



Girl found wrapped in dead parents' arms in collapse

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese state media say rescuers recovered a three-year-old girl who survived under the remains of collapsed homes by being protected by the bodies of her dead parents. At least 22 people died in the collapse of a group of decrepit homes in eastern China. Six people survived and are in stable condition. State broadcaster CCTV reported that firefighters found the girl and her dead parents under the rubble after 15 hours of rescue work on the outskirts of the city of Wenzhou. CCTV said the child had only minor injuries and avoided being struck by heavy objects. Her parents died after being hit by a piece of cement floor. They were found with their arms around their daughter.

Tourist jailed for three months for silencing sermon

MANDALAY, Myanmar (AP) — A court in Myanmar (also known as Burma) has sentenced a Dutch citizen to three months in prison for interfering with a religious observance by unplugging an amplifier blasting a late-night Buddhist sermon near his hotel in Mandalay, the country's cultural capital. Klaas Haytema, 30, and his girlfriend embraced and wept as he left the courtroom after his sentence was announced. Haytema was arrested in late September after a crowd gathered around his hotel in protest when the loudspeakers at a nearby religious hall were turned off. The man, who was reciting the sermon, pressed charges against Haytema. Haytema was also fined 100,000 kyats (about \$100) for violating visa regulations requiring him to respect the culture. He could have been sentenced to two years in prison for insulting religion in the predominantly Buddhist country.

Indonesia arrests man for broadcasting porn on billboard

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesian police say a man they arrested for broadcasting pornography on an electronic billboard in the country's capital gained access to the system after it displayed its log-on credentials. Jakarta police chief Muhammad Iriawan said the suspect, 24-year-old Samudera Al Hakam Ralial, admitted he hacked the IT system of the billboard operator, but claims the broadcast of the porn movie was accidental. Eleven people, including employees of the company responsible for the billboard, were questioned after the movie was displayed for a few minutes on the giant video screen in southern Jakarta just after Friday prayers in the Muslim-majority country. Twitter in social-media-mad Indonesia was set alight by the incident. Many users posted clips of the billboard as it displayed a Japanese porn movie to passing traffic. Iriawan said Samudera had passed by the billboard earlier in the day and saw it was displaying user credentials and other information, which he recorded with a photograph. He then logged onto the system from his office. According to Iriawan, Samudera said he didn't realize a pornographic website he viewed was uploaded to the billboard. Iriawan said the perpetrator could be charged under either the Electronic Transaction Law, which carries a maximum prison sentence of six years and a fine of 1 billion rupiah (\$77,000), or the Pornography Law, which carries a prison sentence of up to 12 years.

Parents of teen girl who died fasting investigated in India

HYDERABAD, India (AP) — Police are investigating the parents of a teenage girl who died after fasting for 68 days in a religious ritual in southern India, an inspector said. The 13-year-old girl's father denied allegations that his daughter was forced to fast as part of a ritual practiced by Jains, an Indian religion that preaches nonviolence. "She wanted to become a Jain nun, and had gone on fast twice in the past," Lakshmi Chand Samdariya told The Associated Press. "She never faced any problem" before. But two days after ending her latest fast, when she was on a liquid diet, "her condition deteriorated," Samdariya said. "We shifted her to a local hospital, where she was declared dead" on October 3. Police in the southern city of Hyderabad opened the case against the girl's parents after a complaint was filed by a children's rights association, inspector M. Mattaiah said. "This is an allegation, and we are investigating to establish the facts," Mattaiah said.

Vietnam seizes more than 2 tons of elephant tusks

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — Vietnamese authorities have seized more than 2 tons of elephant tusks illegally imported from Mozambique. Customs newspaper reported that 2,052 kilograms of ivory hidden in timber in two containers was seized at a port in Ho Chi Minh City. Officials in Ho Chi Minh City were not available for comment. In addition, customs officers in Hanoi International Airport seized 309 kilograms (682 pounds) of elephant tusks illegally smuggled from Nigeria. Elephant ivory is used as jewelry and home decorations in Vietnam, which bans hunting of its own dwindling population of elephants.

