

QUICK HITS

US Court Dismisses Case against Apple, Infosys

San Francisco: A court in California has dismissed a lawsuit against Apple and Infosys over allegations that it abused the visa system to save money. The California federal judge nixed a whistleblower's suit accusing Apple of bringing two trainers from India into the country using B-1 visas instead of the necessary and more expensive H-1B. AppleInsider reported on Thursday. The lawsuit claimed that Apple and Infosys "conspired to have two Indian nationals enter the United States on a business B-1 visa to provide training at Apple in violation of immigration laws". The suit, filed by Carl Krawitt who is a former contractor for Infosys, said the two trainers were brought in under the wrong visa and that Apple should have acquired the more expensive and numerically capped H-1B visas for the pair. A B-1 visa is used to allow non-immigrants enter the US for business purposes but on a temporary basis and with limitations. The lawsuit claimed Infosys executives knew the company "lacked sufficient foreign nationals on H-1B visas to legally perform the classroom training sessions at Apple" that the company was contracted to provide, and that "only Indian foreign national workers on B-1 visas were available to perform services" for Apple at the time, said the report. Apple, however, argued its trainers' activities were permissible under the B-1 visas. IANS

Senate Votes against Trump Border Emergency

Washington: In a stunning rebuke, a dozen defecting Republicans joined Senate Democrats on Thursday to block the national emergency that President Donald Trump declared so he could build his border wall with Mexico. The rejection capped a week of confrontation with the White House as both parties in Congress strained to exert their power in new ways. The 59-41 tally, following the Senate's vote a day earlier to end US involvement in the war in Yemen, promised to force Trump into the first vetoes of his presidency. Trump had warned against both actions. Moments after Thursday's vote, the president tweeted a single word of warning: "VETO!" AP

Tesla Adds Model Y SUV to Line-Up

Hawthorne: Tesla introduced a new electric sports utility vehicle slightly bigger and more expensive than its Model 3, pitched as an electric car for the masses. Tesla CEO Elon Musk showed off the "Model Y" late on Thursday, and the company began taking orders online. Model Y has a starting price of \$39,000 for a version with a 370km range. A long-range version of the SUV capable of travelling 483km on a single charge was priced at \$47,000. AFP

New Zealand Mosque Shootings Kill 49

Mass shootings at two mosques in Christchurch Video shows gunman during attack PM Ardern calls it a terrorist attack

Praveen Menon & Charlotte Greenfield

Wellington | Christchurch: At least one gunman killed 49 people and wounded more than 40 during Friday prayers at two New Zealand mosques in the country's worst ever mass shooting, which Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern condemned as terrorism.

A gunman broadcast livestream footage on Facebook of the attack on one mosque in the city of Christchurch, mirroring the carnage played out in video games, after publishing a "manifesto" in which he denounced immigrants, calling them "invaders".

New Zealand was placed on its highest security threat level, Ardern said, adding that "this can now only be described as a terrorist attack".

Police said three people were in custody including one man in his late 20s who had been charged with murder. He will appear in court on Saturday.

"We were not chosen for this act of violence because we condone racism, because we are enclaves for extremism," Ardern said in a national address. "We were chosen for the fact that we are none of these things. It was because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion, a home for those who share our values."

"You have chosen us but we utterly reject and condemn you." Police commissioner Mike Bush said 49 people had been killed in total. Health authorities said 48 people were being treated for gunshot wounds, including young children.

The video footage widely circulated on social media, apparently taken by a gunman and posted online live as the attack unfolded, showed him driving to one mosque, entering it and shooting randomly at people inside. Worshippers, possi-

bly dead or wounded, lay huddled on the floor, the video showed.

One man who said he was at the Al Noor mosque told media the gunman was white, blond and wearing a helmet and a bullet-proof vest. The man burst into the mosque as worshippers were kneeling for prayers. "He had a big gun ... he came and started shooting everyone in the mosque, everywhere," said the man, Ahmad Al-Mahmoud. He said he and others escaped by breaking through a glass door.

