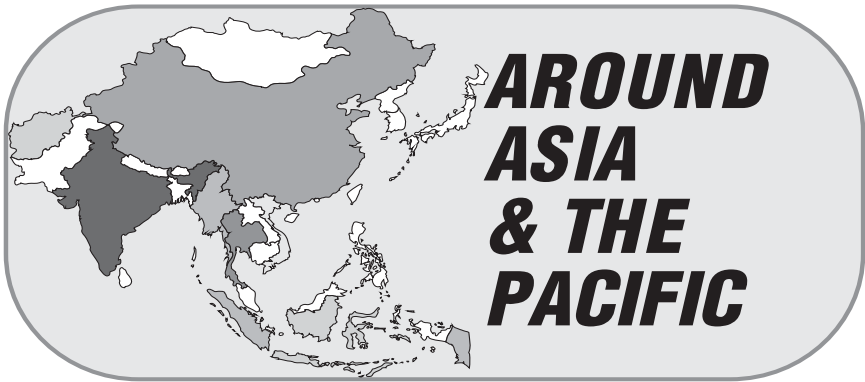




Japan’s cherry blossom season officially arrived March 24

TOKYO (AP) — Japan’s official cherry blossom spotters confirmed the first blooming of the country’s favorite flower on March 24, declaring the official start of the festive season in the Japanese capital. An official from the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) carefully examined the specimen tree of Somei Yoshino variety at Tokyo’s Yasukuni shrine and announced that more than five blossoms — the minimum required for the announcement — were flowering on it. The opening matched the average year and was five days earlier than last year, according to the JMA. Cherry blossoms, or “sakura,” are Japan’s favorite flower and usually reach their peak in late March to early April, just as the country celebrates the start of a new school and business year. Many Japanese enjoy walking or picnicking under the trees. Sakura have deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries and have regularly been used in poetry and literature, with their fragility seen as a symbol of life, death, and rebirth. The announcement in Tokyo, which has enjoyed warmer-than-usual temperatures of around 66° Fahrenheit, came just one day after the blooming of the nation’s first cherry blossom was confirmed in the southwestern city of Kochi on the island of Shikoku. The JMA tracks more than 50 “benchmark” cherry trees across the country. The trees normally bloom for about two weeks each year from first bud to all the blossoms falling off. They were expected to reach their peak in about 10 days. Cherry trees are sensitive to temperature changes and the timing of their blooming can provide valuable data for climate change studies. In recent years, Japan’s cherry blossom season has tended to come earlier than the average, prompting concerns of a possible impact of climate change.

Indonesian sharia clown teaches Islamic values to children

TANGERANG, Indonesia (AP) — Wearing a colorful costume, red nose, and a turban on his head, Yahya Hendrawan performs as a clown in Indonesian schools, teaching Islamic values to children and teenagers. He started out working birthday parties as a side hustle. But in 2010, his religious teacher encouraged him to become a modern-day Abu Nawas, a legendary Arabic poet known for his wit, wisdom, humor, and clever wordplay, so he could bring a cheerful, lighthearted approach to teaching religion. Hendrawan, now known as Yahya Badut, or Yahya the Clown, has embraced that vision. He founded, along with some fellow clowns, the Sharia Clown Foundation, a neighborhood initiative that blends entertainment with religious education. Hendrawan teaches every weekday afternoon in a library at his house and occasionally at a school or orphanage with his clown partners. He often begins lessons with a cheerful song, encouraging children to share a smile. Other clowns open with magic tricks. “There is a hadith that says: Your sweet smile in front of your brothers is charity. So we must prioritize smiles and greetings. When meeting friends, shaking hands, smile ... You are good. I am good. Thank god,” Hendrawan said. By being funny and cheerful, Hendrawan says he hopes the children will quickly absorb his lessons about morals, manners, and Islamic values.

Rohingya refugees welcome new U.S. financial aid

COX’S BAZAR, Bangladesh (AP) — The U.S. government confirmed in late March that it would provide \$73 million in new financial aid for Rohingya refugees through the United Nations’ food agency, easing worries among more than 1 million refugees that essential food rations would be cut. Aid agencies, the U.N., and refugees have voiced concerns after the World Food Program (WFP) warned it may be affected after U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration announced it was cutting international aid. The WFP said that if it is not able to raise funds, it will have no option but to halve food rations to \$6 a month from the previous \$12.50 in Bangladesh’s southern coastal district of Cox’s Bazar, where the Rohingya live in sprawling camps. Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, the Bangladesh government’s Refugee, Relief, and Repatriation commissioner, told reporters that he received confirmation from the WFP that refugees in Cox’s Bazar — as well as the thousands who have been relocated to Bhashan Char island — will continue to receive \$12 to \$13 a month each in aid. The U.S. had been the largest provider of aid to the Rohingya refugees, contributing nearly \$2.4 billion since 2017 and providing the U.N. with emergency food and nutrition assistance, according to the State Department.

Marathon organizers apologize for gun-shaped prizes

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — The organizers of a marathon in southern Taiwan, including a member of the self-governing island republic’s legislature, have apologized after giving out prizes in the shape of a golden Chinese machine gun. Legislator Hsu Chi-chieh of the ruling Democratic Progressive party that favors the island’s independence from China apologized and said the use of the image of a Chinese QBZ-95 on trophies for top winners was an unintentional mistake. Those given the trophies would be given the option of choosing a different one. China claims Taiwan as its own territory and threatens to use force to bring it under its control. In an address to the island in mid-March, President William Lai Ching-te reminded residents that Taiwan law designates mainland China as a “foreign hostile force” and said tougher measures were being taken to prevent Chinese subversion through the media and civic exchanges. Lai warned also of the danger of influential figures and serving and retired members of the military selling secrets to China. Underscoring the apparent incompetence behind the incident, the Fengshan Marathon held near the major southern port of Kaohsiung wound its way through the Taiwanese Military Academy, the Army Infantry Training Command, and the Chung Cheng Armed Forces Preparatory School, all affiliated with the Defense Ministry. The Fengshan Road Running Association apologized for the use of the Chinese rifle.



