

MARINE SAFETY NEWS

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

One of the greatest victories you can gain over someone is to beat him at politeness. - Josh Billings

INFOTAINMENT DVD 46

- Learn about the latest 'Save Our Seafarers' campaign launched to tackle the menace of piracy. Interviews of leading maritime personalities are also available in DVD 46 as they speak at great length about the subject.
 - Take a sneak peek into the 2011-2012 NBA Season in the Sports section of DVD 46. Also read about ways to cure sports injuries and learn about world's best ice-skating destinations.
 - Don't be the odd one out. Learn new languages now available on DVD 46. Also go through the Language Tips Section to brush up on your English grammar. Our sample papers give you the opportunity to test your English-language skills.

Government Apologises For Publishing Details Of Expat Voters

The government has issued an apology for publishing of addresses of Bulgarian expats, who registered to vote in the upcoming elections.

Radi Naydenov, the head of the Commission in charge of organising the vote of Bulgarians abroad at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, confirmed that the ministry had inadvertently published the permanent addresses of nearly 37,000 Bulgarians living abroad on its website.

The publication of the addresses caused widespread outrage among the expats.

As per the country's Election Code annex, which is available on the official page of the Central Electoral Commission, the public lists of individuals, who are going to vote outside the country, must include only names and their respective voting poll.

The addresses are supposed to be used only for internal use.

Naydenov told reporters that the blunder

occurred due to the officials having to process a very large amount of data.

He also confirmed that the addresses were published on Saturday and once the officials realised their mistake, they removed it on Sunday.

"This is an omission on our part that we regret," he said.

Naydenov also declined to comment on reports that claimed that some of the expats were planning to sue the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the blunder with their personal data.

The first alarm was raised by the partner website of WikiLeaks in Bulgaria, bivol.bg. "In order to have such Mafia State as Bulgaria, several prerequisites are needed, with one being completely unavoidable - the pathological incompetency of all State servants - from the policeman to the ambassador," Bivol wrote in its editorial.

Djankov Vows To End '13th Salary'

Finance Minister Simeon Djankov has announced that he will work towards putting an end to the end-of-year bonuses for state servants, which is popularly known as 'the 13th salary.' Speaking during an interview on Tuesday, Djankov said that till the time he is at the post, the employees of the state administration would not get the bonus.

"Even if there is money in the budget, there would not be a 13th salary - they work 12 months; they get 12-month pay," he declared.

Djankov further confirmed that there will be no Christmas bonuses, but there is a possibility of giving something to the retirees with the lowest pensions.

According to him, the policies of the government will depend on how the recession of European economies affect Bulgaria in October and November.

Separately, Djankov supported the decision of the Parliament to not convene until the October 23 presidential and local elections. "In the last weeks the parliamentary stand was used for election campaigning. It is better for the MPs to be where the people who have elected them are, and to find out what the voters need," Djankov said.

Vietnam, Bulgaria Promote Co-operation, Investment

The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency (BSMEPA) held a business forum in Hanoi on Tuesday to boost bilateral ties and trade investment.

Bulgaria's economic competitiveness is high due to the country's location in south-eastern Europe which can be a bridge linking the market to southern and northern Europe.

The government had encouraged investment, especially foreign direct investment (FDI), by applying only one tax policy system to both domestic and foreign investors, said Boriana Mintcheva, head of BSMEPA International Co-operation and Project Division.

Currently Bulgaria exports to Vietnam mainly machinery, medical and pharmaceutical technologies, while it imports coffee, pepper, and seafood. With more than 315,800 small and medium-size businesses in Bulgaria, BSMEPA believes the two countries' businessmen would further co-operate in the coming time, said Mintcheva. (Xinhua)

Raskov Jr To Remain Under Arrest

The grandson of notorious Bulgarian Roma boss Tsar Kiro - Kiril Rashkov Jr, has decided not to appeal against his detention imposed by the Asenovgrad Regional Court and as such will remain under arrest.

Rashkov Jr has been charged with issuing death threats to Veselin Hristov, the maternal uncle of 19-year-old Angel Petrov, who was killed on September 23 in Katunitsa by an associate of Tsar Kiro.

Recent media reports had claimed that Rashkov Jr was planning to appeal against his detention on Tuesday.

However, sources in the Plovdiv District Court said that he had decided to remain in custody like his grandfather due to ongoing tensions in Katunitsa.

