

REST OF THE WORLD



Two killed in jet crash

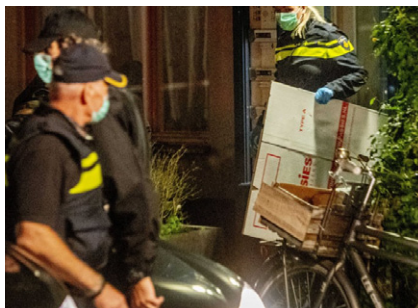
A mid-sized jet that tried to land at a South Carolina airport ran off the runway and split in two, killing the two pilots on board and injuring two passengers. The reason for the crash at the Greenville Downtown Airport was unclear. Witnesses say the plane appeared to land without a problem until it overshot the runway and went down a steep embankment.



Plane crash-lands in lagoon

All 47 passengers and crew have survived after a plane crash-landed in a Pacific lagoon. The 35 passengers and 12 crew members waded through waist-deep water to the emergency exits before escaping on local boats that came to the rescue in the Micronesia archipelago. Seven people were taken to hospital, according to officials, including one described as being in a critical but stable condition.

EUROPE



Dutch police foil terror attack

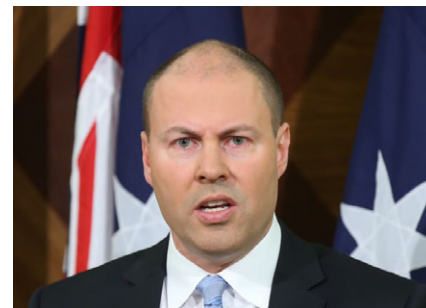
Seven men were arrested in the Netherlands on suspicion of plotting a large-scale extremist attack that Dutch prosecutors said they think was foiled following a months-long investigation. The national prosecutor's office said that heavily armed police arrested the men in the towns of Arnhem, about 100 kilometers south of Amsterdam, and Weert in the southern Netherlands close to the borders of Germany and Belgium.



Third poison suspect identified

A third Russian accomplice alleged to have helped plan the Salisbury nerve agent attack is reported to have been identified by police. The man, from Russia's military intelligence service the GRU, is understood to have visited Salisbury ahead of the poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia, according to The Daily Telegraph.

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND



Banks 'fall short of honesty'

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg says the culture and conduct of the financial sector have fallen below community standards, with greed and profit coming before honesty and integrity. Speaking just after the release of an interim report of the royal commission, Frydenberg said banks and other financial institutions had "put profits before people".



Ardern pleads for cooperation

Rejecting isolationism and protectionism in favour of kindness and collectivism, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's key speech to the United Nations lived up to the "anti-Trump" nickname she was once given. Ardern – who made waves this week by bringing infant daughter Neve into the UN chambers – didn't name the US or its president during her nation's address, but nonetheless played counterpoint.

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Iran fires up over accusation

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Iran of keeping a "secret atomic warehouse" just outside its capital, despite the 2015 deal with world powers that was meant to keep it from obtaining nuclear weapons. Hours later, Iran dismissed the allegation. Netanyahu told world leaders that Iranian officials have been keeping up to 300 tons of nuclear equipment and material in a property near a rug-cleaning operation.

EUROPE



Macedonia to vote on name

Macedonians are weighing matters of national identity and national interest as they prepare to decide what their homeland will be called. This weekend's referendum asks voters if they support changing the Balkan nation's name from Macedonia to North Macedonia. Greece has agreed to drop longstanding objections to neighbouring Macedonia's bids to join NATO if the new name is approved.

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND



Wentworth ballot hurts Phelps

Independent Kerryn Phelps concedes her chances of taking Wentworth from the Liberal Party in the looming by-election have taken a hit, with the Sydney city councillor being drawn near the bottom of the 16-candidate ballot paper. Phelps is considered one of the most likely to steal the seat from the Liberals for the first time in the party's history, but she drew 15th spot when the draw was conducted by the electoral commission.



Russia, China oppose sanctions

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that the world stands at the "dawn of a new day" in relations with North Korea but that international sanctions must remain in place and vigorously enforced if diplomatic efforts to get the country to denuclearize are to succeed – a position that faced resistance from China and Russia.



