday, Modi reiterated India's stand that Pakistan should take concrete action against terror before talks can resume.

"Pakistan needs to create an atmosphere free of terror, but at this stage we do not see it happening. We expect Islamabad to take concrete action" to resume talks, foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale quoted the Prime Minister as telling President Xi.

Ahead of the summit, Imran Khan and Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had written separate letters to their Indian counterparts, pushing for resumption of bilateral talks. After assuming office too, Imran Khan had written to Modi, seeking dialogue on all issues, including Kashmir.

But no bilateral interaction was scheduled between PM Modi and Imran Khan during the summit, where the two leaders are meeting for the first time since the cricket-turned politician took over as the PM of Pakistan.

SCO SUMMIT IN BISHKEK

Pak needs to create an atmosphere free of terror: Modi tells Xi

Modi and Imran Khan ignore each other

China tells US to stop trying to 'mess up' HK

AFP, Beijing

Beijing yesterday denounced what it called "violent interference" by US lawmakers critical of what they see as a worsening human rights environment in Hong Kong.

Congressional representatives introduced the "Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act", which appears designed to put pressure on the city -- and its pro-Beijing leader -- to withdraw a planned extradition law.

The bill threatens to remove Hong Kong's status as a US special trading partner.

Some US lawmakers have "made irresponsible remarks about Hong Kong affairs and violently interfered in China's internal affairs", said Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang at a press briefing. "Relevant people in the United States (should) abandon the illusion of attempting to mess up Hong Kong," he added.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators have taken to the streets of the semi-autonomous city this week to protest a deeply unpopular plan to allow extraditions to China.

On Wednesday, the international finance hub was rocked by the worst political violence since before its 1997 handover, as riot police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters. Dozens were injured in the clashes, which have fuelled public anger. Another mass rally is planned for Sunday.

The city's pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam, who is facing mounting pressure to abandon the extradition legislation, has so far refused to meet protester demands to withdraw or scrap the bill.



Trump-loyal Sarah Sanders to leave White House

White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders, a fierce loyalist of President Donald Trump who channeled his combativeness toward the news media, will leave her job at month's end for a possible political future in her home state of Arkansas, Trump said on Thursday. Sanders, 36, called the job "an honor of a lifetime" but said she was eager to spend time with her children, who are just getting out of school for the summer. "She's a warrior," said Trump, who announced her departure on Twitter shortly before the event. "We've been through a lot together, and she's tough, but she's good."



Assange faces February US extradition hearing

Julian Assange's full extradition hearing will begin in February 25, an English judge ruled yesterday, with the WikiLeaks founder wanted in the United States on espionage charges. Assange is accused of violating its Espionage Act by releasing a trove of classified military and diplomatic files in 2010 about US bombing campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, in a case that has upset defenders of press freedoms and human rights. Washington submitted a formal extradition request to Britain after Quito terminated the 47-year-old Australian's seven-year asylum stay. SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Women take part in a nation-wide women's strike for wage parity outside the federal palace yesterday in Swiss capital Bern. Nearly 30 years after staging a first strike, women across Switzerland stage mass demonstrations for equal pay. PHOTO: AFP

Doctors stage mass strike

REUTERS, Kolkata/New Delhi

A leading Indian doctors' association called for a nationwide strike on Monday, stepping up protests by medical staff demanding better security at hospitals after an attack on doctors in Kolkata.

The move could paralyse hundreds of government-run health facilities across India. Thousands of doctors across the country went on a strike yesterday.

The state of West Bengal, of which Kolkata is capital, has been the worst hit by the strike with at least 13 big government hospitals affected.

The protests were launched in response to an attack at the NRS Medical College in Kolkata on Monday that left three junior doctors seriously injured after a dispute with a family whose relative had died. Doctors demanding better security began a strike but their action was confined to the state. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee condemned them on Thursday, saying police did not strike when one of their colleagues was killed. Banerjee's remarks, which included a warning that junior doctors would be evicted from their hostels if they did not go back to work, triggered a nationwide reaction.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) said the "barbaric" attack at the NRS reflected a national problem and called for a countrywide protest. It also demanded legislation to safeguard doctors.

Nearly 30,000 doctors were on a one-day strike yesterday, most in West Bengal, New Delhi and the western state of Maharashtra, according to figures proved by medical associations.

The IMA had previously called for a protest on Friday, but later in the day asked for the protests to continue over the weekend, and a nationwide withdrawal of non-essential services in all health care institutions on June 17.

All emergency and casualty services will continue to function, IMA, which represents nearly 350,000 doctors in the country, said.

The federal health minister, Harsh Vardhan, tried to calm the furor, promising better security at hospitals and calling on Banerjee to withdraw her ultimatum.

India spent an estimated 1.4% of its gross domestic product on healthcare in 2017/18, among the lowest proportions in the world. Many millions of Indians depend on the cheap but inadequate public health system.

Saudi intercepts five Yemen rebel drones

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi forces yesterday intercepted five Yemeni rebel drones in the second aerial attack on an airport in the kingdom's southwest in two days, a Riyadh-led military coalition fighting the rebels said.

The drones targeted Abha airport, where a rebel missile on Wednesday left 26 civilians wounded, and the nearby city of Khamis Mushait, which houses a major airbase, the coalition said in a statement. The airport was operating normally with no fights disrupted, it added.

Wednesday's missile strike hit the civil airport in Abha, which is a popular summer getaway for Saudis seeking escape from the searing heat of Riyadh or Jeddah.



WORK PLACE SAFETY IN INDIA

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Vacancy Announcement for Executive Chef

Biman Flight Catering Centre invites applications from deserving Bangladeshi and Foreign nationals for appointment as Executive Chef on contractual basis. The position demands the following:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Number of Post | 01 (One) |
| Education | H.S.C. or equivalent with an Associate Degree or Bachelor Degree in the Culinary Arts or a related field (formal culinary education). |
| Work Experience | Minimum 05 years as a Sous Chef/Executive Sous Chef required. Minimum 01 year as an Executive Chef required. Minimum 05 years supervisory experience in a high volume, food production facility in International flight kitchen of reputed hotel (Minimum 4 Star standard) |
| Job Skills | Ability to cook meals according to detailed specifications Excellent time management skills required. Ability to handle multiple tasks without losing focus on priorities; Strong organizational, analytical, communication and leadership skills; Ability to train others required. Basic computer skills required. Must have thorough knowledge about multi cuisine; multi-lingual a plus. |
| Nature of Recruitment | Contractual |
| Contract Period | 02 (Two) years. Renewable. |
| Age Limit | 50 years as on 05-07-2019. |
| Pay Package & Facilities | Negotiable. Candidate will provide expected pay package. |
| Terms & conditions | 1. Candidates fulfilling the requisite qualifications may apply with covering letter attaching a complete C.V, 03 copies of recent passport-size color photographs along with attested copy of all necessary educational certificates, experience certificate, NID and a nationality certificate from respective local Chairman/Mayor/Word Commissioner of Union Parishad/Paurashava/City Corporation. 2. No affidavit will be acceptable in respect of date of birth. 3. Candidates employed in Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous or any other Organizations must apply through proper channel. 4. Candidates should clearly mark Name of the Post on top of the envelope. 5. Applications not conforming to the requisite qualifications & not providing attested copies of supporting documents will be rejected outright. 6. In case of extraordinary candidate job specification and age may be relaxed. 7. No application will be accepted after last date of submission. 8. No TA/DA will be admissible for interview, test etc. 9. BFCC Management reserves the right to cancel the recruitment process in part or in full at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever. 10. Application must reach the following addressee latest by 05-07-2019. |

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