Rashkov Jr had surrendered before the authorities on October 3 after becoming the subject of a nationwide search. He was placed under arrest, the heaviest measure of restraint, as the Asenovgrad Regional Court ruled that he was likely to go into hiding or commit another offence.

Bulgaria Imposes Tax On Plastic Bags

Bulgaria has imposed a new eco-tax on the production of plastic bags in an effort to limit their use for the good of the environment, the government said on Monday. The new tax, which entered into force on October 1, obliges manufacturers or importers to pay BGN 0.15 for every bag below a certain thickness sold.

The levy, which the government expects to be passed on to customers in shops, will rise to BGN 0.35 from 2012, BGN 0.45 in 2013 and BGN 0.55 in 2014.

Its purpose is to cut the number of thin plastic bags used every year in the country from the current 1.2 billion, seen as a major source of litter, the Environment Ministry said, vowing strict checks.

It has already had some success, the Dnevnik newspaper reported on Sunday. "Even if I cannot guarantee that nobody makes them, big producers have definitely stopped production as they have no orders after the imposing of the eco-tax," Tsvetanka Todorova from the producers' association told the paper. (AFP)

REGIONAL NEWS

Jean-Michel Jarre Launches Education Campaign

SOFIA: French electronic music pioneer Jean-Michel Jarre launched a campaign in Sofia on Monday to support education around the world and called for other music and sports celebrities to join in.

MARINE NEWS SUMMARY

CONTAINER VESSELS: NEXT-GENERATION WILL BE LARGEST EVER

If the need is for greater efficiency for road and rail freight during an economic slowdown, standard operating procedures might be to downgrade to smaller and lighter means of overland transport. Shipping lines, however, have a different approach: they build bigger ships. The reason, they say, is better economies of scale, costing them less to send a string of three or four huge new ships across the oceans instead of a larger fleet of smaller vessels. These bigger and newer ships will also have more efficient engines and lower emissions, which also means lower fuel costs, as the company hopes an everlasting impression on its customers. One shipping giant is reportedly spending USD 1.9 billion on 10 new ships, each of which will carry 18,000 TEUs. The new Ultra Large Container Ships (ULCS) will be more than 1,312 feet long and more than 193 feet wide, and will outdo cargo capacity of the world's largest container vessel currently afloat, by 16%. The company's chief executive said that building ULCSs was not only a top priority for the firm but also for its customers, who are heavily dependent upon this in their supply chain. Five years ago, the world's largest container ship had a TEU capacity of 9,500. According to a Paris-based maritime research firm, the container carriers' answer to challenges of sustainable shipping and reduction of emissions is to build ever-larger ships, whose sizes have doubled over a decade.

"From this night on I will give one cent of every ticket for the purpose of education. And this will be until the end of my life," the musician said during his first show in the capital on Sunday night.

"It is a very simple idea, which I wanted to launch in Bulgaria. From now on until the rest of my life in all my concerts I will do this and I will encourage all my colleagues to do it," Jarre told AFP in an interview.

"One cent per ticket is nothing. But if we multiply it by the number of performers, the number of tickets sold for concerts, the seats in cinemas, the newspaper copies sold, the sports events, we will have the budget for education ready tomorrow morning," he added.

Jarre, 63, a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), launched the campaign in Bulgaria to honour UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova, who hails from here.

The money collected will go to the UN Education for All movement, Jarre said.

"Almost one billion people (in the world) cannot read or write," he underlined.

"And it is education that helps understand better climate change and economic problems and stamp out religious extremism. We know that it is also a way to solve many problems of women around the world," he said.

Jarre's show in Sofia on Sunday night was the first in a tour that will also take him to Serbia, Croatia, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, the Scandinavian countries, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. (AFP)

Higher Unemployment In North-Western Regions

SOFIA: The three north-western districts of Montana, Vidin and Vratsa saw their unemployment rate for September remain unchanged from the previous month at 18.12%.

According to a report by the Regional Employment Service, the unemployment rate in the three districts is three times higher than the national average of 9.45%, which was registered in August.

The Yakimovo municipality recorded an alarming 54.6% rate of unemployment. The report further said that 19 unemployed persons compete for one job in Montana, while in Vidin and Vratsa the candidates for one vacancy are 18 and 17, respectively.