Forty-one people were killed at the Al Noor mosque, seven at a mosque in the Linwood neighbour-

hood and one died in hospital, police said. Hospitals said children were among the victims.

The visiting Bangladesh cricket team was arriving for prayers at one of the mosques when the shooting started but all members were safe, a team coach told Reuters. Three Bangladeshis were among the dead and one was missing, the consulate said.

bourhood and one died in hospital, police said. Hospitals said children were among the victims.

The visiting Bangladesh cricket team was arriving for prayers at one of the mosques when the shooting started but all members were safe, a team coach told Reuters. Three Bangladeshis were among the dead and one was missing, the consulate said.

KILLINGS CONDEMNED India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed "deep shock and sadness" over the death of scores of people in the terrorist attack while stressing India's strong condemnation of terrorism and of all those who support such acts of violence.

In a letter to New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern, Modi also underscored India's solidarity with the people of her country at this difficult time.

US President Donald Trump tweeted, "My warmest sympathy and best wishes goes out to the people of New Zealand after the horrible massacre

9 Indians Missing after Shootings

Wellington: At least 9 people of Indian nationality or Indian origin are missing after Friday's shootings, high commissioner Sanjiv Kohli said. "As per updates received from multiple sources, there are nine missing persons of Indian nationality/or origin. Official confirmation still awaited. Huge crime against humanity. Our prayers with their families," Kohli tweeted. "We are shocked to hear about the shooting in Christchurch. Any Indian needing assistance should contact us at 021803899 or 021850033," the mission tweeted. IANS



The New Zealand national flag flown at half-mast. Inset below: One of the gunmen



Ambulance staff take a man from outside a mosque in Christchurch

in the Mosques. 49 innocent people have so senselessly died, with so many more seriously injured. The US stands by New Zealand for anything we can do. God bless all!" Trump wrote on Twitter. The gunman's manifesto praised Trump as "a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose".

British Prime Minister Theresa May offered deepest condolences

"after the horrifying terrorist attack in Christchurch. My thoughts are with all of those affected by this sickening act of violence".

"An attack against peaceful people gathering for prayer is shocking in its cruelty and cynicism," Russian President Vladimir Putin said. "I hope that those involved will be severely punished," he said in a message to Ardern. Reuters/AFP

Kim may Suspend N-Talks with 'Gangster-like' US

Joyce Lee & Josh Smith Seoul: North Korea is considering suspending talks with the US and may rethink a ban on missile and nuclear tests unless Washington makes concessions, news reports from the North's capital on Friday quoted a senior diplomat as saying.

Vice foreign minister Choe Son-hui blamed top US officials for the breakdown of last month's summit in Hanoi between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, Russia's TASS news agency and the Associated Press said. "We have no intention to yield to the US demands (at the Hanoi summit) in any form, nor are we willing to engage in negotiations of this kind," TASS quoted Choe as telling reporters in the North Korean capital.

US secretary of state Mike Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton "created the atmosphere of hostility and mistrust and, therefore, obstructed the constructive effort for negotiations between the supreme leaders of North Korea and the United States", TASS quoted Choe as saying.

Kim is set to make an official announcement soon on his position on the denuclearisation talks with the US and the North's further ac-

Friends & Foes

N KOREAN diplomat blames Bolton, Pompeo for summit breakdown LEADER KIM Jong-un may make announcement on talks soon

TRUMP-KIM summit ended in disagreement over denuclearisation, demands to lift sanctions

INTER-KOREAN meeting cancelled after N Korea no-show

tions, it added, citing Choe. Bolton told reporters outside the White House that he had seen the statement from the North Korean official and that "I think that's inaccurate". He said he had spoken to his South Korean counterpart but wanted to consult with other US officials before responding further.

