

Body of Indian student killed in New Zealand attack returns home



The mother Razia (centre L) and brother Asif Ali (centre R) of Ansi Alibava, who was killed during the New Zealand mosque attacks, mourn over her body in Kodungallur in Trissur district in the Indian state of Kerala

AFP | Kochi, India

The body of an Indian student killed in the Christchurch mosque attacks was returned Monday to her grieving family in Kochi, where relatives remembered a bright young woman dedicated to her studies.

Masters student Ansi Alibava, 25, was among at least five Indians shot dead by a white supremacist in New Zealand on March 15 and her body was the first of two to be repatriated.

Her body arrived at an airport in Kochi in the southern Indian state of Kerala early on Monday where it was received by relatives and government officials.

It was then taken to her nearby hometown of Kodungallur and put on display -- her mother Razia and brother Asif Ali weeping over the coffin -- before a funeral.

"She hails from a poor family and her whole family counted on her. She was a girl who took up the challenge to succeed in life in all adverse circumstances," said K. I. Noushad, Alibava's uncle.

She was praying at the Al Noor Mosque in Christchurch with her husband, Abdul Nazer, when the Australian gunman opened fire on worshippers, killing 43.

Another seven were murdered at a separate mosque when the shooter later turned his weapon on Muslims there in the worst violence of its kind ever seen in New Zealand.

Some families have opted for burials in Christchurch itself, where a national remembrance service for the victims will be held on Friday, two weeks after the tragedy that shocked the world.

Alibava started supporting her family after her father died five years ago in

Saudi Arabia where he had been working. She took out thousands of dollars in loans to fund her studies in business agriculture at Christchurch's Lincoln University.

Alibava's cousin, P.H. Niyas, told AFP the dedicated student was soon to finish her studies.

"She had gone there last year, the course was due to finish by April. There was to be a six-month training (course) after which she was to return home by December," said Niyas.

Supermarket job

Alibava also worked part-time at a supermarket with Nazer, who she married two years ago.

On March 15, they went to the Al Noor Mosque and sat separately in the men and women's sections.

When gunfire broke out, Nazer managed to flee through an emergency exit but his wife did not make it.

When he returned to look for her, Nazer found his young wife motionless and face down, according to Indian media reports.

He was officially informed of her death 24 hours after the massacre.

Another Indian family who lost relatives in the attack opted for burial in Christchurch.

Father and son Asif Vora and Rameez Vora hailed from Gujarat, in western India, and were visiting family in New Zealand when they were killed.

The body of another victim also from Gujarat, Maheboob Khokhar, was expected to arrive late Monday at Ahmedabad airport. The body was due to be taken to a mosque for prayers and then to a burial ground.

Boeing 787 diverted to New Caledonia with smoke from cockpit: official

Noumea, France

A United Airlines Boeing 787-900 jet was diverted to the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia on Monday after reports of smoke coming from the cockpit, a local official told AFP.

The US aircraft flying 256 passengers from Melbourne, Australia, to Los Angeles, touched down safely at La Tontouta airport in New Caledonia's capital Noumea.

"The passengers are disembarking calmly," said the official from the local Chamber of Commerce which runs the airport.

"It seems that there was some smoke

coming out of the cockpit."

An Ethiopian Airlines crash that killed 157 people on March 10 led to the global grounding of Boeing 737 MAX 8 planes.

It followed a Lion Air crash in Indonesia last October that left 189 dead, which raised major concerns about the safety certification of the 737 MAX 8 model.

The Nouvelles-Caledoniennes (Caledonian News) website reported that oxygen masks automatically dropped down in the cabin of the United Airlines plane.

The local RRB radio station said no one was hurt and all the passengers would spend the night in Noumea, 2,700 kilometres (1,650 miles) northeast of Melbourne.

Jordan's king cancels Romanian trip over Jerusalem row

Amman, Jordan

Jordan's King Abdullah II cancelled a visit yesterday to Romania after its prime minister vowed to move her country's embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, his office said.