Meanwhile, data released by Eurostat recently showed that unemployment in Bulgaria rose from 10.2% in August 2010 to 11.7% in the same month of 2011.

Overall, the unemployment rate in Bulgaria fell slightly in September to 9.40% from 9.45% the previous month, the unemployment agency announced on Tuesday.

A total of 309,971 people were registered as unemployed in September, down from 313,772 in August, the agency said in a statement. Some 18,000 people said they had started a job last month, it added. The unemployment rate in Bulgaria stood at an annual average 9.47% in 2010, up from 7.59% in 2009 and 6.31% in 2008. (with inputs from AFP)

Pobeda To Increase Production

BURGAS: Confectionery maker Pobeda has announced that it will boost its output by a third after completing a project to install two production lines. A statement issued by the Burgas-based company on Monday said that the the new equipment, worth BGN 10 million, has already been installed and is currently being tested.

The company received 46% of the funds for investment from the European Regional Development Fund.

The company also said that it recently saw its sales volume decline.

It also registered a slight decline in sales revenue to BGN 26.18 million in 2010 compared to BGN 26.25 million the previous year. "This is due to the increase in prices of a number of commodities, driven by soaring raw material costs," a Pobeda official said. Pobeda specialises in the production of biscuits, mini-cakes, croissants and candies.

CRC To Issue Two 1800 MHz Licences

SOFIA: Officials of the country's telecom regulator CRC have announced that it intends to issue two licences for the use of radio frequency spectrum in the range 1800 MHz for carrying out public electronic communications through a mobile terrestrial network with national coverage.

According to the officials, one licence is for making use of individually assigned scarce resource of radio frequency spectrum - 2 x 5 MHz in the range 1800 MHz (radio frequency bands 1710 - 1785 MHz and 1805-1880 MHz).

The other, according to the officials, is for making use of individually assigned scarce resource of radio frequency spectrum - 2 x 8 MHz in the range 1800 MHz (radio frequency bands 1710 - 1785 MHz and 1805-1880 MHz).

The Day In History

In 1888, Provisional Rules for the establishment of a Higher School (later the University of Sofia) were promulgated in the State Gazette. In 1912, Bulgarian forces captured Lozengrad, which was the first great victory of the Balkan Alliance in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Western Balkans Hope To Move Slowly Towards EU

BELGRADE (AFP): When the European Commission announces its progress report on Wednesday, Western Balkans countries hope for small steps forward as the realisation is dawning EU enlargement will be a very slow process.

As the economic crisis continues in Europe, support for EU integration has fallen in most Western Balkans countries, although the majority generally agrees there is no alternative.

Montenegro and Serbia should both get some good news with the commission expected to recommend candidacy status for Belgrade.

For Podgorica, a candidate member since December 2010, it would be a date for the start of accession talks.

Serbia will reap the reward for arresting the last two remaining fugitives of the UN war crimes court, earlier this year. But Belgrade's hopes that it could also set a start date for accession talks have largely evaporated after the recent unrest in northern Kosovo and the decision to ban a gay pride parade.

Leaked drafts of the evaluation report show that the commission will demand Serbia "show a more constructive attitude" on Kosovo, whose 2008 declaration of independence Belgrade does not recognise.

Serbia and Kosovo started EU-mediated talks earlier this year to solve practical problems. But Belgrade has delayed the dialogue due to the unrest in northern Kosovo and said it would not return to the table until that issue was solved.

This attitude could hurt Belgrade when the EU member states have to decide on candidacy status later this year.

Germany already made it clear it believes normalisation of relations with Kosovo is one of the conditions. Macedonia, which has already been accepted as a candidate member in 2005, expects the commission to recommend opening accession talks for the third time.

Tymoshenko 'Criminally' Exceeded Powers: Judge

KIEV (AFP): Ukraine's former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko clearly exceeded her authority in signing a gas deal with Russia in 2009 and used her powers to "criminal ends," the judge in her trial said in the verdict on Tuesday.

"Y V Tymoshenko... used her official powers to criminal ends and, acting consciously, committed actions which clearly exceeded her rights and powers which had heavy consequences," said judge Rodion Kireyev.

Kireyev has yet to announce his final judgement in the case or give any details what sentence the former Orange Revolution leader could face if found guilty. But his initial summary was a clear blow for Tymoshenko who appeared distressed in the packed court, flanked by her husband Olexander and daughter Yevgenia. Prosecutors have demanded a jail sentence of seven years.

