

NKorea nuclear site collapsed



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspects a purported hydrogen bomb (file photo)

Beijing
North Korea's underground nuclear test site has partially collapsed following a massive bomb blast last year, making it unusable, Chinese seismologists have concluded.

The North's leader Kim Jong Un declared last week that his regime would halt nuclear and long-range missile tests and shut down its nuclear site at Punggye-ri under Mount Mantap in the country's northeast.

The offer came days before his summit this Friday with the South's President Moon Jae-in, which is scheduled to be followed by a summit with US President Donald Trump.

North Korea conducted five of its six nuclear tests at the site, with the biggest blast last September 3 triggering a 6.3-magnitude earthquake that was felt across the northern border with China.

The North claimed it tested a hydrogen bomb.

Landslides and earthquakes following the explosion led to speculation that the site was suffering from "tired mountain syndrome".

Two studies involving Chinese experts have found that a 4.1-magnitude aftershock that took place 8 1/2 minutes after the first quake caused the collapse of rock inside the mountain.

"It is necessary to continue monitoring possible leaks of radioactive materials caused by the collapse incident," said the University of Science and Technology of China in a summary of one study posted on its website.

The university said the study would be published in *Geophysical Research Letters*, a journal of the American Geophysical Union.

An English-language abstract by the study authors in another section of the university's website concluded: "The occurrence of the collapse should deem the underground infrastructure beneath mountain Mantap not be used for any future nuclear tests."

The line about the site being unusable does not appear in the Chinese-language summary and it was unclear whether it would be included in the journal.

One of the study's authors, Lianxing Wen of New York's Stony Brook University, did not immediately respond to emailed questions.

A second study led by Chinese scientists, including experts from the China Earthquake Administration, also concluded that the September aftershock had caused a collapse. (AFP)

'Golden cabbage' leaves stolen off Vienna landmark

Vienna
Thieves have stolen half a dozen of the gilded leaves that make up the famous "golden cabbage" dome on the iconic Secession building in Vienna, police said Wednesday.

The Art Nouveau building, completed in 1898, is undergoing restoration and the culprits made use of the scaffolding to clamber up and prise off six to eight of the leaves, police spokeswoman Irina Steirer said.

The theft from the roof, visible from afar and a well-



The famous 'golden cabbage' on roof of Secession building

known landmark in the Austrian capital, took place on Monday night, Steirer said.

The building by architect Joseph Maria Olbrich was

constructed to house works by Gustav Klimt and other artists after they quit the stuffy Kuenstlerhaus to found a new art association called the Secession. (AFP)

#PollToday



Do you think Kim has agreed to freeze missile tests due to the collapse of the nuclear test site?

Yes No Cant Say



"The DPRK has proven to be a tough negotiator and not even mentioning human rights at this very first stage of negotiations would be a misstep and a lost opportunity."

Tomás Ojea Quintana
U.N. Special Rapporteur

Rest in sight

Indonesia oil well fire kills 18



A newly drilled illegal oil well in western Indonesia exploded into flames, burning 18 people to death and injuring dozens of others.

Philippines hold drills at Boracay

Philippine police preparing to shut down the Boracay resort island staged drills in riot gear, startling the laid-back beach community as workers mounted a last-ditch effort to halt the six-month closure.

Massive protest as Armenia crisis grows

Several thousand protesters took to the streets of the Armenian capital after talks between the opposition and the acting prime minister were called off

Philippines revokes Australian nun's visa

The Philippines revoked the visa of a 71-year-old Australian nun who has been ordered to leave the country within 30 days after President Rodrigo Duterte accused her of unlawfully criticising his government.

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Danish inventor gets life for murdering reporter

Copenhagen

A Danish court sentenced inventor Peter Madsen to life in prison yesterday for murdering and dismembering a Swedish journalist aboard his home-built submarine in Copenhagen harbour in August 2017.

Madsen, dressed in black, sat completely still as his sentence was handed down in the Copenhagen City Court.

Police detained him on Aug. 11 last year when he

emerged from his submarine without Wall, a 30-year-old Swedish journalist who was researching a story on the man who was already well known in Denmark for his submarines and his plan to send a human into space in a home-made rocket.

Later that month, police identified a torso washed ashore in Copenhagen as Wall's. Arms, legs and a head determined to be that of the victim were also later retrieved by the authorities. (Reuters)

Singapore euthanizes polar bear born in tropics



Inuka, the first polar bear born in the tropics, swims in his new enclosure at the Singapore Zoo in Singapore

Singapore

Inuka, the world's first polar bear born in the tropics, was euthanised yesterday by the Singapore Zoo, officials said.

The 27-year-old bear suffered from age-related ailments including arthritis, and its limbs became too weak to support its over 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) frame.

The zoo said this resulted in injuries to its abdomen and paws which did not respond well to weeks of

intensive treatment.

A team of veterinarians and keepers decided not to revive the bear after it was anaesthetised yesterday for a thorough health check.

"Looking at all the symptoms it is quite clear that from ... Inuka's point of view, he would have been suffering quite a fair bit of discomfort and pain," said Cheng Wen-Haur, deputy chief executive of Wildlife Reserves Singapore, which runs most of the country's zoos. (AP)

Parents of terminally ill UK toddler launch new legal bid

London

The parents of terminally ill British boy Alfie Evans were to appeal a decision preventing them from going to Rome for treatment following high-profile interventions in the case from Pope Francis and the Italian government.

Toddler Evans, who suffers from a rare neurological disease, had his ventilator support removed late on Monday, but has continued breathing independently for

more than a day.

A judge ruled on Tuesday that the 23-month-old could be taken home from Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool, northwest England, but could not be taken to Rome for further treatment.

"The court of appeal have reached out to us and said they are going to set back three judges to hear the case," Tom Evans told reporters outside the hospital on Tuesday. (AFP)