

Bangkok blasts: Thai police releases sketch of suspected 'foreign' bomber

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Bangkok: Thailand police today released a sketch of a young "foreign man" suspected of carrying out a bombing at a hugely popular Lord Brahma temple, that killed at least 20 people, and offered a 1 million baht reward for any information in tracing him down along with his accomplices.

The detailed sketch, made on the basis of the CCTV grab at the Erawan Brahma temple which showed a youth in yellow T-shirt placing a backpack on a bench inside the shrine's compound and then walking out, is the strongest lead yet in the Monday explosions, the country's "worst ever attack".

The police issued an arrest warrant seeking for "a foreign man, unnamed, according to the sketch" and announced a reward of one million baht (USD 28,000) for any information on the suspect.

The sketch showed a fair, young man with thick hair and wearing black glasses who could be of "mixed origin", Thai police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri said in a televised interview.

The suspect may have been wearing a wig to disguise himself and may have been part of "a network", according to national police chief General Somyot Poompanmuang.

Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha today urged bombers who attacked Bangkok this week to turn themselves in for their own safety, saying, otherwise, they could be killed.

The bombers could be murdered by the masterminds who hired them to set off explosives at the Erawan shrine and Sathorn pier, Gen Prayut was quoted by Bangkok Post as saying.

An explosive device was hurled at Bangkok's Sathorn pier but it caused no injuries or damage as it bounced into the water and exploded there, just a day after the twin blasts at the Hindu shrine also killed nine foreigners and 11 others, and left scores injured, mostly Chinese.

The premier noted that CCTV cameras at both the Rajprasong intersection - where the blasts outside the temple occurred - and Sathorn pier have given authorities clear indications of the suspects' movements.

The Brahma temple, one of the most popular tourist attractions in Bangkok, was reopened today for worshippers and tourists two days after the blasts.

Hospitals also discharged 55 injured people today, said Col Winthai Suvari, the spokesman of the National Centre for Peace and Order.

He said 68 other injured victims are still being treated.

The explosion occurred on Monday evening as worshippers, tourists and people returning from their offices were at the shrine and nearby .

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack so far.

Meanwhile, security has been tightened in southern provinces especially in Koh Samui in Surat Thani, Hat Yai in

Songkhla and Phuket which are key tourist destinations, an army spokesman said.

He said that particular areas were singled out in line with the government's concerns, to assure Chinese travellers of their safety.

- PTI