Kireyev said Tymoshenko sustained a loss to state gas firm Naftogaz of UAH 1.5 billion (USD 190 million) by agreeing a 10 year contract on gas imports from Russia in 2009 when she was prime minister.

Despite being held under arrest since August, Tymoshenko as ever showed up in court with her hair plaited intricately around her head and wearing an immaculate beige dress. She shouted "Glory to Ukraine!" after being led in.

Accused Global Arms Dealer Bout's Trial Set To Open

NEW YORK (AFP): The trial of Viktor Bout, a Russian ex-army officer alleged to have overseen the world's biggest private arms dealing network, starts in New York on Tuesday with jury selection.

Bout was brought to the US in 2010 from Thailand in the wake of a daring sting operation by US agents in a Thai hotel in 2008, followed by a bitter extradition battle that raised US-Russian tensions.

FINANCIAL NEWS

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

USD 1 = BGN 1.4389

EUR 1 = USD 1.3593

Dubbed by US officials "the merchant of death," Bout is accused of attempting to sell undercover US agents surface-to-air missiles and other weapons for use by Colombia's FARC rebels against US anti-narcotics personnel. He has pleaded not guilty.

Bout's New York legal team concedes that he did run a fleet of cargo planes acquired after the Soviet break-up, but insists he never sold or brokered weapons.

He faces up to life in prison if found guilty. Jury selection from a pool of 80 will feature careful screening by Judge Shira Scheindlin and lawyers from both sides, amid concerns that Bout's notoriety may make it difficult for him to get a fair trial.

Greek Write-Down Marks End Of Austerity Charge

BRUSSELS (AFP): European leaders have switched horses as Dexia became the first bank to need bailing out with lenders caught in a squeeze triggered by the sovereign debt crisis.

While Europe's strategy had long been to exact austerity in exchange for loans to keep over-extended governments afloat, a fierce recession in Greece and the rising threat of a global downturn again next year was already forcing a rethink.

Belgian Finance Minister Didier Reynders said it recently: "We don't want Greece to die on the treatment table."

"We have to help it get back on its feet," he said, urging a gentler pace of cuts and a re-assessment of how to make its debt sustainable.

Markets have punished eurozone leaders during the months of uncertainty since a second bailout was agreed in July, yet has never got off the ground with a first EUR 110 billion rescue placed on hold by EU and IMF auditors.

It's been one delay after another - the auditors pulling out of Athens inspections for almost a whole month and Slovakia threatening to torpedo changes to the bailout vehicle amid mounting talk of a proper Greek default and a euro exit.

German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble conceded on Sunday that the July deal, which was to see banks and other private creditors accept a 21-percent 'haircut' on their holdings of government bonds, might not have gone far enough.

 WEATHER

Sofia: 8-16c Sunny
 Varna: 8-14c Rain/Wind
 Burgas: 9-11c Rain
 Pernik: 6-15c Sunny.

Egypt Probes Deadly Sectarian Clashes

CAIRO (AFP): Egypt's military rulers ordered a speedy probe into clashes which killed 25 people, mostly Coptic Christians, as the cabinet held crisis talks and thousands attended the funerals of 17 victims.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) "tasked the government with quickly forming a fact finding committee to determine what happened," in a statement read on state television Monday as world leaders urged restraint.

It called for "all measures against all those proven to have been involved, either directly or by incitement".

Both the ruling military council and the cabinet held crisis talks, a day after the clashes in Cairo left 25 dead, most of them Copts, and more than 300 people injured, according to health ministry figures.

The SCAF, which took power when president Hosni Mubarak was ousted in February, stressed it "continues to bear national responsibility to protect the people" until it hands over to an elected civilian authority. Thousands of people attended a service at the Copt cathedral for the funerals of 17 demonstrators.

 SPORTS NEWS

Football: Scots Plot Shock Downfall Of Mighty Spain

Scotland manager Craig Levein sees no reason why a famous victory can't be achieved against world champions Spain on Tuesday that would guarantee his team a place in the Euro 2012 play-offs.

Currently sitting in second place, one point ahead of the Czech Republic in Group I, Scotland need a result that equals or betters their rivals who play away in Lithuania.