Choe said Washington threw away a golden opportunity at the summit and warned that Kim might rethink a moratorium on missile launches and nuclear tests, the AP said. "I want to make it clear that the gangster-like stand of the US will eventually put the situation in danger," AP quoted her as saying. But she added: "Personal relations between the two supreme leaders are still good and the chemistry is mysteriously wonder-

ful." Reuters

FB Product Chief Cox to Exit as Focus Shifts to Messaging

Munsi Vengattil & Paresh Dave San Francisco: Facebook's chief product officer and one of its earliest employees, Chris Cox, said on Thursday he is leaving the company just days after chief executive Mark Zuckerberg revealed a plan to transform the world's biggest social network into an encryption-focused messaging company.

Cox, the 36-year-old Zuckerberg lieutenant who would have managed the CEO's vision to bring Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp closer together, said in a blog post that his departure came "with great sadness". He had left a graduate programme at Stanford University to join Facebook in 2005 as a software engineer and helped develop its original news feed feature.

"As Mark has outlined, we are turning a new page in our product direction, focused on an encrypted, interoperable, messaging network... This will be a big project and we will need leaders who are excited to see the new direction through," Cox said in a Facebook post.

Cox's departure removes a layer of management, bringing Zuckerberg closer to a family of apps that he wants to make compatible, in what technology analysts expect will be a complicated engineering task.

Shares of Facebook were down 1.7% in extended trading following the announcement.

Cox informed the company of his intention to resign on Monday, according to a regulatory filing on Thursday.

Also departing is WhatsApp vice president Chris Daniels, adding to a string of recent high-profile exits from Facebook's product and communications teams. The shakeup is the second major management restructuring in as many years as the company

also faces numerous government investigations across the world related to user privacy and fake news on its services. Daniels had informed the company several months ago of his intention to leave and will stay on through a leadership transition, a person familiar with the matter said. Reuters



Chris Cox

TIPS, TRIVIA & TRENDS YOUR DAILY DIET OF FUN AND FACTS

Yeast from 1886 Shipwreck Makes New Brew

An ale introduced at a New York craft beer festival this month comes with an intriguing backstory—brewed from yeast in beer that went down on a doomed steamship and languished on the ocean floor for 131 years. Long Island brewer Jamie Adams created Deep Ascent ale using yeast from bottles salvaged from the SS



Oregon, an England-to-New York luxury liner that sank off Fire Island in 1886. Adams recovered the bottles in 2017 and cultured the yeast in test tubes. He then spent the next two years brewing test batches. What resulted was a brew with a slightly fruity taste and hoppy finish. Adams said his aim was to recreate what it would have been like to drink a beer on the ship in 1886. AP

Global Students' Strike Targets Climate Change

Thousands of school students walked out of classes across Australia and New Zealand on Friday in a global student strike to protest against government inaction on climate change. "Climate change is worse than Voldemort," read a handmade sign carried by one student in Wellington, referring to the evil wizard in the hugely popular Harry Potter books and films. "The oceans are rising, so are we," read another in Sydney. Student protests in capitals and cities from Wellington to Melbourne and Sydney drew tens of thousands of people. The worldwide student strike movement started in August 2018, when 16-year-old Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg began protesting outside her parliament on school days. She has since been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. "If we don't do something, it'll be our lives affected, not the 60-year-old politicians," said Sydney student Callum Frith, 15, who was wearing his school uniform. "We need action."



Elsewhere in Asia, about 60 students protested at government house in the Thai capital of Bangkok, holding cardboard signs to campaign against plastic. Thailand is one of the world's top marine plastic polluters. In the South Korean capital of Seoul, more than 100 students held recycled cardboard signs with slogans such as "Too Warm 4 School," and "Don't deny climate change." Reuters

