



Seoul: Surviving sexual-slavery victims will receive \$90,000

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Surviving South Korean women who were forced into sexual slavery by Japan’s military in World War II will be eligible to receive around 100 million won (about \$90,000) each from a foundation that will be funded by the Japanese government. Seoul’s Foreign Ministry said the families of deceased victims will be able to receive about 20 million won (\$18,000), and added it expects the Japanese government to soon transfer a promised 1 billion yen (\$9.9 million) to a foundation formed in July. South Korea and Japan had agreed to set up the foundation in December as they settled the long dispute over South Korean sex-slave victims. Seoul says there are currently 46 surviving South Korean victims and 199 victims who have died. The opening of the foundation’s office in Seoul was met by protests. Many people in South Korea believe the Seoul government settled for far too less in the December settlement. Under the agreement, which was described by both governments as “irreversible,” Japan pledged to fund the foundation to help support the victims. South Korea, in exchange, vowed to refrain from criticizing Japan over the issue and will try to resolve a Japanese grievance over a statue of a girl representing victims of sexual slavery that sits in front of the Japanese Embassy in downtown Seoul.

Locally transmitted Zika virus infects 41 in Singapore

SINGAPORE (AP) — More than 40 people have been infected locally by the Zika virus in Singapore, but most have fully recovered, according to officials. Singapore announced its first Zika infection in May, with the virus imported by a 48-year-old man who had travelled to Brazil. The Ministry of Health confirmed 41 locally transmitted cases of the virus. The ministry said in a statement that the patients were “not known to have travelled to Zika-affected areas recently, and are thus likely to have been infected in Singapore. This confirms that local transmission of Zika virus infection has taken place.” Of the group, 34 people have recovered, while seven remain at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, the statement said. The ministry named two residential districts of Singapore where the disease was transmitted and said the bulk of those infected were foreign construction workers. The virus was mostly detected through tests. Among those still hospitalized is a 47-year-old Malaysian woman, identified by authorities as the first locally transmitted case. Zika has mild effects on most people, but can be fatal for unborn children. Infection during pregnancy can result in babies with small heads — a condition called microcephaly — and other brain defects.

Vietnam lifts ban on commemoration of 1966 battle

VUNG TAU, Vietnam (AP) — Under pressure from top Australian officials, Vietnam lifted its sudden ban on veterans who had travelled to the country to mark the 50th anniversary of Australia’s most costly battle of the Vietnam War, with the government allowing low-key commemorations. More than 1,000 Australian veterans and their families travelled to Vietnam to commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan at a cross marking the site where 18 Australian soldiers and hundreds of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops died in a rubber plantation on August 18, 1966. The reversal over the ceremony, which drew some Australian veterans back to the Communist country for the first time since the war, comes after Vietnam told Australia that the event was cancelled. That decision prompted urgent talks between foreign ministers of both countries, with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull speaking to his Vietnamese counterpart by phone. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement that small groups of people would be allowed into the site, but visitors would be banned from wearing medals or uniforms and from carrying banners or flags. The Long Tan anniversary is Australia’s official Vietnam Veterans Day and has been commemorated by Australians at the battle scene since 1989.

‘SOS’ in sand leads to rescue of people stranded on island

CHUUK STATE, Micronesia (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard says two stranded mariners were rescued August 26 after crews saw their “SOS” in the sand on an uninhabited island in Micronesia. A U.S. Navy aircraft crew spotted the pair on the beach and gave their location to the Coast Guard in Guam. Hawaii News Now said the two, who had no emergency equipment, were picked up and taken to a patrol boat. The Coast Guard received a report about the couple’s 18-foot vessel going missing on August 19. Hawaii News Now said the two departed Weno Island on August 17 and were expected to arrive at their destination, Tamatam Island, the next day. Hawaii News Now said a ship noticed flashing lights from the uninhabited Chuuk State island where the two were later found. The U.S. Navy was alerted and spotted the survivors on the beach.