"We are in a position where it is ours to lose," said Levein.

"A position that I would have taken at the start of the group. If we win on Tuesday, we are second, that's a fact. There is nothing for us to fear."

Levein underlined his confidence in his team to get a result in Alicante.

"We are playing the world champions, of course, but I believe wholeheartedly in the players and their ability to rise to the challenge." Defending champions Spain, who top the group after seven straight victories, already did the Scots a big favour by beating the Czechs 2-0 in Prague on Friday. (AFP)

Football: Danes In Must Win Game Against Portuguese

Denmark will look to give long-serving coach and Danish football great Morten Olsen the chance of a final golden farewell with a place in next year's Euro 2012 by beating Portugal here on Tuesday in their final qualifier.

Olsen, who captained Denmark to their first ever World Cup finals in 1986, has announced last year he will stand down at the end of the present campaign but his reign will be extended to summer next year if the Danes beat a revitalised Portuguese side which would see them top the group at their rivals' expense.

The 62-year-old, capped 102 times, has guided the Danes to three major championships - the 2002 and 2010 World Cup finals and Euro 2004 - in the 11 years he has been in charge.

Whilst they are level on points with Portugal a draw would not suffice as they would finish second because the Portuguese have a better head to head record having beaten them 3-1 at home.

Denmark's highly-rated young midfielder Christian Eriksen believes that he and his team-mates have no reason to fear their opponents despite that defeat, because they had come off best in their two 2010 World Cup qualifiers, beating Portugal in Lisbon and drawing at home.

"It would be better to avoid the play-offs, but we can only avoid them by getting a win," the Ajax star told uefa.com. (AFP)

Football: Pint-Sized Giovinco Set For Full Italy Debut

Italy coach Cesare Prandelli confirmed on Monday that diminutive Parma striker Sebastian Giovinco will start for the Azzurri for the first time in Tuesday's Euro 2012 qualifier against Northern Ireland. Giovinco - who stands just 1m64 (5ft 5in) tall - is preferred to Giuseppe Rossi as partner to AC Milan's Antonio Cassano for the game in Pescara.

"For me his size has never represented a problem," said Prandelli.

"I have always been convinced that if a player is good enough to make it to Serie A then it shows that he is prepared to climb any mountain."

"I never thought that a little guy like Giovinco could not break through," Prandelli went on, adding that he considers the ex-Juventus player to be an out-and-out striker rather than a trequartista (a creative player positioned behind the strikers).

Giovinco has been capped four times as a substitute, all under Prandelli, and has yet to score for Italy despite sitting at the top of the Serie A scorers' charts just now along with Genoa's Argentine frontman Rodrigo Palacio. (AFP)

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Boxing: Haye Set To Announce Retirement

Former WBA heavyweight champion David Haye is set to announce his retirement after informing the British Boxing Board of Control he intends to quit the sport, according to reports here on Tuesday.

Haye, who celebrates his 31st birthday on Thursday, had always said he would not fight past the age of 30, but many had expected him to delay his retirement for one more big fight, possibly against Ukraine's Vitali Klitschko, who holds the WBC title.

Board secretary Robert Smith told The Sun: "I received an email on Monday advising me Haye would not be carrying on. "The board will discuss it on Wednesday but there is no way we could go against his wish not to renew his boxing licence.

Without it, he can't fight." The Londoner lost his WBA belt to Klitschko's brother Wladimir by an unanimous points decision in Hamburg, Germany in July. The contest was a heavyweight unification fight for the WBA, WBO, IBF and IBO belts and the three judges scored 117-109, 118-108 and 116-110 all in Klitschko's favour. (AFP)

F1: Hamilton Will Bounce Back, Warns Team Boss

McLaren team chief Martin Whitmarsh has backed Lewis Hamilton to bounce back from his recent string of disappointments to win again and be a title contender next season.

Whitmarsh said he believed the 26-year-old Englishman's difficulties this year have sapped his confidence, but he is just one win away from rediscovering his form as the world's fastest and most exciting racing driver.

Speaking after Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix won by Hamilton's team-mate and fellow-Briton Jenson Button, Whitmarsh said: "He's a great racing driver. His heart is in it and he is very open about his emotions. He doesn't like not winning, but it will come good. "I hope that this time next week we are celebrating one of Lewis's greatest ever victories - and that is entirely possible.