Forget Flying Carpets, Flying Taxis are Coming Your Way



that is likely to happen sooner than later, with flying taxis expected to take to the skies by 2025. "People have been dreaming about it for decades on paper, and now the technology is here," said Michael Thacker, executive vice-president for technology and innovation at Bell. "The only question is, what are we going to do with it?" Thacker said his company has joined with ride-hailing app Uber and several aeronautics firms, including France's Safran, to create a fleet of flying taxis that are called vertical take-off and landing vehicles (VTOL). The Nexus, as this hybrid electric propulsion aircraft is named, was first unveiled in January at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Between 20 and 30 other firms are working on similar concepts, among them startups or major companies such as Airbus, which recently presented its electric aircraft CityAirbus. Uber plans to launch its air taxis first in Los Angeles and Dallas, two major traffic-congested American cities. Asked about using helicopters as an alternative, Thacker said the taxis are financially sounder and quieter. "The noise has to blend in with the background noise of the city," he said. He predicted the vehicles could start to be commercially used around 2025. AFP

S Korean Female Stars Rush to Deny K-Pop Sex Videos

Female K-pop stars and actors have rushed to issue denials that they appear in sex videos secretly shot by male singers, illustrating women's fears about victim-blaming and stigma in the face of South Korea's enduring conservative social values. In three days no fewer than five male K-pop singers, including mega star Seungri, have been identified as recipients of illicit videos made by singer-songwriter Jung Joon-young (in pic) of sexual acts with women, taken without their consent. Three are being investigated by police while four have announced their retirements or quit their bands. There has been widespread online speculation on the victims' identities. At least four women have issued separate statements denying they appear in the videos, with actor Oh Cho-hee saying on her Instagram account that the rumours were "really not true". Most of their agents said they would take legal action against further online rumours that "significantly ruin their reputation and image". AFP



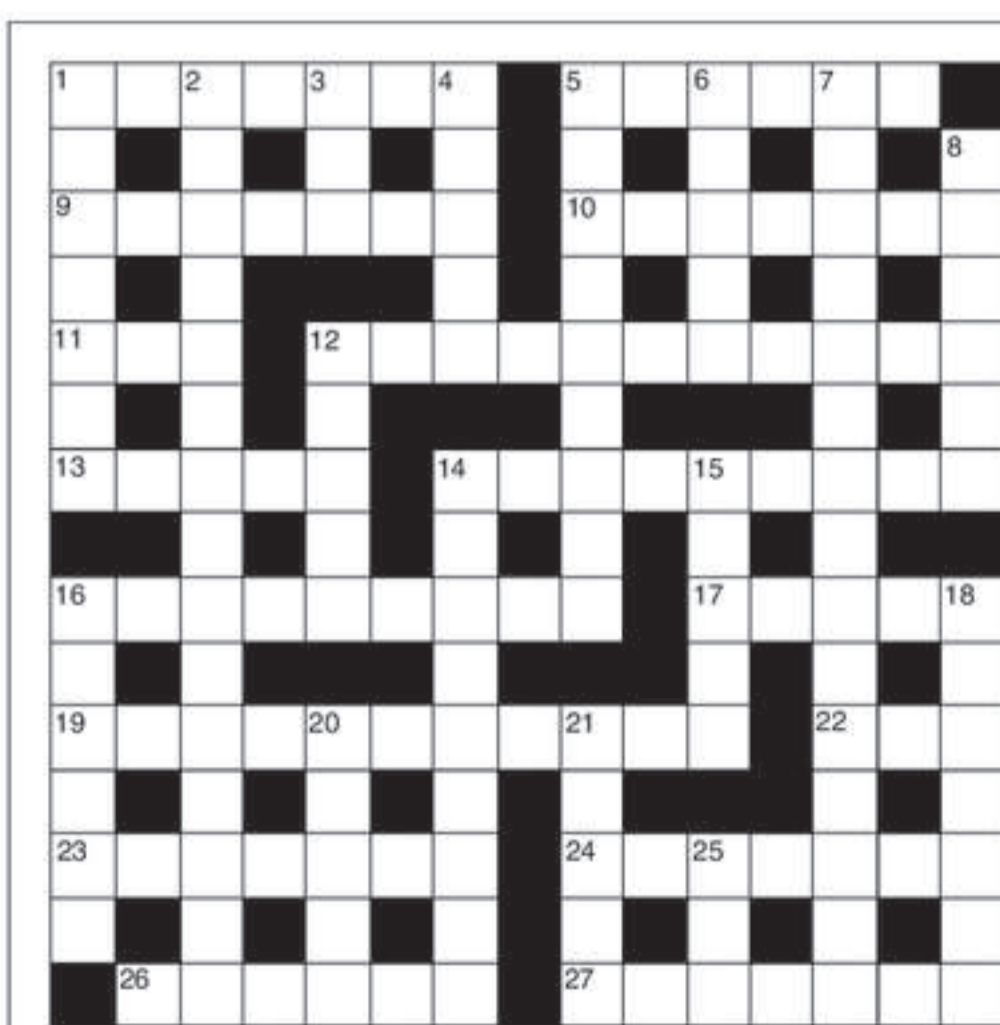
Uber Driver Pleads Guilty to Charges of Kidnapping Passenger in US