Would-be bomber fails to detonate in Indonesian church

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Police in western Indonesia say a would-be suicide bomber failed to detonate explosives in a packed church during Sunday Mass. National police spokesman Maj. Gen. Boy Rafli Amar said the assailant left a bench and ran toward a priest at the altar, but a bomb in his backpack apparently did not detonate and left the attacker injured. Amar said the man kept running toward the priest with a burning backpack as the congregation chased and captured him. The motive of the attack was not clear. Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim nation, has suffered a spate of deadly attacks by Muslim militants since the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people.



OFF AGAIN. Members of the all-male Japanese pop group SMAP — from left, Goro Inagagi, Tsuyoshi Kusanagi, Takuya Kimura, Shingo Katori, and Masahiro Nakai — perform on stage at their first-ever overseas concert in Beijing, in this September 16, 2011 file photo. The on-again, off-again breakup of the group with a strong following in much of Asia is back on, with the five members of SMAP going their separate ways at the end of this year, after performing together for more than two decades. (AP Photo/Xinhua, Jin Lianguai, File)

Japan’s long-running, all-male pop group SMAP to break up

TOKYO (AP) — The on-again, off-again breakup of an all-male Japanese pop group with a strong following in much of Asia is back on: The five members of SMAP will go their separate ways at the end of this year, after performing together for more than two decades.

The group’s agency, Johnny & Associates, announced that SMAP would disband, according to Japanese media reports. The agency said its members would focus on their solo careers, Kyodo News service reported.

A possible split was widely rumored in January, until the group’s members made an unusual television appearance to say they would stay together and apologized for causing concern among their fans.

Johnny & Associates said it had recently proposed the band take a hiatus, but that some members wanted to break up for good, according to the media reports.

“We judged it difficult for them to continue activities as a group,” Johnny & Associates said, according to Kyodo.

SMAP, which stands for “Sports Music Assemble People,” was formed in 1988 as a six-person teenage boy band. Its first CD came out in 1991, and the group surged to stardom with choreographed singing and dancing.

SMAP’s members now range in age from 39 to 43, and SMAP remains a popular group that is a staple of entertainment shows and commercials. Each member has also performed individually in variety shows and films.

China’s launch of quantum satellite is a major step in space race

By Nomaan Merchant
The Associated Press

BEIJING — China’s launch of the first quantum satellite will push forward efforts to develop the ability to send communications that can’t be penetrated by hackers, according to experts.

The satellite launched into space from the Jiuquan launch base in northwestern China’s Gobi desert will allow Chinese researchers to transmit test messages between Beijing and northwestern China as well as other locations around the world.

If the tests are successful, China will take a major step toward building a worldwide network to send messages that can’t be wiretapped or cracked through conventional methods.

“It moves the challenge for an eavesdropper to a different domain,” said Alexander Ling, principal investigator at the Centre for Quantum Technologies in Singapore. “Lots of people around the world think having secure communications at a quantum level is important. The Europeans, the Americans had the lead, but now the Chinese are showing the way forward.”

Quantum communications use subatomic particles to securely communicate between two points. A hacker trying to crack the message changes its form in a way that would alert the sender and cause the message to be altered or deleted.

Researchers around the world have successfully sent quantum messages by land. But a true satellite-based network would make it

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Asian Currency Exchange Rates

Units per U.S. dollar as of 9/02

Bangladesh Taka	78.375
Cambodian Riel	4052.2
China Renminbi	6.6805
Fijian Dollar	2.0593
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7553
Indian Rupee	66.825
Indonesian Rupiah	13247
Iranian Rial	30093
Japanese Yen	103.92
Laos New Kip	8073.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.0893
Nepal Rupee	106.96
Pakistani Rupee	104.42
Papua N.G. Kina	3.1696
Philippine Peso	46.688
Russian Ruble	65.158
Saudi Riyal	3.7501
Singapore Dollar	1.3602
South Korean Won	1116.3
Sri Lankan Rupee	145.51
Taiwan Dollar	31.668
Thai Baht	34.631
Vietnam Dong	22296