



Journalist freed

German journalist Billy Six, detained by Venezuelan intelligence services four months ago, was freed in Caracas



We need a new president, committed heart and soul to the climate crises

— Al Gore, Former US vice-president

SHORT TAKES

Houston woman has sextuplets

Houston: A Houston woman beat the odds of one in 4.7 billion after giving birth to sextuplets at The Woman's Hospital of Texas in the United States. According to the hospital, the woman delivered two sets of twin boys and one set of twin girls between 4:50 am and 4:59 am local time on Friday. The mother, Thelma Chiaka, is doing well. The babies were born at weights ranging from 1 pound and 12 ounces to 2 pounds and 14 ounces. They are stable and will continue to receive care at the neonatal intensive care unit.

Slovaks vote for president

Bratislava: Zuzana Caputova, an anti-corruption campaigner with no previous experience of public office, is set to win Slovakia's presidential election on Saturday as voters spurn the ruling Smer party one year after the murder of a journalist sparked mass protests. The killing of Jan Kuciak triggered the biggest anti-government protests in Slovakia since communism ended three decades earlier. It also led to the resignation of then prime minister, Smer leader Robert Fico.

24 DEAD IN ZIMBABWE CYCLONE

Harare: At least 24 people have been killed and dozens are missing in parts of eastern Zimbabwe hit by the peripheral effects of tropical cyclone Idai which lashed neighbouring Mozambique, government said Saturday. Zimbabwe's ministry of information announced on Twitter that so far the "number of deaths is confirmed at 24 mainly from Chimanimani East," including two students, while at least 40 other people have been injured.

Many houses have been damaged and bridges washed away in parts of the Manicaland province. A group of people who fled their homes were "marooned" on top of a mountain waiting to be rescued, but strong winds were hampering helicopter flights, the ministry said. Earlier a lawmaker said thousands of people have been affected, power cut off and major bridges flooded. "The information we have so far is that over 100 people are missing and some of them" may have died, Joshua Sacco, a member of parliament in Chimanimani district, said. "At least 25 houses were swept away following a mudslide at Nanganu township in Chimanimani urban."

Mosque attack suspect charged with murder

■ Tarrant flashes white power gesture in New Zealand court

Christchurch, March 16: A right-wing extremist flashed a white power gesture as he faced the first of many murder charges in a New Zealand court on Saturday, while a shell-shocked community dug graves for 49 mosque-goers he stands accused of slaying.

Australia-born, 28-year-old Brenton Tarrant stood largely impassive in the dock wearing handcuffs and a white prison smock, as the judge read the first of what are expected to be a host of murder charges that could mean he dies in jail.

Flanked by armed police, the former personal fitness trainer gestured an upside-down "okay", a symbol used by white power groups worldwide. He did not request bail and was taken into custody until his next court appearance which was scheduled for April 5.

Outside the courtroom, Christchurch residents struggled to deal with the aftermath of what is thought to be the worst act of terror against Muslims in the West. At an old gravesite, excavators were called in to remove the vast amount of earth needed to bury the dead, although police have not yet been able to release the bodies to anxious families.

At the nearby hospital, doctors worked round the clock to treat 39 people for gunshot wounds and other injuries sustained in the attacks. The wounded included a two-year-old boy and a four-year-old girl.

The attack on the Al Noor and Linwood mosques has prompted an outpouring of grief and deep shock in this usually peaceful country, which prides itself on welcoming refugees fleeing violence or persecution.

Throughout the day people laid flowers at a makeshift memorial just beyond the police cordon around the Al Noor mosque, where most of the victims died. Many were accompanied with handwritten letters laden with sadness and disbelief, from residents of what one local driver called the "city of sorrow".

"I am so sorry that you were not safe here. Our hearts are breaking for your loss," read one of the notes marked with a string of x-kisses. —AFP

Halim gave a harrowing account of the moment during Friday prayers when gunshots rang out in the mosque, replacing peaceful reflection with screaming, bloodshed and death.

"Everyone laid down on the floor, and some women started crying, some people died immediately," he said.

But, he said, New Zealand Muslims still felt at home in the south Pacific nation. "My children live here" he said, adding, "we are happy". —AFP



A Turkish man holds a placard as people demonstrate for the people killed during the mosque attacks in New Zealand, during a protest in Ankara, Turkey, on Saturday.

