

Austin bombings suspect killed in blast

Law enforcement personnel investigate the surroundings of a house linked to the bomber in Pflugerville, Texas

Austin

A 24-year-old white man suspected of being behind a series of deadly parcel bombings in the US state of Texas blew himself up yesterday as authorities moved in to arrest him.

Police said the suspect detonated a device in a car outside a hotel in the state capital Austin which has been gripped by fear since the attacks began nearly three weeks ago.

While the search for the unnamed bomber is now at an end, authorities warned that he may have planted other explosives before his death.

"The suspect is deceased," Austin police chief Brian Manley told an early morning news conference

after the dramatic end to the massive manhunt.

Manley told reporters that the suspect is believed to have been responsible for all five bomb explosions that have killed two people and wounded half a dozen others since March 2. The motive behind the attacks remains unknown.

Police traced the suspect's car to a hotel outside Austin in a pre-dawn operation.

As authorities waited for tactical teams to arrive, the suspect started to drive away. As police then moved to stop and arrest him, he detonated a bomb inside his car that killed him, Manley said. One police officer was injured by the blast.

Police zeroed in on the suspect over the past 36 hours as evidence came

in from video footage and witness accounts, Manley said.

"It has been a long almost three weeks for the community of Austin," the police chief said.

But Fred Milanowski, a senior officer at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), warned that the danger was not yet over.

"We want to make sure that if people see suspicious packages or bags, that they continue to call 911 so that we can respond and deal with them," Milanowski, said.

President Donald Trump offered his congratulations to police, writing on Twitter: "AUSTIN BOMBING SUSPECT IS DEAD. Great job by law enforcement and all concerned!" (AFP)

Rio museum selling artwork to pay bills

Rio De Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro's Modern Art Museum is selling one of its most prized works, a Jackson Pollock painting, to help stay afloat.

The private, not-for-profit museum said a sale of this type has never been done before in Brazil, although it is common in Europe and the United States.

The Pollock painting in question is titled "No.16" and was completed in 1950.

Proceeds of the sale will be used to create a fund to keep the museum going for another 30 years, it said.

The painting was donated



The Jackson Pollock painting in question is titled 'No.16' and was completed in 1950.

by the late former US vice president Nelson Rockefeller in 1954, and is estimated to be worth around \$25 million.

The Brazilian Museum Institute called on the Modern

Art Museum to reverse course and try to come up with another way to raise money at a time of financial struggle for many of the South American country's museums. (AFP)

#PollToday



Do you think user data from social media has been used by other world leaders also to win elections?

Yes No Cant Say



"We stand by Britain's side in solidarity, a lot of indications point to Russia. That is why transparency is demanded of Russia."

Angela Merkel
German Chancellor

Rest in sight

Philippines bus crash kills 19



Nineteen persons were killed in southern Philippines when a bus ran off a highway and plunged into a ravine. At least 25 others have been injured in the incident, authorities said.

Myanmar president Htin Kyaw resigns

Myanmar President U. Htin Kyaw has resigned. First Vice President U. Myint Swe will serve as acting President until Parliament elects a new President.

Hawking's final resting place revealed

The ashes of renowned physicist Steven Hawking will be interred in Westminster Abbey here near the graves of ground-breaking scientists Sir Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin.

US, North and South Korea meet in Finland

A tripartite talk between North Korea, South Korea and the US has started in Finland and denuclearisation is not on the agenda, Finnish Foreign Minister Timo Soini has said.

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Vatican communications chief quits over 'lettergate' row

Vatican City

Pope Francis' communications chief resigned yesterday after a scandal over a doctored letter, a public relations fiasco for the Vatican two months after the pope had warned of the dangers of fake news.

A brief Vatican statement yesterday said Francis had "accepted the resignation" of Monsignor Dario Viganò, Prefect of the Secretariat for

Communication. A Vatican source said the Italian prelate had been urged to offer it.

The resignation was unusually swift by Vatican standards, coming little more than a week after the media ruckus started.

The scandal centred around Viganò's handling of a missive to him from former Pope Benedict, 90, who resigned in 2013 and lives in near-isolation in the Vatican grounds. (Reuters)

One of Nepal's last dancing bears dies after rescue



The two sloth bears were rescued in southern Nepal in December last year from a pair of itinerant street performers who used the animals for entertainment

Katmandu

One of Nepal's last known dancing bears that was recently rescued has died after being transferred to a zoo, an animal rights activist said yesterday, blaming the death on "negligence".

The two sloth bears were rescued in southern Nepal in December last year from a pair of itinerant street performers who used the animals for entertainment.

Shortly after their rescue, the bears -- 19-year-old male Rangila and Sridevi, a 17-year-old female -- were

transferred to a zoo near the capital Kathmandu where they were put in cages on display.

A few weeks later, the female bear died.

"(We) were told that she had some problem in her liver and that it was jaundice," said Niraj Gautam of Jane Goodall Institute Nepal, who was involved in the rescue of the bears.

"These animals should have been thoroughly checked. There was nothing. That's the negligence we want to point out." (AFP)

Boko Haram frees most of abducted schoolgirls

Dapchi, Nigeria

Islamic militant groups drove scores of kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls back into the town where they had been captured a month ago and abruptly set them free on yesterday.

The captors gave no reason for their release, but Nigeria denied that a ransom had been paid. Several of the girls said some of their friends had died in captivity and one was still being held.

The fighters from the Boko Haram group, some shouting 'God is greatest', drove the girls back into the northeast town of Dapchi

in a line of trucks in the morning, dropped them off then left, witnesses told Reuters.

"I don't know why they brought us back but they said because we are children of Muslims," one of the freed girls, Khadija Grema, told Reuters.

Aliyu Maina, reunited with his 13-year-old daughter, said the fighters "stopped and blocked the road, they didn't talk to anybody, they didn't greet anybody."

"They said people should make space for people to recognise their children and I got my child." (Reuters)