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Ethiopia and Indonesia crash parallels heap pressure on Boeing



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## Volunteers fly in to wash the dead in New Zealand



People visit a memorial site for victims of Friday's shooting, in front of the Masjid Al Noor mosque in Christchurch

CHRISTCHURCH (Reuters) - Kamran Nasir was in a finance lecture in Australia when a gunman slaughtered 50 people during Friday prayers at two mosques in the New Zealand city of Christchurch. People visit a memorial site for victims of Friday's shooting, in front of the Masjid Al Noor mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand March 18, 2019. REUTERS/Jorge Silva

Within hours he had joined a band of about 60 volunteers on their way to wash the dead victims, in the somber aftermath of New Zealand's worst modern mass shooting spree.

"We got this text - they need volunteers," Nasir, 35, told Reuters.

"It literally unfolded in an hour and half and we were running to the airport to catch a flight," he said, sitting with four friends who had also dropped everything to offer help.

Experienced in Islamic funeral rites, the men from Brisbane who are connected to Brothers in Need, a charity group, are part of a contingent drawn from Australia and cities across New Zealand to help a community overwhelmed by the number of bodies which must be dealt with according to ritual.

They also epitomize a spirit of generosity that has pulsed across a grieving city this week.

need us," Nasir said.

He arrived in the early hours of Saturday, the same day Australian Brenton Tarrant, 28, a suspected white supremacist, was charged with murder over the killings. Tarrant was remanded without a plea and is due back in court on April 5 where police said he was likely to face more charges.

Christchurch is subdued. Bunches of flowers have been piled up outside the botanical gardens and underneath oak trees opposite one of the mosques, which are guarded by armed police.

The majority of victims were migrants or refugees from countries such as Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Turkey, Somalia, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. The youngest was a three year old boy, born in New Zealand to Somali refugee parents.



People visit a memorial site for victims of Friday's shooting, in front of the Masjid Al Noor mosque in Christchurch

"The first thing that went through my head was: They



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# Ethiopia and Indonesia crash parallels heap pressure on Boeing

ADDIS ABABA/PARIS (Reuters) - Investigators into the Boeing 737 MAX crash in Ethiopia have found striking similarities in a vital flight angle with an airplane that came down off Indonesia, a source said, piling pressure on the world's biggest planemaker.

The Ethiopian Airlines disaster eight days ago killed 157 people, led to the grounding of Boeing's marquee MAX fleet globally and sparked a high-stakes inquiry for the aviation industry.

Analysis of the cockpit recorder showed its so-called "angle of attack" data was "very, very similar" to the Lion Air jet that came down off Jakarta in October, killing 189 people, a person familiar with the investigation said.

The angle of attack is a fundamental parameter of flight, measuring the degrees between the air flow and the wing. If it is too high, it can throw the plane into an aerodynamic stall

"If that's the case, that does raise the possibility that there is a similar occurrence between the Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines accidents," said Clint Balog, a Montana-based professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Even then, it was too early to draw firm conclusions, he added. A flight deck computer's response to an apparently faulty angle-of-attack sensor is at the heart of the ongoing probe into the Lion Air crash.

Ethiopia's Transport Ministry, France's BEA air accident authority and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have all pointed to similarities between the two disasters but safety officials stress the investigation is at an early stage. "Everything will be investigated," Ethiopian Transport Ministry spokesman Musie Yehyies told Reuters.

Both planes were 737 MAX 8s and crashed minutes after take-off with pilots reporting flight control problems.

Under scrutiny is a new automated system in the 737 MAX model that guides the nose lower to avoid stalling, while in the Lion Air case Boeing has raised questions about whether crew used the correct procedures.

Lawmakers and safety experts are asking how thoroughly regulators vetted the system and how well pilots around the world were trained for it when their airlines bought new planes.

**BOEING PLANS NEW SOFTWARE**

With the prestige of one of the United States' biggest exporters at stake, Boeing has said the MAX series is safe, though it plans to roll out new software upgrades in days.