IMAM SAYS 'WE STILL LOVE THIS COUNTRY'

Christchurch, March 16: An imam who was leading prayers at a Christchurch mosque when a gunman brandishing semi-automatic weapons mowed down his congregation said on Saturday that the Muslim community's love for New Zealand would not be shaken by the massacre.

"We still love this country," said Ibrahim Abdul Halim, imam of Linwood Mosque, vowing that extremists would "never ever touch our confidence".

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Search is on for missing Indians

Christchurch, March 16: India's High Commission in New Zealand on Saturday said that it has been pursuing with local authorities whereabouts of seven Indians and two Indian-origin persons after the terror attacks on two Christchurch mosques.

Two Indians are receiving treatments, the Indian mission said. "We have been pursuing with NZ authorities whereabouts of 9 Indians, incl 2 PIOs. 2 Indians receiving treatment."

Following up with NZ Govt for others. Also r in regular touch with their families (sic)," the Twitter account of the Indian High Commission in New Zealand said. At least 49 worshippers were killed on Friday in attacks on the Al Noor Mosque in central Christchurch and the Linwood Mosque in the city's outer suburb, in what appeared to be the worst attack on Muslims in a western country.

On Friday, the Twitter account of India's High Commissioner in New Zealand Sanjiv Kohli tweeted: "As per updates received from multiple sources there are 9 missing persons of Indian nationality/origin. Official confirmation still awaited. Huge crime against humanity. Our prayers with their families".

In New Delhi, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said on Friday that India's High Commission in New Zealand is in touch with local authorities for more information. High Commission said any Indian national affected by the attacks on two Christchurch mosques can contact the mission for assistance. —PTI

Prez issues first veto over wall

Washington, March 16: Unbowed by a congressional rebuke, President Donald Trump issued the first veto of his presidency on Friday in a demonstration that he is not through fighting for his signature campaign promise, which stands largely unfulfilled 18 months before voters decide whether to grant him another term.

Trump rejected an effort by Congress to block the emergency declaration he'd used to circumvent lawmakers as he tried to shake loose funds for his long-promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. The monthslong confrontation now moves to the courts, but not before marking a new era of



divided government in Washington and Republicans' increasing independence from the White House. "Congress has the freedom to pass this resolution," Trump said, "and I have the duty to veto it." A dozen defecting Republicans joined Senate Democrats in approving the joint resolution which capped a week of confrontation with White House. —AP

THREE OR MORE EGGS A WEEK MEANS EARLY DEATH!

People who eat an added three or four eggs a week or 300 milligrams of dietary cholesterol per day, have a higher risk of both heart disease and early death compared with those who eat fewer eggs, new research finds.

■ Eggs are a major source of dietary cholesterol, wrote Victor Zhong, post-doctoral fellow at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

■ Zhong and his colleagues noted that a single large egg contains about 186 milligrams of cholesterol.

■ The researchers examined data from six US study groups including more than 29,000 people followed for 17½ years on average.

■ Over the follow-up period, a total of 5,400 cardiovascular events occurred, including 1,302 fatal and non-fatal strokes.

■ Extra 300 mg of dietary cholesterol per day was associated with a 3.2% higher risk of heart disease and 4.4% higher risk of early death.

■ Each additional half an egg was associated with a 1.1% higher risk of cardiovascular disease and 1.9% higher risk of early death.

■ Additionally, cholesterol-containing foods are usually rich in saturated fat and animal protein.

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 7, 4, 2, 8, 6, 5, 7, 8, 9, 4, 3, 6, 1, 9, 3, 4, 1, 6, 7, 8, 5, 2, 4, 8.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER grid with numbers 5, 6, 9, 8, 7, 3, 1, 2, 4, 1, 3, 8, 4, 2, 9, 6, 5, 7, 7, 4, 2, 1, 6, 5, 8, 9, 3, 3, 2, 5, 6, 9, 4, 7, 1, 8, 4, 7, 1, 5, 8, 2, 9, 3, 6, 9, 8, 6, 3, 1, 7, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 3, 2, 4, 6, 5, 7, 1, 2, 1, 4, 7, 5, 8, 3, 6, 9, 6, 5, 7, 9, 3, 1, 4, 8, 2.