'Brexit would be a disaster'

Sir Richard Branson has dismissed Boris Johnson's alternative vision for Britain leaving the EU, warning Brexit would be a "disaster" for the UK and Europe. The billionaire Virgin boss also voiced support for a second referendum, saying he thinks it is "quite likely that sense will finally prevail". "I think it's becoming clearer and clearer just what a disaster it is and I just hope that ultimately it doesn't go through," he said.



Death prompts bus upgrade

The ageing shuttle bus fleet at Mt Ruapehu is being replaced after the death of an 11-year-old girl in a crash two months ago. A 14-year-old two-wheel-drive Mitsubishi Fuso imported from Japan, carrying 31 people, flipped on its way down from the Tūroa skifield at Mt Ruapehu in July. Passengers and first responders described carnage – the road covered in glass and metal, and people bloodied and with broken bones.



A Dassault Falcon 50 jet. - 123RF

REST OF THE WORLD

Two dead in South Carolina jet crash

A mid-sized jet that tried to land at a South Carolina airport ran off the runway and split in two, killing the two pilots on board and injuring two passengers.

The reason for the crash at the Greenville Downtown Airport was unclear. Witnesses say the plane appeared to land without a problem until it overshot the runway and went down a steep embankment.

The pilots' names won't be released until the Greenville County Coroner's Office notifies relatives. One pilot died at the scene; the other at Greenville Memorial Hospital. The two passengers, a married man and woman, are in critical condition at an area hospital.

The jet was likely landing to pick up more passengers when it ran off a runway embankment and hit nose first, said Joe Frasher, the airport's director.

"We all saw it land, and for some reason it did not stop," Frasher said.

Frasher said the crash, involving a Dassault Falcon 50 model, is the worst in at least 20 years at the airport. ■



Rescuers help passengers and crew of an Air Niugini flight to shore. - US Navy / AP

REST OF THE WORLD

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The 35 passengers and 12 crew members waded through waist-deep water to the emergency exits before escaping on local boats that came to the rescue in the Micronesia archipelago.

Seven people were taken to hospital, according to officials, including one described as being in a critical but stable condition.

Passenger Bill Jaynes said the plane came in very low as it was attempting to land at the Chuuk Island airport.

"I thought we landed hard," he said. "Until I looked over and saw a hole in the side of the plane and water was coming in. And I thought, well, this is not the way it's supposed to happen."

Jaynes said the flight attendants were panicking and shouting, and that he suffered a minor head injury.

He said he called his wife, who started crying.

"I was really impressed with the locals, who immediately started coming out in boats," he said.

"One would think that they might be afraid to approach a plane that's just crashed."

The sequence of events remains unclear.

Jaynes said the only scenario he can imagine is that the Air Niugini plane hit the end of the runway and continued into the water.

However, the airline said the plane landed short of the runway.

The striking images of people being rescued from the half-submerged plane were reminiscent of the 2009 crash-landing in New York City known on the Hudson River.

"It's really fortunate that we didn't have any fatalities," said Glenn Harris, a government aviation security inspector for the Federated States of Micronesia. ■



Dutch police officers search the residence of an alleged terrorist in The Netherlands. - EPA

EUROPE

Dutch police foil terror attack

Seven men were arrested in the Netherlands on suspicion of plotting a large-scale extremist attack that Dutch prosecutors said they think was foiled following a months-long investigation.

The national prosecutor's office said in a statement that heavily armed police arrested the men in the towns of Arnhem, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) south of Amsterdam, and Weert in the southern Netherlands close to the borders of Germany and Belgium.

The investigation was launched by intelligence suggesting the alleged ring leader, a 34-year-old man of Iraqi heritage, wanted to carry out an attack at the site of a large event and cause multiple casualties, according to the statement.

The suspects allegedly wanted to use bomb vests and assault rifles to do harm at the event, and planned to detonate a car bomb at another location, prosecutors said. An investigation of potential targets was continuing.

Prosecutors said the suspects ranged in age from 21 to 34.

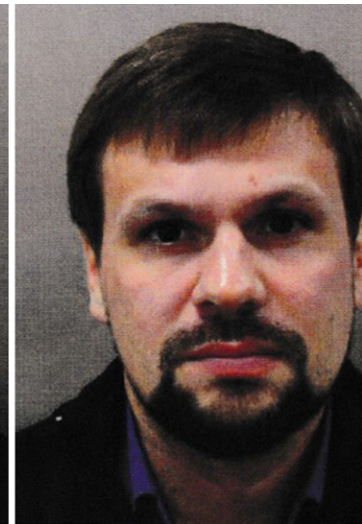
Three of them, including the 34-year-old Iraqi, were previously convicted of attempting to travel overseas to join extremist networks.