The fix was developed in the aftermath of the Indonesia crash when regulators suggested false sensor data could cause a system known as MCAS (Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System) to over-react and make the jet hard to control.

Although the 737 has two sensors, Reuters first reported in November that the system for preventing stalls only tracks one of them at a time because regulators assumed risks of a mishap were small and would be further reduced by a trained crew.



Two Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft are parked at a Boeing production facility in Renton, Washington



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# Editor's Choice



Horsemen take part in a Kok-boru, or goat dragging, competition as part of Navruz celebrations, an ancient holiday marking the spring equinox, in Bishkek



People wait in line to enter the U.S. embassy in Havana, Cuba, March 18, 2019. REUTERS/Alexandre Meneghini



A local athletics team mourns the loss of one of its members, killed in the mosque attack, outside Masjid Al Noor mosque in Christchurch



Members of Qhara Qhara community, a Quechua ethnic group, rest during a protest against the occupation of their homeland by other social organizations, in La Paz



French President Emmanuel Macron attends a debate with intellectuals at the Elysee Palace in Paris



Canada's Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan speaks during a news conference with Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland in Ottawa



Russian President Vladimir Putin addresses the crowd during a concert marking the fifth anniversary of Russia's annexation of Crimea, in Simferopol



Horsemen take part in a Kok-boru, or goat dragging competition as part of Navruz celebrations, an ancient holiday marking the spring equinox, in Bishkek

# The Growing Push To Raise The Smoking Age To 21

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

**The big picture:** Seven states and nearly 450 cities have already raised their smoking age. The change is gaining more steam in Congress partly due to the rise of youth vaping and FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb's aggressive response to that trend.

**Where it stands:** Democratic Sen. Brian Schatz and Republican Rep. Robert Aderholt previously proposed raising the age limit from 18 to 21, and there's a bipartisan push to try again.

- "He will continue to look for bipartisan support for this uniformity as well as tightening age-verification for internet sales," said Brian Rell, Aderholt's chief of staff.

- Gottlieb has also expressed support for the move.

- Chatter on the subject is "all over the place," said Rep. Greg Walden, the top Republican on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. "It is something we should talk about ... especially in the era of vaping and everything else. And frankly, in the era of legalized marijuana in many states."

**Two big industry leaders** — Juul and Altria — are also on board. (Altria has invested in Juul.)

- Raising the smoking age "is the most effective action to reverse rising underage e-vapor usage rates," Howard Willard, chairman and CEO of the Altria Group, wrote last month in an op-ed in The Hill.



(Illustration/Axios)

**Proponents' argue** that plenty of 18-year-olds are still in high school, so they can buy tobacco products and pass them along to younger peers. But there aren't a lot of 21-year-olds hanging out with 16-year-olds.

**The other side:** There's plenty of resistance.



**OVERVIEW**

*A diverse and growing coalition is pushing Congress to raise the federal age limit for buying tobacco products from 18 to 21. It's even attracting some industry support, potentially as a way to help avoid a regulatory crackdown on e-cigarettes.*

- "I wouldn't do that," said Sen. Richard Shelby, chairman of the powerful Appropriations Committee.

**Between the lines:** Gottlieb's proposed restrictions on vaping products may have helped motivate the industry's engagement — but he's about to step down.

- Whether Gottlieb's successor carries on with these regulations or not, raising

the age may be a way to "get ahead of things," said Rep Tom Cole, a top GOP appropriator.

- "I think some of the different groups that are involved in vaping and what have you are looking for ways...to do something without giving away as much as they thought they might lose," Cole added.

**Related**  
A surge in youth vaping is driving the FDA's crackdown



(Illustration/Axios)

The Food and Drug Administration will announce a series of actions this week aimed at cracking down on youth vaping, despite e-cigarette maker Juul's last-minute effort to self-police.

**Between the lines:** After years of warnings that flavored e-cigarettes appeal to young people, data finally drove the point home, prompting a Republican administration to move forward with an especially tough regulatory crackdown.