The king "decided to cancel his visit to Romania which was due to begin yesterday in solidarity with Jerusalem" following the

announcement by Prime Minister Viorica Dancila, a royal court statement said.

Dancila's promise, made on Sunday at the annual conference of the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC in Washington, broke with the position of both the European Union and her own president.

"I, as prime minister of Romania, and the govern-

ment that I run, will move our embassy to Jerusalem," said Dancila.

Romania's centrist President Klaus Iohannis, who has opposed the embassy transfer as a breach of international law, criticized Dancila. "Because of the amateurism of the prime minister our relation with this region is damaged", Iohannis said yes-

terday during a meeting with mayors from across Romania.

"Romania built a relation based on trust with the Arab world... Now the prime minister has managed to cripple it. And for what? For nothing", Iohannis said, adding that King Abdullah took Dancila's decision as a "personal affront".

Cyclone survivors face ticking bomb of disease



People queue to buy breads in Beira, Mozambique

AFP | Beira, Mozambique

The Red Cross warned yesterday that survivors of a powerful cyclone that pummeled southern Africa face "a ticking bomb" of disease even as aid workers reached those affected by the storm.

Cyclone Idai smashed into Mozambique's coast, unleashing hurricane-force wind and rain that flooded swathes of the poor country before battering eastern Zimbabwe -- killing 706 people across the two nations.

The head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Elhadj As Sy said "we are sitting on a ticking bomb" as he called for renewed efforts to address the worsening health situation.

As logistical conditions improved and roads to affected communities have been reconnected, the full scale of the humanitarian crisis has been revealed for the first time since the storm struck on March 15.

More than two million people have been affected in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi where the storm started as a tropical depression causing flooding which killed 60 and displaced nearly a million people. Hundreds are still missing in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

"The conditions for rescue are improving. Yesterday a road reopened which was really important to allow officials to work and rescue," Mozambique's Land Minister Celso Correa told reporters.

"Children looking for their parents" "We've got 30 missions flying today and some going by road so we can really deliver volume," said the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Sebastian Rhodes Stampa. "We are packing food and shelter now -- they will go

out tomorrow both north and south".

Stampa stressed that efforts to rebuild infrastructure damaged in the cyclone were temporary and not lasting repairs.

"They are repairing for now," to allow aid through, he said.

Buzi, one of the worst hit towns located 30 kilometres (19 miles) southwest of Beira, became reachable by road on Monday -- for the first time since the storm hit.

"It will now be much faster to deliver aid," Stampa added.

In Buzi, survivor Joao Zacaria said that "one man who had 40 cows lost them all. Forty, can you imagine!"

Sy, who had just returned from the region, warned of a "high risk of water-borne diseases" like cholera and typhus -- as well as malaria, which is endemic in the region.

A procession of mourners carried the coffin containing the body of Tomas Joaquim Chimukme, who was killed by the cyclone, through saturated marshland outside of Beira on Monday.

Many of those attending wore open sandals in the water which was ankle-high.

The United Nations has warned that stagnant water in many areas, decomposing bodies and the lack of sanitation in overcrowded shelters in Mozambique could create breeding grounds for such diseases.

The government has already identified some suspected but unconfirmed cases of cholera, Sy said.

"That is the reason why I am raising the alarm. Many of these water-borne diseases are a great risk, but they are preventable," he added.

"The worst thing is the children crying and looking for their parents... It is heartbreaking," he said, adding that it remained unclear how many children may have been orphaned.

Medical services in the affected region were stretched even before the cyclone hit and according to aid group MSF, Beira hospital's operating theatre sustained serious damage. As many as 17 health centres have lost their roofs, it added in a statement.

The South African military have deployed several aircraft to the affected area and an EU-funded World Food Programme chopper is supporting rescue and recovery efforts.



People take part in the looting sacks of Chinese rice printed "China Aid" from a warehouse which is surrounded by water after cyclone hit in Beira, Mozambique