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 4, 7, 3, 2, 7, 6, 1, 3, 8, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 8, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 3, 7, 9, 8, 4, 1, 8, 4, 9, 3, 9, 2, 5, 4, 6, 9.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER grid with numbers 4, 9, 8, 1, 5, 3, 2, 6, 7, 3, 1, 2, 7, 6, 4, 5, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 9, 2, 8, 3, 4, 1, 8, 5, 9, 4, 7, 6, 1, 3, 2, 1, 2, 4, 8, 3, 9, 7, 5, 6, 6, 3, 7, 5, 1, 2, 9, 8, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 8, 7, 6, 1, 9, 9, 7, 6, 3, 4, 1, 8, 2, 5, 2, 8, 1, 6, 9, 5, 4, 7, 3.

PM Ardern vows gun law reforms

Christchurch (New Zealand), March 16: New Zealand's prime minister vowed to toughen the country's gun laws after revealing on Saturday that the man accused of murdering 49 people in two mosques legally purchased the arsenal of firearms used in the massacre.

Jacinda Ardern said the gunman, 28-year-old Australian Brenton Tarrant, obtained a



"Category A" gun licence in November 2017 and began purchasing the five weapons used in Friday's attacks in the southern

city of Christchurch the following month.

The firearms included two semi-automatic rifles, two shotguns and a lever-action weapon, she said, speaking to reporters in Wellington before heading to Christchurch.

"The mere fact... that this individual had acquired a gun licence and acquired weapons of that range, then obviously I think people will be seeking change, and I'm com-

mitting to that," she said.

"While work is being done as to the chain of events that led to both the holding of this gun licence, and the possession of these weapons, I can tell you one thing right now our gun laws will change."

She confirmed that the gunman and two suspected associates who were also arrested had not been on the radar of any intelligence agencies. —AFP

ETHIOPIAN | MISHAP ■ Bereaved families offered charred earth from crash site to bury

DNA testing of remains to take 6 months

Addis Ababa, March 16: Ethiopian Airlines said on Saturday that DNA testing of the remains of the 157 passengers on board flight 302 may take up to six months as it offered bereaved families charred earth from the plane crash site to bury.

A team of investigators in Paris has begun examining the black box recorders recovered from the site where the Boeing 737 MAX 8 plane crashed into a field on Sunday after taking off from Addis Ababa. Passengers from more than 30 nations were aboard.

As families wait for the results from the investigation into the cause of the crash, Ethiopian Airlines is planning to hold a service on Sunday in Addis Ababa, at the Kidist Selassie, or Holy Trinity Cathedral, where many of the country's past



Ethiopian relatives of crash victims grieve at the site where the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 Max 8 crashed shortly after takeoff on Sunday killing all 157 on board, near Bishoftu, south-east of Addis Ababa, on Thursday.

rulers are buried beneath its pink stone spires. "We were told by the company that we will be given a kilo (of earth) each for burial at Selassie Church for a funeral they will organise,"

said one family member who asked not to be named. Papers given to the families at the Skylight Hotel on Saturday said death certificates would be issued within two weeks, and an initial

payment made to cover immediate expenses.

The return of remains - most of which are charred and fragmented - would take up to six months, the papers said, but in the meantime earth from the crash site would be given.

Abdumajid Sheriff, a Kenyan whose Yemeni brother-in-law died, said they had already held a service. "We are Muslims we didn't care about that (earth). We did yesterday our prayers at the mosque and that is all for us."

Experts say it is too soon to know what caused the crash, but aviation authorities worldwide have grounded Boeing's 737 MAXs, as concerns over the plane caused the company's share price to tumble by around 10 percent.

Flight data has already indicated some similarities

with a crash by the same model of plane during a Lion Air flight in October. All 189 people onboard were killed. Both planes crashed within minutes of take off after pilots reported problems.

The grounding of Boeing's 737 MAX jets after the crash in Ethiopia has had no immediate financial impact on airlines using the planes, but it will get painful for the industry the longer they do not fly, companies and analysts said on Friday.

Boeing plans to release upgraded software for its 737 MAX in a week to 10 days, sources familiar with the matter said.

The U.S. planemaker has been working on a software upgrade for an anti-stall system and pilot displays on its fastest-selling jetliner in the wake of the deadly Lion Air crash. —Reuters



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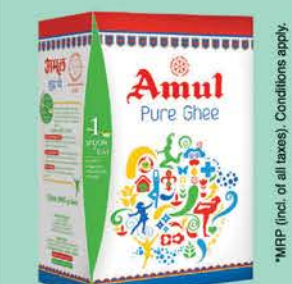
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