**Details:** As the Washington Post reported last week, the FDA's actions are expected to include:

- A ban on sales of flavored e-cigarettes in most retail settings, along with age-verification rules for online sales.

- A proposal to ban menthol in regular cigarettes.

**Juul proposed** a similar set of voluntary steps. FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb applauded Juul's efforts in a tweet on Tuesday, but said that "voluntary action is no substitute for regulatory steps #FDA will soon take."

**The big picture:** Both of these ideas have been pushed before, both by public health advocates and some Democrats. But new data showing a 77% increase in e-cigarette use among high school students between 2017 and 2018 prompted the FDA to act.



**There is a growing movement to push Congress to raise the federal age limit for buying tobacco products from 18 to 21.**

- A 2009 law passed by a Democratic-controlled Congress banned flavored cigarettes, but left it to the FDA to decide whether that should include menthol. E-cigarettes had yet to hit the market.

- Toward the end of the Obama administration, some Democrats — including former Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman — asked the FDA to ban flavored e-cigarettes, but it didn't happen. Since then, Juul has become enormously popular, particularly among youth.

- "The only reason I saw for flavors was companies trying to get kids to smoke. I pleaded with them to take out all the flavors," Waxman said in an interview. "Now, what many of us predicted has come true. Kids are vaping, and Juul is the biggest source of e-cigarettes."

**What's next:** The menthol ban will likely anger the tobacco industry, but at least one former opponent of the ban — the Congressional Black Caucus — seems more likely to be on board this time around.

- The NAACP released a statement in support of the FDA's actions yesterday.

**When it came to menthol,** in 2009, there was "uncertainty about what the right public health policy was, because you had the question of whether if large populations are already smoking and addicted, and you do a ban, does that lead to black market-type concerns, or is it good for public health?" said Phil Barnett, a former staff director for Waxman.

- "Because that was a really science-based kind of question, the idea was to leave that to FDA to address it and think it through in a regulatory process," he added. (Courtesy axios.com)



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**Launch Site Located Near Boca Chica Beach In South Texas**

**SpaceX Sets To Launch 'Test Hopper' — Prototype For Mars Rocket Ship This Week**

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



SpaceX workers crawl the lower section of the Test Hopper out to a launch pad near Boca Chica Beach, Texas, on March 8, 2019. (Photo/bocachica/pointer)

**Overview**

SpaceX has built a stainless-steel rocket ship at its launch site near Boca Chica Beach, located at the southern tip of Texas.

"Test Hopper" is the first yet partly-functional prototype of Starship: a launch system that SpaceX founder Elon Musk hopes to use to send people to Mars.

A sheriff hand-delivered road closure notices to residents on Friday, according to a local resident. The document warned locals that SpaceX will "conduct testing" as soon as Monday, March 18.

SpaceX previously said its Test Hopper "will be tethered during initial testing" and that any of its "hops" — short vertical take-offs and landings — won't be visible "from offsite."

Musk later confirmed on Twitter that SpaceX hopes to attempt its first "very short" Test Hopper flights this week.

One resident reported not receiving the notice. The person also claims that SpaceX promised a schedule for launch activities but has yet to provide one.

SpaceX, the aerospace company founded by Elon Musk and headed by Gwynne Shotwell, is about to test-launch its first prototype of rocket ship designed to send people to Mars, according to a document reviewed by Business Insider.

The company may begin firing up its "Test Hopper" prototype as soon as Monday, according to a notice stuffed into the mailboxes of some residents near Boca Chica Beach, which is at the southernmost tip of Texas.

SpaceX started building out its launch site in Boca Chica in 2014 for the Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy rockets. However, Musk said in early 2018 that Boca Chica "will be dedicated to" the new Mars vehicle, called Starship.

On March 8, SpaceX crawled the lower section of its mirror-polished Test Hopper out to a launch pad at Boca Chica. Shortly afterward, engineers attached a single truck-sized Raptor rocket engine—the newest and most powerful such machine SpaceX has ever developed — to the base of the vehicle.

