

49 killed and more than 20 seriously injured in New Zealand mass shooting targeting mosques



Ambulance staff take a man from outside a mosque in central Christchurch, New Zealand, Friday, March 15, 2019. A witness says many people have been killed in a mass shooting at a mosque in the New Zealand city of Christchurch.(AP Photo/Mark Baker)

One person has been charged in connection with a “well-planned” terrorist attack that killed 49 people and injured dozens more in two mosques in New Zealand on Friday, authorities said.

The New Zealand police said four people — three men and one woman — were in custody in connection with the attack. Investigators later defused a number of improvised explosive devices that were found inside vehicles. Prime Minister Jacinda Arden described the suspects as one principal, two associates and one person not directly connected to the attacks. She said the suspects were not on any security watch lists.

“These are people who I would describe as having extremist views, that have

absolutely no place in New Zealand.” Arden said.

Thirty people were killed at the Masjid Al Noor mosque in central Christchurch and seven were slain inside the Linwood Masjid Mosque. Another three died outside the Linwood mosque.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison confirmed that one of the detainees was a 28-year-old white Australian-born citizen. He described the suspect as “an extremist, right-wing, violent terrorist.”

The suspects were apprehended by local police following Friday’s attack, Mike Bush, New Zealand’s police commissioner, told reporters at a news conference. No motive for the attack has been determined.

Investigators did not rule out that more gunmen could be involved, he said.

NEW ZEALAND GUNMAN APPEARS TO HAVE LIVESTREAMED MASSACRE

Police were also working to remove an unconfirmed video that circulated online showing the Australian suspect entering a mosque and firing multiple shots at people inside. He claimed responsibility for the shooting and reportedly published a 74-page anti-immigrant manifesto prior to the killings. He wrote that he traveled to the island nation to train and commit the attack.

In one video frame, the suspect is seen driving to the mosque with what appeared to be several semi-automatic weapons inside his vehicle.

Officers responded to a shooting at the Masjid Al Noor in Christchurch on Friday afternoon and also responded to a second shooting at the nearby Linwood Masjid mosque.



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#WATCH This is the latest statement on the Christchurch shooting by Police Commissioner Mike Bush.

Authorities were not sure if any other locations were under threat and urged worshipers to refrain from visiting any mosque in the country, Bush said. A brief

lockdown of Christchurch schools was lifted Friday evening.

AOC DRAWS IRE RIPPING 'YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS' AFTER CHRISTCHURCH MOSQUE SHOOTINGS

Ardern said Friday's events represented "one of New Zealand's darkest days."

Witnesses said the Masjid Al Noor mosque was full for Friday afternoon prayers when the shooting occurred. Len Penaha told the Associated Press that he saw a man dressed in black enter the mosque and then heard dozens of gunshots. That was followed by terrified mosque-goers running from the terror. A suspect was seen outside, fleeing after dropping what appeared to be a semi-automatic weapon, witnesses said.



A man reacts as he speaks on a mobile phone outside a mosque in central Christchurch, New Zealand, Friday, March 15, 2019. A witness says many people have been killed in a mass shooting at a mosque in the New Zealand city of Christchurch.(AP Photo/Mark Baker)

"I saw dead people everywhere," one nearby resident said.

Another witness told TVNZ he saw three women shot and bleeding outside the mosque. A third witness said a suspect fired more than 50 shots, Stuff.co.NZ reported.

"He had a big gun and a lot of bullets and he came through and started shooting, like, everyone in the mosque, like, everywhere, and they have to smash the door

and the glass from the window and from the small door to try and get out," he said.

WITNESSES SAY MANY DEAD, INJURED IN SHOOTING AT NEW ZEALAND MOSQUE

Retno Marsudi, Indonesia's foreign minister, said six Indonesians were inside the Al Noor Mosque when the shooting occurred and three escaped.

"We are looking for three other Indonesian citizens," Marsudi said.

Members of the Bangladesh cricket team said they narrowly escaped the shooting at the Masjid Al Noor mosque. Players and coaching staff were reportedly getting off a bus when the shooting broke out. Tamim Iqbal, a batsman on the team, tweeted: "Entire team got saved from active shooters. Frightening experience and please keep us in your prayers."



Tamim Iqbal Khan@TamimOfficial28

Entire team got saved from active shooters!!! Frightening experience and please keep us in your prayers

Mario Villavarayen, a strength and conditioning coach with the team, told New Zealand media the players did not see the suspect but heard shots. He said the group was shaken but unhurt.

"I spoke to one of them shortly after," Villavarayen said. They didn't see anything but heard gunshots. They were at the ground and just started running. The coaching staff were all at the hotel."

The team reportedly fled the scene on foot to Hagley Oval where it was scheduled to play New Zealand on Saturday.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Source:

<https://www.foxnews.com/world/multiple-fatalities-at-new-zealand-mosque-shootin>

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