News Item 011- 紫色瀑布为哪般

The death of music superstar Prince shocked and saddened the world yesterday. In his honor, many famous monuments turned purple. The color was chosen in memory of his hit song “Purple Rain.”Yesterday, even Niagara Falls in Canada turned purple. People on social media were impressed that such huge waterfalls could turn purple in such short notice. But, the purple color was not, in fact, meant to honor Prince. The agency that manages Niagara Falls had been planning to make the falls purple on April 21 in honor of Queen Elizabeth II’s 90th birthday. Purple is the color of royalty. Canada is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The Canadian travel site Canoe.com wrote on Twitter: “Niagara Falls goes purple for the Queen’s birthday. And, inadvertently （无意地）, for Prince.” Another Canadian landmark, the Toronto Tower, also glowed purple Thursday night. That, too, was for the Queen’s birthday. A Toronto politician tweeted the reason: The confusion has made “Niagara Falls” a trending topic on social media. And, even though it is now clear that officials planned to make the falls purple to honor the Queen’s birthday, many people are choosing to believe it was also in memory of Prince.

News Item 012- 政府要求苹果解锁恐怖分子的手机

Apple chief executive Tim Cook told the firm’s customers Monday that a recent demand by the US government is “chilling”（令人胆寒的）. The government wants the technology company to build a “backdoor” into an encrypted（加密的）Apple phone used by one of the terrorists who launched an attack last year in California. In an open letter to Apple customers, Cook said if Apple complies with（遵从）the request, it would open the door to countless future searches of Apple customers’ phones. This is VOA news.

News Item 013- 印度街头儿童编撰报纸

From poverty to child labor, underage marriages, sexual abuse and drugs—there is no shortage of topics for Balaknama. “When reports arrive and the team sits down to select the story, lots of fights break out. They argue this story will have more impact than that story. So there’s a lot of debates before the final selection goes to print.” The newspaper has 70 reporters in several states, 14 of them reporting regularly from the capital. All of the writers, editors and managers are homeless children. “I used to beg, do drugs and sometimes go rag（破烂） picking. Then I learnt about Balaknama and began to work for it. First I was a junior reporter, then a reporter and now I’m all set to become the editor.” Many of the children have jobless and illiterate（不识字的）parents. As budding（初获成功的）reporters they now earn money and many are enrolled in distance learning programs that may help advance their careers. “What I couldn’t do, at least my daughter is doing. She’s helping others and she’s also helping us.” The monthly eight-page newspaper began in 2002 as a quarterly（季刊）. It has changed the lives of the children who publish it and aims at improving the livelihood of thousands of others. It is supported by NGOs and charity groups.

News Item 014- 科特迪瓦女子突破社会传统组建乐队

The nine women of Bella Mondo win over yet another audience. The group is one of just a handful of all-women ensembles（乐团）in Ivory Coast. It all started in 2007. Prisca Allou was a music student. A music producer came to see her. He said he wanted to make an all-female orchestra（乐队）to fulfill a promise to his late（已故的）mother. Allou got on board and was charged with recruiting all the members. “It wasn’t easy at first. Some parents were against it. You know, in Africa, the place of women is often seen as being either in an office, or at home. That was the stereotypical（带有成见的）image.” Allou spread the word and took out ads in local papers. Most of the girls she found were not professional players. “I just played some tamtam（铜锣）. I learned to play drums when I joined Bella Mondo.” The girls spent the next four years learning to play their instrument. Many gave up along the way, but eight of them soldiered on with Allou, and Bella Mondo was born. The band plays original songs and covers. Their music spans a wide range of styles: funk, reggae, pop music. They released their first album in 2013, and have performed in Paris, Dakar, Cotonou（科托努）and, of course, here at home in Abidjan（阿比让）. You can see them nearly every Thursday at this bar, the same venue that gave the band its start years ago. “Oh yes, I was surprised at first. A woman singing—you see that everyday. But an entire band, playing all the instruments and everything? It was extraordinary. I was dumbstruck（惊呆）. ” The women are now working on their second album（专辑）.

News Item 015- 非洲饥荒

Somaliland is one of the poorest African regions. Its rural population is struggling to make a living in the best of times, but drought（干旱）makes it impossible. “I am 80. In the 80 years of my life, I’ve never seen such severe drought. It has killed so many animals and caused so much famine（饥荒）. Our lives are in danger.” The situation is similar in the neighboring Punt land region and parts of Ethiopia. The United Nations last month called for urgent aid to save 1.7 million people in the affected parts of Somalia. “Communities are losing their means for survival, and we need to stop this loss of lives and forced displacement（迁移） as people have no other option than to move in search of food, water and income.” But when there is no food and water for miles and miles around, moving may be futile（徒劳的）. Some Ethiopian farmers have crossed the border to try to escape famine. “The drought has been raging（严重）for three years in Ethiopia. We were told that there were pastures（草地）on the other side of the border. But when we got here, we found nothing.”