An Indian-origin man working as a driver for ride-sharing company Uber in the US has pleaded guilty to kidnapping a sleeping passenger and driving her more than 95km from her destination to boost his fare. Harbir Parmar, 25, of New York, pled guilty in White Plains federal court to kidnapping and wire fraud. He was arrested in October last year. Parmar pleaded guilty to one count of kidnapping, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison, and one count of wire fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. He will be sentenced in June. US attorney Geoffrey Berman said Parmar took advantage of a vulnerable woman who utilised a ridesharing service by kidnapping and terrorising her. "In addition, he charged many of his ridesharing customers with fraudulent fees," he said, adding that Parmar will now be held accountable for his brazen crimes. PTI



Crossword

7356



ACROSS: 1 Partners do this in county hotel a little (7) 5 Ruin Beachy Head beacon (6) 9 Depart on foot, avoiding a path (7) 10 Allowed into pigeon house, she wrote Gigi (7) 11 Return Prince Harry's note (3) 12 Tuber and old rubbish found in Darling river (5,6) 13 Gem, top-of-the-range, set in ring (5) 14 He paid poor European church for helmet, say (9) 16 Where all the animals were, about 500, unaware (2,3,4) 17 Excessively restricting a book that's proscribed (5) 19 Team achieves possibly undesirable results (4,7) 22 Model Conservative ejects Republican (3) 23 Complete conserving Arab clipper (7) 24 Strips of pasta, old ones, tangled up (7) 26 Announced approval for climb (6) 27 Rumour supplied by grass involving auditors (7)

DOWN: 1 Perhaps Ayrshire Beer set up plant (7) 2 She's a left hander, possibly showing lack of commitment (4-11) 3 Old weapon made from half of bark? (3) 4 Plant note about short song in church (5) 5 Change one's mind and support number (9) 6 Blockhouse initially is good place to go (5) 7 Lots that better curled up with love - or these (3-5,7) 8 Far-off meteor broke up (6) 12 Ointment left in bar (5) 14 How divers enter pool without thinking (4,5) 15 Golfer does this first in Turnberry in places (5) 16 Forcefully demand twin sister's portion (6) 18 Waste donkey's years without Karen, making long trip (7) 20 First of young found in big lake nest (5) 21 Top commander's beginning to hope for certainty (5) 25 A helping of avocado or tuberous plant (3)

SOLUTION TO No. 7355 ACROSS: 1 Portmanteau. 9 Solicit. 10 Moulder. 11 Rib. 12 Elevate. 13 Eardrum. 14 Sin. 15 Miami. 17 Yahooo. 18 Stoic. 20 Argue. 22 Wig. 24 Emotive. 25 Unheard. 26 Mum. 27 Chinese. 28 Bolsnie. 29 Tea strainer. DOWN: 1 Palaeontologist. 2 Reclaim. 3 Mitre. 4 Numbering. 5 Equery. 6 Under the weather. 7 Assets. 8 Crambo. 16 Abatement. 18 Sketch. 19 Chimera. 21 Echelon. 23 Gadget. 25 Umbr.

Dilbert

by S Adams

