

TOP OF THE WORLD



At the blast site. AP

TANZANIA  
57 dead in fuel tanker blast

Morogoro: Fifty-seven people perished in Tanzania on Saturday when a fuel tanker exploded after overturning on a road west of the country's economic capital Dar es Salaam, police said. The disaster took place near the town of Morogoro, with police saying the blast may have been sparked by a cigarette as people rushed to collect leaking fuel from the stricken truck. "There was a huge blast which has so far killed at least 57 people," regional police chief Willbrod Mtafungwa said. Witnesses told AFP that they saw the charred remains of a number of motorcycle taxis and trees scorched by the power of the explosion.

RUSSIA  
Five died in missile test explosion

Moscow: Russia said Saturday an explosion at an Arctic missile testing site killed five nuclear agency staff and involved radioactive isotopes after a nearby city reported a spike in radiation levels. In a statement, Russia's nuclear agency Rosatom said the accident on Thursday at a secret military facility also left three staff with burns and other injuries. The military had not previously described the accident as involving nuclear fuel and said radiation levels were normal afterwards. Officials in a nearby city reported radiation levels were raised after the accident.

NORWAY  
Shooting at mosque, suspect in custody

Oslo: One person has been injured in a shooting inside a mosque in Norway, police said on Saturday, adding that one man had been apprehended. The suspected shooter at the al-Noor Islamic Centre near the country's capital was described as "a young white man" who appeared to have acted alone, the police added. The victim was a 75-year-old member of the congregation, mosque director Irfan Mushtaq told TV2. The shooter, who wore body armour and a helmet, was overpowered by members of the mosque before police arrived, Mushtaq added.

Targeted Mexicans: El Paso killer

In his manifesto, gunman said attack was response to the 'Hispanic invasion of Texas': Authorities

NICHOLAS BOGEL-BURROUGHS  
AUGUST 10

THE SUSPECT in the El Paso, Texas, shooting stepped out of a vehicle with his hands up and declared "I'm the shooter" when he was arrested minutes after the massacre at a Walmart that killed 22 people, police said in an affidavit filed Friday.

The suspect, Patrick W. Crusius, 21, who is white, also divulged to police that he had targeted "Mexicans," according to the document, written by Detective Adrian Garcia of the El Paso Police Department.

While responding to reports of an active shooter Saturday morning, the document said, rangers with Texas Department of Public Safety saw a vehicle stop at an intersection near the Walmart. It said a man exited the vehicle and admitted opening fire on customers and employees in the store.

After waiving his Miranda rights, Crusius said he had used an AK-47-style rifle and brought multiple magazines with him from Allen, Texas, to carry out the killings, Garcia wrote.



At the burial of one of the victims of the mass shooting at a Walmart store in Texas. Reuters

Crusius' mother had called the Allen Police Department in the weeks before the shooting, asking whether her son was mature enough to handle the rifle he had recently ordered.

Authorities have said that the gunman wrote a four-page manifesto that said he was carrying out the attack in "response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas." Latinos around the United States have said they were deeply shaken by the shooting, the deadliest attack to target Latinos

in modern U.S. history.

The suspect is facing a state capital murder charge and is being held without bond. The El Paso prosecutor has vowed to seek the death penalty, and federal prosecutors are considering charging the suspect under hate crime statutes, as well as firearm laws that can carry a death sentence.

In the affidavit, which was written hours after the massacre, Garcia wrote that the suspect had been taken to an interview room, where he agreed to

EXPLAINED  
Republicans weigh background checks

AFTER TWO recent mass shootings, President Trump has indicated a willingness to consider expanded background checks on gun purchasers, US media reported.

Trump must overcome opposition from the National Rifle Association and other such groups. However, this issue is one which Trump has frequently changed his stance on over the years. He was in favour of such a measure in 2013, against it when running for president in 2015 and back in support in 2018, after another mass shooting. Republican reactions to the recent killings suggest that they are, at least, feeling the pressure to take substantive action.

speak with another detective about the shooting.

The El Paso police chief, Greg Allen, previously said that Crusius "basically didn't hold anything back" in interviews with investigators and had told them he drove for 10 to 11 hours from Allen to El Paso. He became lost in the border city and drove to the Walmart because he was hungry, Allen said.