TRADITION THREATENED. Fishers retrieve a net on Nguyen Tat Thanh beach in Da Nang, Vietnam. Warming oceans threaten the ocean ecology and the marine life that inhabits it. It may result in the proliferation of smaller, less nutritious fish and increase costs of fishing and consequently food. Anchovies, for instance, have an outsized role on marine ecology. They’re food for other fish that people eat, like mackerel. They are also vital to make fish meal, which is used to feed farmed fish. (AP Photo/Yannick Peterhans)

Climate change and overfishing threaten Vietnam’s ancient tradition of making fish sauce

By Aniruddha Ghosal
The Associated Press

DA NANG, Vietnam — Bui Van Phong faced a choice when the Vietnam War ended 50 years ago: Stay in his small village, helping his parents carry on the family’s centuries-old tradition of making fish sauce, or join the hundreds of thousands of people fleeing his country for a better life.

Phong chose to stay behind and nurtured a business making the beloved condiment, known as nuoc mam in Vietnam, that is now in its fourth generation with his son, Bui Van Phu, 41, at the helm. Fish sauce from the village has been recognized by Vietnam as an indelible part of the country’s heritage and the younger Bui is acutely aware of what that means.

“It isn’t just the quality of fish sauce. It is also the historical value,” he said.

But that heritage is under threat, and not only from giant conglomerates that mass-produce fish sauce in factories. Climate change and overfishing are making it harder to catch the anchovies essential to the condiment that underlies so much of Vietnam and southeast Asia’s food.

Anchovies thrive in large schools in nutrient-rich waters near the shore. But climate change is warming the oceans, depleting oxygen levels in the water. Scientists have long feared that this would lead to smaller fish, as large fish that need more oxygen may migrate or adapt over time by shrinking. Renato Salvattecì, who studies

fisheries at the Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel in Germany, said his research into warmer periods millenia ago found support for this in the fossil record.

“If we continue with this trend of deoxygenation, anchovies will not be OK with that,” he said. “Every species has a limit.”

Breaching that limit will have global consequences.

Warming oceans threaten the ocean ecology and the marine life that inhabits it. It may result in the proliferation of smaller, less nutritious fish and increase costs of fishing and consequently food. Anchovies, for instance, have an outsized role on marine ecology. They’re food for other fish that people eat, like mackerel. They are also vital to make fish meal, which is used to feed farmed fish.

Overfishing compounds the problem, and geopolitical tensions in the contested waters of the South China Sea — responsible for about 12% of the global fish catch — make management difficult. The destructive industrial fishing practice of dragging large nets along the seabed, scooping up everything in a net’s path, has prevailed since the 1980s. But despite increased fishing, the amount of fish being caught has stagnated, according to a 2020 analysis of fishing trends.

Even if the world can limit long-term global warming to 2.7° Fahrenheit (1.5° Celsius) above pre-industrial levels and halve fishing intensity, the South China Sea will still lose more than a fifth of its fish stocks, warned a 2021 assessment by scientists from the Uni-

Continued on page 4



FAIRWAY
INDEPENDENT MORTGAGE CORPORATION



Tu Phan
Branch Manager, NMLS #7916

Call about
refinances & purchases
Offering
FHA/VA/Conventional Mortgages

(503) 780-6872
<tu.phan@fairwaymc.com>
<www.LoansNow.com>



12817 S.E. 93rd Ave.
Clackamas, OR 97015

Copyright ©2023 Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation, NMLS #2289, 4750 S. Biltmore Lane, Madison, WI 53718, 1-866-912-4800. All rights reserved. This is not an offer to enter into an agreement. Not all customers will qualify. Information, rates and programs are subject to change without notice. All products are subject to credit and property approval. Other restrictions and limitations may apply. Fairway is not affiliated with any government agencies. Equal Housing Opportunity. AZ License #BK-0904162. Licensed by the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act, License No #1DBO-78367. Licensed by the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation under the California Financing Law, NMLS #2289. Loans made or arranged pursuant to a California Residential Mortgage Lending Act License.



一圖千字

STUNNING PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDDINGS
SENIORS
BABIES
PREGNANCY
PORTRAITS
FUNERALS

LANDIS.PHOTOS@GMAIL.COM
JANLANDISPHOTOGRAPHY.COM
503•317•3759

Asian Currency Exchange Rates	
Units per U.S. dollar as of 4/04	
Bangladesh Taka	121.27
Cambodian Riel	3984.3
China Renminbi	7.2816
Fijian Dollar	2.319
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7748
Indian Rupee	85.533
Indonesian Rupiah	16745
Iranian Rial	42029
Japanese Yen	146.99
Laos New Kip	21640
Malaysian Ringgit	4.437
Nepal Rupee	136.83
Pakistani Rupee	280.6
Papua N.G. Kina	4.098
Philippine Peso	57.344
Russian Ruble	84.44
Saudi Riyal	3.7526
Singapore Dollar	1.3473
South Korean Won	1459.5
Sri Lankan Rupee	295.43
Taiwan Dollar	33.18
Thai Baht	34.4
Vietnam Dong	25803