The men were attempting to obtain AK47 assault rifles, handguns, bomb vests, grenades and raw materials for bombs and were looking for opportunities to train with such weapons, according to the statement.

Prosecutors said that the investigation sped up this month because of the suspects' "advanced preparations."

Minister for Justice and Security Ferd Grapperhaus told Dutch national broadcaster NOS that police acted in time to prevent an attack.

"In a sense it is serious, but luckily it's also good news – a terrorist cell that was plotting an attack has been taken down," Grapperhaus said. "They weren't so far that it was a danger to society, in the sense that it was nearly too late. But they were quite far in their preparations." ■



Salisbury nerve agent attack suspects Alexander Petrov, left, and Ruslan Boshirov. - PA

EUROPE

Third Russian poison suspect identified

A third Russian accomplice alleged to have helped plan the Salisbury nerve agent attack is reported to have been identified by police.

The man, from Russia's military intelligence service the GRU, is understood to have visited Salisbury ahead of the poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia, according to The Daily Telegraph.

The paper said the suspect was likely to have fed back details including the layout of the cul-de-sac where Skripal lived and which door he used to enter and leave.

A Scotland Yard spokeswoman said: "We will not be discussing any further details in what remains a live investigation."

UK authorities believe two Russians, using the aliases Alexander Petrov and Ruslan Boshirov, smeared the highly toxic Novichok chemical on a door handle at the Wiltshire home of former GRU officer Skripal on March 4.

The attack left Skripal and his daughter critically ill, and Dawn Sturgess, 44, who was later exposed to the same nerve agent, died in July.

The investigative group Bellingcat has identified one of the suspects as Colonel Anatoliy Chepiga – a highly decorated GRU officer.

Bellingcat said it had identified Chepiga, who travelled to the UK with a passport issued in the assumed name of Ruslan Boshirov, by trawling through online records from Russian military academies.

The Government has declined to comment officially on the report, although it has previously said the two suspects wanted for the attack on the Skripals were GRU officers.

Bellingcat is reportedly close to identifying the second suspect.

A spokeswoman for the Russian Foreign Ministry dismissed Bellingcat's claims, and said they were part of an "information campaign" to distract from the investigation into what really happened in Salisbury. ■



Treasurer Josh Frydenberg. - AAP

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND

Treasurer: Banks fall short of honesty

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg says the culture and conduct of the financial sector have fallen below community standards, with greed and profit coming before honesty and integrity.

Speaking just after the release of an interim report of the royal commission, Frydenberg said banks and other financial institutions had “put profits before people”.

He said it was clear bad behaviour had permeated the culture of the big banks, with misconduct going largely unpunished.

“This interim report is a frank and scathing assessment of the culture, conduct and compliance of our financial system,” Frydenberg said.

“Australians expect and deserve better.”

The three-volume interim report offered a blunt assessment of the reasons behind misconduct in the banking sector.

“Too often, the answer seems to be greed, the pursuit of short term profit at the expense of basic standards of honesty,” the commission said in its report.

“How else is charging continuing advice fees to the dead to be explained?”

Commissioner Kenneth Hayne said in the report banks had searched for their “share of customers’ wallets”.

“From the executive suite to the front line, staff were measured and rewarded by reference to profit and sales.”

The commission found when misconduct was revealed, it either went unpunished or the consequences did not meet the seriousness of what had been done.

“The conduct regulator, ASIC, rarely went to court to seek punishment for misconduct. The prudential regulator, APRA, never went to court,” the report said.

“Much more often than not, when misconduct was revealed, little happened beyond apology from the entity, a drawn out remediation program and protracted negotiation with ASIC of a media release, an infringement notice, or an enforceable undertaking.” ■



Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. - AP

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND

Ardern pleads for cooperation, kindness

Rejecting isolationism and protectionism in favour of kindness and collectivism, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s key speech to the United Nations lived up to the “anti-Trump” nickname she was once given.

Ardern – who made waves this week by bringing infant daughter Neve into the UN chambers – didn’t name the US or its president during her nation’s address, but nonetheless played counterpoint.

