

MOSQUE RAIDED AFTER OZ SHOOTING

Sydney

An Australian mosque reportedly visited by a 15-year-old boy before he shot dead a civilian police employee in an "act of terrorism" has been raided, police said yesterday.

New South Wales state police said the mosque in the western Sydney suburb of Parramatta - close to the scene of the double shooting on Friday afternoon - was raided with the consent of religious leaders.

"NSW Police yesterday executed a warrant at a mosque in Parramatta," police said in a statement yesterday. "The



A fireman hoses down the scene where a 15-year-old gunman shot dead a civilian police employee

warrant was undertaken by arrangement with leadership at the mosque who provided full assistance to police at all times."

The 15-year-old gunman, who killed finance worker Curtis Cheng at close range outside the police force's headquarters before he was shot dead by officers, visited the mosque before the shooting, according to the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* (ABC).

Investigators have yet to establish why the teenager - who has no criminal history - targeted 58-year-old Cheng,

although Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said on Saturday the attack "appears to have been an act of terrorism".

Police did not provide further details about the mosque raid. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported that investigators were searching for the boy's belongings, but had left empty-handed.

Senior police sources told the ABC the teenager's sister went missing Thursday and boarded a Singapore Airlines flight to Istanbul, adding that she could be bound for Iraq or Syria.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop would not comment on

the report of the girl's travels, but said Australian federal and state governments were in talks with Muslim communities after the boy was identified as being of Iraqi Kurdish background and born in Iran.

"Yesterday, Prime Minister Turnbull and (NSW) Premier Mike Baird had a long conversation with not only... relevant agencies but also leaders in the Muslim community," Bishop said.

"We're certainly reaching out to the leaders of the Muslim community but working with the families at a grassroots local level.

France floods

17 DEAD AFTER STORMS SWEEP FRENCH RIVIERA

Nice

Violent storms and flooding along the French Riviera have killed at least 17 people and another four are still missing in what were described as "apocalyptic" scenes, local officials said yesterday.

Up to 180 millimetres (seven inches) of rain fell in just three hours overnight, transforming the glitzy streets of Cannes, Nice and Antibes into debris-strewn rivers. In

Cannes - home of the glitzy film festival - the torrent carried some cars out to sea, city hall said.

Communications to the region - one of the wealthiest in France, and a magnet for visitors from around the world - were badly hit and thousands of residents were left without power.

President Francois Hollande visited the region, expressing the "solidarity of the nation" to those affected - but also



A flooded car, in Mandelieu-la-Napoule, southeastern France

warning that the disaster suggested an environmental message had to be learnt.

"There have always been catastrophes. But their rhythm and intensity are on the increase," he said.

Three people died when water engulfed a retirement home at Biot near Antibes, and three drowned when their car was trapped by rising waters in a small tunnel at Vallauris-Golfe-Juan.



Damaged and flooded car in Mandelieu-la-Napoule, southeastern France

Pilgrims to Lourdes trapped on trains

Paris

Hundreds of Italian pilgrims returning by train from the French shrine of Lourdes were trapped overnight by violent storms, rail authorities said yesterday.

All trains were stopped along the French Riviera,

although the pilgrims' trains were allowed to resume their journey at a slow pace yesterday.

"We hope to let them continue their journey towards Italy by letting their trains go along a track re-opened for them, but at a

slow speed," said a spokesman for French rail company SNCF.

The storm "did serious damage to the railway infrastructure, tracks, crossings, electrical lines, primarily around the area of Cannes," he said.

Maid torture: Bangladesh cricketer's wife arrested

Dhaka

Bangladesh police arrested international cricketer Shahadat Hossain's wife yesterday over allegations of beating and torturing their 11-year-old maid, an officer said.

The 29-year-old paceman was suspended last month when police raided his house after officers found the injured and crying maid on a street in the capital Dhaka.

He and his wife Nritto Shahadat had been on the run since.

"Nritto Shahadat was arrested from her parents' house," inspector Shafiqur Rahman said.

"We conducted a raid at the house as we had information that the couple was hiding there. But we only found her," he said, adding police were still hunting for Hossain.

The maid, Mahfuza Akter Happy, told police and local media in September that the couple beat her, while television footage showed her looking frail and thin with swollen black eyes.

Quick action

Oregon teenager escaped by 'playing dead'

Roseburg

A teenager survived a mass shooting at an Oregon college because the gunman believed she was dead, her father said.

Randy Scroggins said the attacker ignored his daughter Lacey because she was covered by the body and blood of another victim. Instead the gunman shot dead another student.

Nine people were killed in the shooting at a community

college in Oregon. The gunman, Chris Harper Mercer, 26, shot himself dead after exchanging fire with police.

The victims ranged in age from 18 to 67. Eight were students while the oldest was a teacher.

Scroggins, a pastor, said he was indebted to the family of 20-year-old Treven Anspach, who was shot after Mercer passed over his daughter.

"I will say thank you for

giving birth to the one that saved my baby."

Scroggins also said his daughter told him Mercer had spared one student to deliver a message to the authorities.

Other students' relatives have backed up the account: Bonnie Schaan, mother of Cheyenne Fitzgerald, said she was told by her 16-year-old daughter the gunman told a classmate they were "going to be the lucky one".

It is unclear why Mercer

carried out the killings. The authorities have not released the contents of notes left by him.

Two survivors have said religion was an issue - the gunman asked his victims to state their religion and shot dead the Christians.

His father, Ian Mercer, said he had no idea how his son had amassed such an arsenal and said the attack would not have happened if the US had stricter gun control laws.



Residents of Douglas County attend a prayer service and candlelight vigil at River Bend Park to remember the victims of the mass shooting