The El Paso killings were one of three shootings in a week that are now being investigated

by federal authorities. A gunman in Dayton, Ohio, killed his sibling and eight other people near a bar, rattling the nation less than 12 hours after the El Paso killings and drawing renewed calls for a federal ban on assault rifles.

The El Paso suspect's court-appointed lawyer, Mark Stevens, has previously declined to comment on the charges. He did not immediately respond to an email Friday about the reported confession. **NYT**



Reuters

TYPHOON KILLS 18 IN CHINA

■ People walk in the rainstorm as typhoon Lekima hit in Shanghai, China, on Saturday.

■ The storm triggered rainstorms and caused a landslide that blocked rivers, raising the water level and trapping 120 villages.

■ At least 18 were killed and 14 missing after a barrier lake burst in eastern China's Zhejiang province, official media here said.

■ More than one million people, including 253,000 in Shanghai, were evacuated before the storm struck, the *Xinhua* said. **PTI**

Hong Kong protesters defy Beijing warnings, as police fire tear gas

ANDREW HIGGINS, KATHERINE LI & EZRA CHEUNG  
HONG KONG, AUGUST 10

DEFYING WARNINGS from China of a crackdown if they continued more than two months of protests, young demonstrators blocked a vital tunnel under Hong Kong's Victoria Harbor on Saturday, barricaded a traffic intersection and set fires outside a police station in a shopping district popular with tourists.

The Hong Kong police force said in a statement that the fires in the Tsim Sha Tsui district of the city posed "a serious threat to the safety of everyone

at the scene."

Police officers fired tear gas in several locations as a day that began with a show of peaceful defiance outside the headquarters of China's military garrison descended into an evening of clashes, panic and widespread disruption.

Assailed for days by China's propaganda machine as violent thugs who must be stopped, Hong Kong's protest movement — a largely leaderless jumble of groups and causes — started the day with a display of what activists say was their peaceful intent. Several thousand people marched in an orderly procession past China's military headquarters in the former British colony. **NYT**

Road clear for Gotabaya to contest coming Sri Lankan president election

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, AUGUST 10

WITH MOST hurdles out of his way, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was Sri Lanka's defence secretary during the successful war against the LTTE, is all set to contest the presidential elections to be held towards the end of November.

The *Sunday Express* has learnt that a consensus has been reached in the family and former president Mahinda Rajapaksa will announce the name of brother Gotabaya as the candidate of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) on August 11, at the party's national convention being held in Colombo.

Sources said Gotabaya will roll out his campaign the same



Gotabaya Rajapaksa

day, and tour the country till August 18, meeting leaders and clergy of the Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Hindu communities.

The Sri Lankan election commission had recently announced that the presidential polls would be held between November 15 and December 7. While Mahinda cannot con-

HELD FOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Jeffrey Epstein 'kills himself' in Manhattan jail

WILLIAM K RASHBAUM & BENJAMIN WEISER  
NEW YORK, AUGUST 10

JEFFREY EPSTEIN, the financier who was long dogged by accusations of sexual abuse of girls and who was able to cultivate a stream of high-profile friends despite his lurid lifestyle, killed himself in his Manhattan jail cell, officials said on Saturday.

Epstein hanged himself, the officials said. He was found at roughly 6:30 am Saturday at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan and was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead, the federal Bureau of Prisons said in a statement.

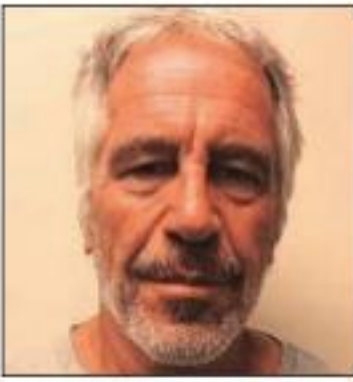
Last month, a week after being denied bail on federal sex trafficking charges, Epstein was found unconscious in his cell at the jail with marks on his neck. Prison officials had been investigating that incident as a possible suicide attempt.

Epstein was housed in a special unit with extra security, but he was not under suicide watch, according to a prison official.

The authorities did not explain why he was not under additional safeguards, given the earlier incident. The FBI said it was investigating, and Attorney General William P. Barr said in a statement that a special inquiry would be opened into what happened.

"I was appalled to learn that Jeffrey Epstein was found dead early this morning from an apparent suicide while in federal custody," Barr said. "Epstein's death raises serious questions that must be answered. In addition to the FBI's investigation, I have consulted with the Inspector General who is opening an investigation into the circumstances of Epstein's death."

