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Wrecking ball approaches a jewel of Shanghai

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Train blasts kill more than 190 in Madrid



Victims being tended by rescue workers Thursday outside Madrid's Atocha station after a series of highly coordinated attacks.

10 bombs at rush hour wound 1,400

By Elaine Sciolino

MADRID: In the bloodiest terrorist attack in modern Spanish history, 10 bombs exploded Thursday during the morning rush hour in three commuter train stations in Madrid, killing more than 190 people and wounding more than 1,400.

Three other bombs were discovered and detonated by the police after the highly coordinated explosions that went off within a 10-minute period.

As the country struggled to absorb the carnage just three days before general elections, Prime Minister José María Aznar in a television appearance called the attacks "mass murder" and vowed that Spain would never negotiate with "these assassins." Aznar, whose armored car saved him from an ETA attack when he was the opposition leader in 1995, added, "March 11 now

has its place in the history of infamy."

Already some Spaniards were calling the attacks their country's "9-11," and the front page of a special edition of the biggest daily, El País, on Thursday afternoon ran the headline, "11-M." There was no advance warning of the attacks and no immediate claim of responsibility. The Spanish authorities at first ruled out international terrorism and blamed the Basque separatist group ETA, which has been seeking independence from Spain for more than three decades.

"It is absolutely clear that the terrorist organization ETA was seeking an attack with wide repercussions," Interior Minister Angel Acebes said at a hastily called news conference, dismissing speculation that any other group could be involved.

But on Spanish television Thursday night, Acebes was less categorical, say-

ing that the Spanish government was not ruling out any possibilities. He said that a van had been discovered in the town of Alcalá de Henares, the birthplace of Cervantes outside Madrid and the origin of the train that arrived in Atocha on Thursday morning. In the back seat were detonators and some papers in Arabic and verses of the Koran on teaching, he said.

And in London, the Arabic newspaper Al Quds al Arabi said it had a claim of responsibility in the name of Al Qaeda.

The Spanish government declared a three-day period of mourning, and political parties participating in the elections called off all remaining campaign events, although elections will proceed as scheduled.

"All of Spain is suffering," said Mariano Rajoy, the front-runner and leader

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'This catastrophe goes beyond the imaginable'

By Mar Roman

MADRID: Dismembered bodies entangled in the metal wreckage of train carriages. Amputated legs and arms scattered on station platforms. Thousands of people, many of them schoolchildren, fleeing in panic.

"It was butchery on a brutal scale," Juan Redondo, an inspector for the fire-fighting department of Madrid, said Thursday. "This catastrophe goes beyond the imaginable."

In all, 10 bombs exploded in the span of a half-hour across the Spanish capital's commuter rail network, killing more than 190 people and wounding more than 1,400.

The dead and severely wounded were taken away on stretchers. The wounded with cuts and bruises sat and wept helplessly on sidewalk curbs.

Redondo said that at El Pozo station just east of central Madrid, where two bombs tore through a double-decker

commuter train, he saw at least 70 bodies on the platform.

"It looked like a platform of death," he said, adding that one body had to be picked off the train station's roof.

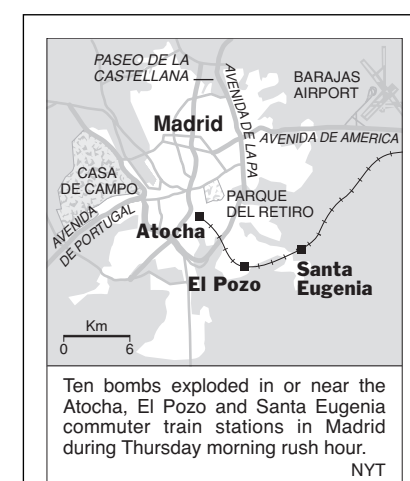
"I've never seen anything like it before. The recovery of the bodies was very difficult. We didn't know what to pick up."

The blasts struck between 7:30 a.m. and 8 a.m. as trains brought hundreds of thousands of people to work. The area around central Atocha station was packed with rush-hour traffic. It soon became crammed with wailing ambulances and dozens of riot-police vans. Helicopters flew overhead.

More than seven hours later, ambulances continued to make their way back and forth from the station.

Residents in nearby houses were warned to stay off balconies, but thousands of passers-by gathered, many

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Ten bombs exploded in or near the Atocha, El Pozo and Santa Eugenia commuter train stations in Madrid during Thursday morning rush hour. NYT

For Spain, 'Our 9/11'

■ The bombings in Madrid will be a test of pan-European police cooperation in the face of terrorist threats. Page 3

■ Officials worldwide summon their strongest language to condemn the bombings. Some leaders call for even stronger steps against terrorism. Page 3

UPDATE

Aristide intends to visit Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica: The ousted Haitian president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who fled into exile in Africa last month, plans to visit Jamaica soon, a Jamaican official said Thursday.