“In the face of isolationism, protectionism, racism – the simple concept of looking outwardly and beyond ourselves, of kindness and collectivism, might just be as good a starting point as any,” Ardern said.

“We must demonstrate that collective international action not only works, but that it is in all of our best interests.”

In a speech focusing heavily on generational change and equality, Ardern also made a plea for international cooperation on social issues.

“I for one will never celebrate the gains we have made for women domestically, while internationally other women and girls experience a lack of the most basic opportunities and dignity,” she said.

The statement was in stark contrast to US president Donald Trump’s, which – along with drawing laughter from other world leaders – stated: “We reject the ideology of globalism and accept the doctrine of patriotism.”

Ardern met briefly with Trump while in New York and says he congratulated her on her daughter, while she raised the issue of aluminium and steel tariffs being applied on her country.

A heavily export-dependent nation, New Zealand’s leaders have for decades advocated for multilateralism and open trade. ■



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. - AP

REST OF THE WORLD

Iran fires up over nuke accusation

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Iran of keeping a “secret atomic warehouse” just outside its capital, despite the 2015 deal with world powers that was meant to keep it from obtaining nuclear weapons. Hours later, Iran dismissed the allegation.

Holding up a poster-board map of an area near Tehran as he spoke at the UN General Assembly, Netanyahu told world leaders that Iranian officials have been keeping up to 300 tons of nuclear equipment and material in a walled, unremarkable-looking property near a rug-cleaning operation.

Netanyahu’s disclosure – which he presented as a big reveal on the international community’s biggest stage – came four months after Israel announced the existence of what it said was a “half-ton” of Iranian nuclear documents obtained by Israeli intelligence in the Shourabad neighborhood near Tehran. Israel said the cache proved that Iranian leaders covered up their nuclear weapons program before signing the nuclear agreement. Iran hasn’t acknowledged the alleged seizure.

“You have to ask yourself a question: Why did Iran keep a secret atomic archive and a secret atomic warehouse?” Netanyahu asked. “What Iran hides, Israel will find.”

Netanyahu didn’t specify what the material and equipment was, and it was not immediately clear whether it proved to be a violation of the nuclear deal. The International Atomic Energy Agency, which has been monitoring Iran’s compliance with the agreement, had no immediate comment.

Netanyahu also said Iranian officials had been clearing some radioactive material out of the site, which sits a short distance from Shourabad, and “spread it around Tehran.” He then even suggested that residents of the capital might want to buy Geiger counters.

In a tweet, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif derided the Israeli presentation as an “arts and craft show” by a country that he said needed to come clean about its own nuclear program. ■



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. - AP

REST OF THE WORLD

Russia, China oppose North Korea sanctions

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that the world stands at the “dawn of a new day” in relations with North Korea but that international sanctions must remain in place and vigorously enforced if diplomatic efforts to get the country to denuclearize are to succeed – a position that faced resistance from China and Russia.

Chairing a special session of the UN Security Council, Pompeo said President Donald Trump’s diplomatic breakthrough with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has led to a point where the nuclear threat from the country can be resolved. But the “unprecedented diplomatic opening” would close unless the pressure from sanctions is kept up.

“Until the final denuclearization of the DPRK is achieved and fully verified, it is our solemn collective responsibility to fully implement all UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to North Korea,” he said.

Pompeo said the US has evidence that UN sanctions, particularly those restricting North Korean oil imports and coal exports, are being violated and he demanded that UN members ensure they are respected.

“Enforcement of UN Security Council sanctions must continue vigorously and without fail until we realize final, fully verified denuclearization,” Pompeo said.

China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi, whose country is North Korea’s main ally, agreed that the sanctions “remain valid,” but he said the resolutions provide for them to be modified based on North Korea’s compliance and the council should consider doing so.

“China believes that the Security Council may consider invoking in due course this provision in order to encourage (North Korea) and other relevant parties to move denuclearization further ahead,” he said. ■



- AAP

EUROPE

Macedonia to vote on name change

Macedonians are weighing matters of national identity and national interest as they prepare to decide what their homeland will be called.

This weekend's referendum asks voters if they support changing the Balkan nation's name from Macedonia to North Macedonia.

Greece has agreed to drop longstanding objections to neighbouring Macedonia's bids to join NATO and eventually the European Union, if the new name is approved.