Manhattan federal prosecutors last month charged Epstein, 66, with sex trafficking of girls as young as 14. The indictment renewed attention toward how Epstein — who had opulent homes, a private jet and access to elite circles — had escaped severe punishment in an earlier investi-



KEY EVENTS FROM 2019 PROCEEDINGS

**July 7:** Epstein arrested and taken into custody at Teterboro airport in New Jersey.

**July 8:** New York prosecutors alleged that from about 2002 to 2005, Epstein "sexually exploited and abused dozens of minor girls at his homes", some as young as 14-years-old.

**July 18:** Federal judge denied bail for Epstein

**July 25:** Epstein was found lying with injuries to his back at a federal lockup in New York. He was then placed on suicide watch

gation into his abuse of girls more than a decade ago in Florida.

He had avoided federal criminal charges in 2008 after prosecutors brokered a widely criticized deal that allowed him to plead guilty to state charges of solicitation of prostitution from a minor and serve 13 months in jail. Even while in custody, Epstein was allowed to leave the jail for 12 hours a day, six days a week, to work at his office in Florida.

The new federal indictment also focused scrutiny on an array of luminaries in government, politics, business, academia, science and fashion with whom Epstein had associated over the years, including Donald J. Trump, Bill Clinton, Prince Andrew of Britain and the retail billionaire Leslie Wexner. **NYT**

BY THE EARLY 1980s, THE PENGUIN COLONY HAD BEEN FACING TOTAL EXTINCTION

To save tiny penguins, an Australian suburb was wiped off the map

BESHA RODELL  
PHILLIP ISLAND, AUGUST 10

IT'S A magical sight: Just as the light begins to vanish, thousands of tiny penguins waddle out of the surf on an island in south-eastern Australia, then head up the beach and along well-worn paths toward their burrows.

The "penguin parade" has been a major attraction since the 1920s, when tourists were led by torchlight to view the nightly arrival of birds — the world's smallest penguin breed, with adults averaging 13 inches tall — from

a day of fishing and swimming.

For much of that time, the penguins lived among the residents of a housing development, mostly modest vacation homes, in tight proximity to cars and pets, as well as ravenous foxes. The penguins' numbers fell precipitously. But in 1985, the state government took an extraordinary step: It decided to buy every piece of property on the Summerland Peninsula and return the land to the penguins. The process was completed in 2010.

The birds are now thriving. There are about 31,000 breeding penguins on the peninsula, up

from 12,000 in the 1980s. Phillip Island Nature Parks is the most popular wildlife tourist destination in the state of Victoria, drawing 740,000 visitors in 2018. And late last month, a gleaming symbol of that success opened to the public: a \$58 million visitor center, a striking star-shaped building with glass walls that look onto penguin burrows.

"The case study at Phillip Island is proof that difficult short-term decisions can yield great long-term results," said Rachel Lowry, chief conservation officer of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature-Australia. "It is



Penguins on Phillip Island, Australia in July 2019. NYT

an incredible example of allowing scientific modeling to motivate and inform a decision that has gone on to benefit both people and nature in the long term."

For many residents of Victoria, a visit to the penguin parade was — and still is — a childhood rite of passage, the destination for school trips and family outings.

But the peninsula has also been an attractive location for developers. On the penguins' breeding ground, 190 structures — mainly homes — were built as part of Summerland Estate, with plans for hundreds more. That, along with the predatory behav-

ior of foxes (now eradicated) introduced by European settlers, led to a sharp decrease in the island's population of little penguins. At one time there were 10 colonies on Phillip Island; today there is only one.

By the early 1980s, scientists studying the colony were worried about the prospect of total local extinction. "The colony was being eroded at an alarmingly rapid rate," said Peter Dann, research manager at Phillip Island Nature Park. In the years leading up to 1985, measures had been taken by the government to halt development and buy undevel-

oped land on the peninsula. But the idea of eradicating Summerland Estate was a bombshell for residents.

Dann, who himself was a onetime renter on the peninsula, said he understood the anguish. But his main concern and loyalty lay with the penguins, he said.

This week, nine years after the last Summerland Estate home was purchased and removed by the state, a final demolition will begin: The old center and its surrounding facilities will be cleared, freeing up almost 15 acres of prime habitat — enough for around 1,400 tiny penguins. **NYT**