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ORANGE, California: Police officers stand outside an office building where multiple people were killed in a shooting in Orange, California on Wednesday. —AFP

## Four people shot dead in California

### Suspect arrested in brutal New York assault of Asian woman

**ORANGE:** Four people, including a child, were shot and killed Wednesday evening at an office building in Southern California, police said. It is the third such shooting in the United States in weeks, with 18 people killed in two separate gun violence incidents in March.

The shooter, whose motivations are so far unknown, sustained a gunshot wound and was taken to hospital, police lieutenant Jennifer Amat said, adding the suspect was in a critical condition. She continued that officers were still working to determine whether the wound was self-inflicted or a result of an exchange of fire with police. Police did not release any more information about the victims, but said that a fifth individual—a woman—had been hospitalized and was in a critical condition.

“The situation has been stabilized and there is no threat to the public,” the Orange Police Department said in a post to their Facebook page. The incident began around 5:30 pm local time on the upper floor of a small office building in

the city of Orange. The block houses businesses including a counseling service, an insurance company, a financial consulting firm and a phone repair shop, local media reported. Police and the suspect exchanged fire, according to the Los Angeles Times. One man, who asked not to be identified speaking to local TV channel KTLA5, described the situation as “terrifying”.

Cody Lev told local media The Orange County Register that they heard three loud pops, followed by silence and then sirens. “I can tell you that we haven’t had an incident like this in the city of Orange since 1997,” Amat said, referring to a mass shooting event that saw four people shot dead.

She added: “It’s just such a tragedy for the victims, their families, our community and our police department.” California governor Gavin Newsom posted on Twitter: “Horrible and heartbreaking. Our hearts are with the families impacted by this terrible tragedy tonight.” “I’m deeply saddened by reports of a mass shooting

in Orange County, and I’m continuing to keep victims and their loved ones in my thoughts as we continue to learn more,” US Representative Katie Porter from California also tweeted. It comes after two other high-profile mass shootings earlier this month, which set off a renewed debate about gun control measures in the United States. On March 22, 10 people were killed in a shooting at a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado, less than a week after a man shot and killed eight people, including six women of Asian descent, at spas in Atlanta, Georgia.

#### Attack on Asians

Meanwhile, New York police on Wednesday charged a suspect in a brutal, videotaped assault of a 65-year-old Asian-American woman that sparked outrage amid a surge of anti-Asian violence in the United States. Police identified the man as 38-year-old Brandon Elliot, who was released from prison in 2019 on lifetime parole for stabbing his mother to death in front of his five-

year-old sister in 2002.

A spokesperson said NYPD officers arrested Elliot late Tuesday at a hotel in Times Square near the scene of the crime that is housing homeless people during the coronavirus pandemic. He was charged with felony assault as a hate crime in the early hours of Wednesday, police said in a statement.

The attack, which took place on a sidewalk in broad daylight in midtown Manhattan on Monday, was caught on CCTV footage from inside an adjacent building and showed bystanders seemingly looking on without intervening. In the video, posted online by police, the suspect can be seen walking up to the woman and kicking her in the stomach, knocking her to the ground. He then kicks her several times in the head before walking away. He “made anti-Asian statements” towards the victim, police said. The video also shows a man, who appears to be a delivery worker, watching the attack unfold from inside the building. — AFP