Test Hopper can't launch into space, but it will trial crucial hardware and ideas that SpaceX needs to create a full-scale Starship (formerly called Big Falcon Rocket).

Starship is designed to have two fully reusable parts — a Starship spaceship and "Super Heavy" booster — stand roughly 400 feet tall, and use a "bleeding" atmospheric reentry system.



Left to right: An illustration of SpaceX's "test hopper," Starship spaceship, its booster, a Falcon 9 rocket and integrated Starship launch system.

If Musk's "aspirational" dreams for the system come true, Starship may reach orbit in 2020, send its first crew around the moon in 2023, and launch the first people toward Mars in 2024. Ultimately, it might ferry up to 100 people and 150 tons of cargo at a time to the red planet.

But first, SpaceX needs to prove the basic concepts behind Starship work with its Test Hopper.

Comments from a company representative, as well as the notice reportedly handed to some Boca Chica residents, suggest that SpaceX will attempt Test Hopper's first integrated rocket-engine firing as soon as Monday, followed by tethered "hop" test launches shortly thereafter.

(Editor's Note: Following the publication of this story, Musk confirmed that SpaceX hopes to try the test hopper this week.) (Courtesy <https://www.businessinsider.com>)

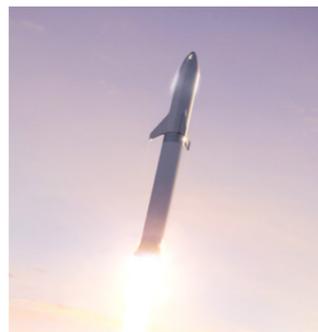
**Related**

**Mars Rocket Ship Prepares For Test Launch**

The Big Falcon Rocket (officially shortened to BFR) is a privately-funded, fully-reusable launch vehicle and spacecraft system in development by SpaceX. In November 2018 the second stage and ship was renamed by Elon Musk to Starship, while the first stage was given the moniker "Super Heavy".

The overall space vehicle architecture includes both launch vehicle and spacecraft, as well as ground infrastructure for rapid launch and relaunch, and zero-gravity propellant transfer technology to be deployed in low Earth orbit (LEO). The payload capacity to Earth orbit of at least 100,000 kg (220,000 lb) makes BFR a super heavy-lift launch vehicle.

However, if the pattern seen in previous iterations holds, the full Starship-Super Heavy stack could be capable of launching 150 tons or more to low earth orbit, more than any other launch vehicle currently planned. The first orbital flight is tentatively planned for 2020.



Artistic rendition of the SpaceX Super Heavy booster lifting the Starship vehicle during ascent.

**SpaceX Super Heavy Booster For The Starship Vehicle**

**Function**

Mars colonization, Earth-lunar transport, Multiplanetary transport, Intercontinental transport, Orbital launcher, Space tourism (lunar missions).

**Manufacturer** SpaceX

Country of origin United States

**Project Cost** US\$5 billion, estimated  
SpaceX has been developing a super heavy-lift launch vehicle for many years, with the design (and nomenclature) of the vehicle undergoing several revisions over time. Before 2016, the vehicle was referred to as the Mars Colonial Transporter (MCT), then in 2016, Musk presented the vehicle as the ITS launch vehicle, forming a core part of the SpaceX comprehensive vision for an Interplanetary Transport System (ITS). In September 2017, the design changed to a much smaller 9 m (30 ft)-diameter vehicle and was given the code name BFR.

The launch vehicle design is dependent on the concurrent development work on the Raptor rocket engines, which are cryogenic methalox-fueled engines to be used for both stages of the BFR launch vehicle. Development on the Raptor began in 2012, leading to engine testing which began in 2016.

The BFR system is intended to completely replace all of SpaceX's existing space hardware (the Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy launch vehicles, and the Dragon spacecraft), initially aiming at the Earth-orbit launch market, but explicitly adding substantial capability to support long-duration spaceflight in the cislunar and Mars transport flight environments. (Courtesy Wikipedia)

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