The proposed prefix might seem minor, but it touches a nerve in the ex-Yugoslav republic that declared independence in 1991.

Opponents in both Macedonia and Greece have accused their governments of conceding too much.

The West has taken keen interest in the vote. US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis has said there was "no doubt" Russia helped to fund groups opposed to the name change. ■



Virgin boss Sir Richard Branson. - PA

EUROPE

Branson says Brexit 'would be a disaster'

Sir Richard Branson has dismissed Boris Johnson's alternative vision for Britain leaving the EU, warning Brexit would be a "disaster" for the UK and Europe.

The billionaire Virgin boss also voiced support for a second referendum, saying he thinks it is "quite likely that sense will finally prevail".

"I think it's becoming clearer and clearer just what a disaster it is and I just hope that ultimately it doesn't go through," he said.

"I listened to Boris Johnson and I also listened to the words he said about entrepreneurs and business people.

"I do personally think that entrepreneurs and business people know what this country needs more than Boris Johnson knows."

He added: "I hope ultimately sense prevails and there's a big re-think and the British people have a chance to vote on whatever is negotiated in the end." ■



Independent candidate for Wentworth Kerryn Phelps. - AAP

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND

Wentworth ballot a blow to Phelps

Independent Kerryn Phelps concedes her chances of taking Wentworth from the Liberal Party in the looming by-election have taken a hit, with the Sydney city councillor being drawn near the bottom of the 16-candidate ballot paper.

Phelps is considered one of the most likely to steal the seat from the Liberals for the first time in the party's history, but she drew 15th spot when the draw was conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission.

"Being down near the bottom of the ballot form might make it a little bit of a harder task from here," she said. "It is what it is."

Licia Heath, a fellow independent, is 13th, while Liberal candidate Dave Sharma is ninth and Labor's Tim Murray is fifth.

Robert Callanan from Katter's Australian Party is No.1 on the ballot paper for the by-election, which will be held on October 20.

Asked if he was relieved to see his main rival down the bottom of the ballot, Sharma said he believed voters were more than capable of picking out who they wanted to support from a list.

"Obviously the voters are going to decide who they support and I'm sure they'll find whichever candidate of the 16 they want to support," Sharma said.

"It will be a tough by-election, I've been saying that all along, I know that, the government knows that."

Sharma confirmed he had spoken to deposed prime minister, and former member for Wentworth, Malcolm Turnbull on a few occasions during this campaign.

"He has been very supportive ... it's great to have him willingly offering me his advice and his support," Sharma said.

"He's got a lot of valuable things to offer me."

Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore – who in 2017 had a public falling out with Phelps who was serving as her deputy on council – has backed Heath in the Wentworth poll. ■



- RNZ / Checkpoint

AUSTRALIA + NEW ZEALAND

Girl's death prompts shuttle bus upgrade

The ageing shuttle bus fleet at Mt Ruapehu is being replaced after the death of an 11-year-old girl in a crash two months ago.

A 14-year-old two-wheel-drive Mitsubishi Fuso imported from Japan, carrying 31 people, flipped on its way down from the Tūroa skifield at Mt Ruapehu in July.

Passengers and first responders described carnage – the road covered in glass and metal, and people bloodied and with broken bones.

Hannah Francis, an 11-year-old Auckland girl, died from her injuries.

Police are investigating and early reports were that the bus' brakes weren't working properly – it had failed its Certificate of Fitness nine times.

But in advance of that investigation, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL) – which owned the bus that crashed – has announced it will retire all buses older than 10 years and replace them with six new four-wheel-drive buses.

"We have undertaken a complete review of our transport operations ... [and] have been working with leading alpine transport operators since the accident to develop vehicle standards and guidelines," RAL board chair Murray Gribben said, ahead of the company's annual general meeting.

The retiring of its fleet comes as former staff members at RAL speak out about the company's maintenance practices.

"Most of the exhaust brakes didn't work on the two wheel drive buses. Often the handbrakes didn't work. Sometimes the horns didn't work. They weren't up to Certificate of Fitness standards most of the time I was driving them," Lucy Conway, who drove buses for RAL in 2011 and 2012, said.

"They tried, the mechanics tried, constantly, to fix the exhaust brakes. But nobody could.

"I don't think two-wheel drive Japanese import buses are suitable for that road, quite frankly, and that's basically why I left. It was just too scary." ■