Wilton Dyer, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, said Aristide was coming to Jamaica. Asked when, Dyer said, "soon." He gave no details, and it was unclear whether Jamaica, which is 115 miles, or 180 kilometers, west of Haiti, had invited Aristide or he had asked to come.

Aristide fled Haiti on Feb. 29, driven out by armed rebels and by U.S. pressure to quit, (Reuters) Related article, Page 5

CURRENCIES | New York

	Thursday 4 P.M.	Previous
€1 =	\$1.2338	\$1.224
£1 =	\$1.8109	\$1.8053
¥1 =	¥110.94	¥110.78
₱1 =	₱1.2699	₱1.2872

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THE MARKETS

	Thursday 4 P.M.	Change
The Dow	10,128.38	-1.64%
S&P 500	1,106.79	-1.52%
Nasdaq	1,943.89	-1.03%

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Greenspan foresees more jobs 'before long'

From news reports

WASHINGTON: Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve board chairman, said Thursday that the U.S. economy would begin to increase the pace of job creation "before long" and that erecting protective trade barriers was not the answer to the country's current worries about the loss of jobs to foreign competition.

In remarks to the House of Representatives Education Committee, the Fed chief waded into a burgeoning political argument with a call for an open trade environment.

"As history clearly shows, our economy is best served by full and vigorous engagement in the global economy," Greenspan said a day after President George W. Bush said restricting access to American markets might hurt U.S. exporters.

On Thursday, Bush said he was "concerned" about U.S. companies shifting jobs overseas. He urged lawmakers to improve the business climate by preserving tax cuts and reining in damage

awards in lawsuits.

"The way to deal with outsourcing is to make the United States of America a better place to do business," Bush said at USA Industries, an auto parts company in New York State.

In his testimony, Greenspan repeated his warning that Congress would have to trim future Social Security benefits, saying lawmakers would eventually have to address the problem of the pending retirement of 77 million baby boomers. In response to a question from a Democratic presidential candidate, Representative Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, Greenspan said the government could not meet all the promises in Social Security and Medicare that have been made to future retirees.

"We do not have enough in real resources to meet the promises that have already been made. We will not be able to fully meet the benefits to the next generation, the baby boomers that are retiring," he said. "We have to construct a pattern that the benefits we do

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3 Afghan boys, with tales of Cuba

By Carlotta Gall

KABUL: There is no doubting their youth. Asadullah thinks he is 12 or 13 — certainly he is too young to grow a beard. His friend Naquibullah, 15, has just fuzz on his cheeks. Muhammad Ismail Agha says he is 15, but looks older.

Young as they are, the three were recently released from the United States detention camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, after more than a year on suspicion of belonging to the Taliban. Never charged, given merely a verbal apology from American officers, they were freed in January and returned home with stories of study and fun and games.

But their detention leaves unanswered the question of why three juveniles, none of whom were captured on the battlefield or carrying weapons, were held for so long without explanation at Bagram Air Base, near Kabul, and then at Guantánamo Bay.

The three were kept away from the adult prisoners at Guantánamo, but more juveniles are still being held in Cuba, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, which vis-



Naquibullah, 15, was at Guantánamo for over a year.

its prisoners there. Juveniles continue to be picked up by the American military, Afghans say, often with scant justification.

"Already at Bagram they knew I was not a Taliban," said Asadullah, the youngest of the three, as he threw stones into a stream during an interview below his mountain village, Khoja Angur. He was interrogated daily at Bagram for several months and then sent to Guantánamo for 11 months. The journey terrified him.

"I thought they would throw me from the plane into the sea, or kill me in the plane," he said.

Naquibullah, a little older, did not

blame the Americans. "This is not their fault," he said in an interview at his home in the eastern province of Pakhtia.

"They did not know if I was Taliban or not."

Still, he wondered why an adult neighbor was released from Guantánamo last November while he continued to be held. "I missed my home," Naquibullah said. Referring to his American interrogator, he said, "I used to ask: 'When will I go home?' and he always said, 'Soon.'" It took 14 months.

Ismail, the eldest of the three, never expected it to be so long. "At the end, they told me, 'You were wrongly detained,'" he said in an interview in Nawzad, near his home in southern Afghanistan.

Aside from homesickness, the boys did not suffer at Guantánamo. They were not mistreated, they learned to read and write in their own language, Pashto, and they studied English, math and astronomy. They played board games and soccer. Once they even went with their guards for a picnic on the beach and snorkeled, Asadullah said.

But the Red Cross has expressed concern that both Bagram and Guantánamo are "inappropriate" places to hold juveniles. An unknown number are still held there.

For its part, the United States mili-

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