Toyota recalls 340,000 Prius hybrid cars for faulty brakes

TOKYO (AP) — Toyota Motor Corp. has recalled 340,000 gas-electric hybrid Prius cars around the world, 212,000 of them in Japan and 94,000 in North America, for a defect in the parking brake. Toyota acknowledged receiving reports of crashes, injuries, and deaths. The Japanese automaker refused to provide details, saying it was still looking into the reports. Toyota said the parking brake cable can disengage unexpectedly, causing it to stop working properly. So if the car is left in any gear other than park, it could start rolling away and possibly crash. Toyota said 17,000 Prius vehicles were recalled in Europe, and the rest in Australia and other regions. The problem models were manufactured from August 2015 through October 2016. The company said all the vehicles were manufactured at its Tsutsumi plant in Toyota city, Japan, the company's headquarters, one of a handful of plants around the world that make the Prius.



KIROBO MINI. Toyota Motor Corp. SMO Moritaka Yoshida speaks with a compact sized humanoid communication robot, Kirobo Mini, during a press unveiling in Tokyo. The robot is not equipped with face recognition technology, so it cannot recognize different people, but the idea is one Kirobo Mini per person, according to Toyota. More people in Japan are living alone these days, including the elderly and young singles. And they need someone, or in this case something, to talk to, according to Fuminori Kataoka, general manager in charge of the robot project. (AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi)

Toyota's tiny robot sells for less than \$400, talks, can't drive

By Yuri Kageyama
AP Business Writer

TOKYO — The new robot from Japanese automaker Toyota Motor Corp. can't do much but chatter in a high-pitched voice.

The 39,800-yen (\$390), four-inch-tall, doll-like Kirobo Mini — whose name comes from *kibo*, or "hope," and "robot" — supposedly has the smarts of a five-year-old.

Fuminori Kataoka, general manager in charge of the project, says its value is emotional, going from home to car to the outdoors as a faithful companion, although the owner must do all the walking and driving.

Preorders start later this year. Shipments are set for next year. No overseas sales are planned so far. The company said it planned a gradual rollout, initially limited to Tokyo and Aichi prefecture in central Japan, near company headquarters, to get feedback from consumers.

The robot comes equipped with a camera, microphone, and Bluetooth, and connects to a smartphone, which needs to be installed with a special software application. It turns its head toward a voice, although sometimes that function fails as its voice recognition is far from perfect.

"Toyota has been making cars that have a lot of valuable uses. But this time we're just pushing emotional value," Kataoka said.

During an interview with The Associated Press, the robot turned its head to the reporter and then to Kataoka when he replied. But the first time Kataoka asked the robot for its

name, it replied by asking what kind of car he had. It got it right the second time. Kataoka just laughed.

The robot is not equipped with face recognition technology, and so it cannot recognize different people. The idea is one Kirobo Mini per person, according to Toyota.

More people in Japan are living alone, including the elderly and young singles. And they need someone, or in this case something, to talk to, Kataoka said.

But he was amazingly frank about how useless his robot is.

"This is not smart enough to be called artificial intelligence," he said. "This is about the existence of something you can talk to. A stuffed animal might not answer back, but people do talk to it, like my daughter once did this. But if it talked back, wouldn't that be better? And isn't this better than talking to a box?"

Some may find depressing, if not disturbing, a vision of a society of lonely people turning to dialogue with machines. But proponents say that's the reality, and that the technology can serve as a tool to help care for the sick or the elderly.

Naoki Mizushina, a researcher at Tokyo-based MM Research Institute, which studies the robotics market, said the robot was too much like talking toys, on sale at cheaper prices, and it seemed to lack concrete functions to make it a big hit, such as linking to online shopping or furnishing convenient information.

"Will this take off? It might be tough," he said.

Continued on page 13

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Fijian Dollar	2.0721
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7574
Indian Rupee	66.936
Indonesian Rupiah	13053
Iranian Rial	31650
Japanese Yen	103.76
Laos New Kip	8130.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.2092
Nepal Rupee	107.06
Pakistani Rupee	104.67
Papua N.G. Kina	3.1678
Philippine Peso	48.325
Russian Ruble	63.010
Saudi Riyal	3.7509
Singapore Dollar	1.3841
South Korean Won	1136.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	146.88
Taiwan Dollar	31.712
Thai Baht	35.161
Vietnam Dong	22301