



Wanda lures Hollywood to China with rebate offer

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese entertainment giant Wanda is offering producers a rebate of 40 percent to promote its upcoming \$8 billion movie studio in eastern China in an ambitious bid to establish the complex as a major production base in Asia. The 408-acre Qingdao Movie Metropolis is due to open in the port city in August 2018. Not just a movie studio, it is slated to include four indoor theme parks and even international schools to encourage foreign filmmakers to live there with their families. In an announcement in Los Angeles, Wanda said the next installments of *Pacific Rim* and *Godzilla*, made by Wanda-owned Legendary Entertainment, would be filmed in Qingdao, as well as unspecified films by Lionsgate. Wanda said it and the Qingdao city government established a film and TV industry development fund to enable Chinese and international producers to receive a rebate of 40 percent of their Qingdao production expenses. The announcement is the latest by Wanda to promote its growing entertainment brand on the global stage, even as U.S. lawmakers raise concerns about the company's investment in Hollywood.

Nepal drains dangerous glacial lake to safe level

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Nepalese officials have reported that army soldiers and local villagers dug through rocks and boulders to drain a glacial lake just south of Mount Everest, bringing the water to a safe level and possibly preventing an outburst that could have flooded several villages. Lt. Col. Bharat Lal Shrestha, who led the team of soldiers, said they were able to lower Imja Lake's level of water by 11 feet, making it safe and for now averting the risk of outburst. The 40 soldiers working with 100 villagers dug through boulders and rocks to build an outlet to drain out as much as 1 million cubic liters of water. The lake, at 16,400 feet altitude, is considered one of the most likely glacial lakes to have an outburst.

Abu Sayyaf received \$7.3 million from kidnappings

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — A Philippine government report says Abu Sayyaf militants pocketed at least 353 million pesos (\$7.3 million) from ransom kidnappings in the first six months of the year and have turned to abducting foreign sailors as military offensives restrict their mobility. The confidential military and police threat assessment report seen by The Associated Press said the offensives have taken their toll on the Abu Sayyaf, slightly reducing the number of the militants although they remain capable of launching attacks. President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered troops to destroy the notorious Muslim extremist group, which has been blacklisted by the U.S. and the Philippines following more than two decades of bomb attacks, raids on civilians, mass kidnappings, and beheadings.

Woman mauled by tiger at park demands compensation

BEIJING (AP) — A woman who was mauled by a tiger after getting out of her car at a Beijing safari park, reportedly because she felt carsick, is demanding compensation of more than 2 million yuan (\$300,000) from the facility. Her mother was killed in the incident after also leaving the vehicle to come to her assistance. The attack happened in July in the enclosure of the animals at Beijing Badaling Wildlife World near the Great Wall of China. The park confirmed media reports that the survivor, identified only by her surname, Zhao, is requesting 1.5 million yuan for her "serious injuries," including nerve damage, scarring of her face, and psychological trauma, along with 1.24 million yuan as compensation for the death of her mother. Spokesman Cao Zhijie said that even though a district government investigation found the park was not to blame, they were willing to pay some compensation "out of our humanity." No figure has been decided. Media reports cited Zhao as saying that she got out of the car because she felt carsick and thought they had already driven out of the enclosure.

In Dubai, a showdown on shawarma is reportedly coming

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A showdown over shawarma has come to Dubai. A state-owned newspaper has reported that nearly half of all shawarma stands in Dubai either will be shut down or have stopped selling the popular Mideast street food. The *National* newspaper of Abu Dhabi quoted Sultan al-Tahir, head of food inspection in Dubai, as saying the city-state's more than 570 shawarma stands had six months to update their operations to comply with new hygiene regulations. Al-Tahir says 113 stopped making the meat wraps, while another 141 took no action and will be shut down. The others followed the rules or are in the process of complying. Shawarma is typically cooked outdoors, with spiced chicken, lamb, and beef shaved off a vertical spit. Al-Tahir said Dubai's high heat can cause bacteria to spread.

Sony Music apologizes for Japanese band's Nazi-like outfits

TOKYO (AP) — Sony Music Japan apologized after a popular Japanese all-girls band came under fire for performing in outfits resembling Nazi-era German military uniforms. The members of Keyakizaka46 appeared at an October 22 concert in black knee-length dresses that looked like military overcoats, and black capes and officer caps with a Nazi-like eagle emblem. Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) is the group's label. "We express our heartfelt apology for causing offense ... because of our lack of understanding," Sony Music Japan said in a statement posted on its website. "We take the incident seriously and will make efforts to prevent a recurrence of a similar incident in the future." Sony Music spokesman Yasuyuki Oshio said there had been no intention to link the performance to Nazism.



OLDEST-EVER PANDA. Giant panda Jia Jia eats bamboo next to her birthday cake made with ice and vegetables at Ocean Park in Hong Kong while celebrating her 37th birthday, in this July 28, 2015 file photo. A Hong Kong theme park reported that the world's oldest panda in captivity was euthanized because her health was deteriorating. Ocean Park said a veterinarian euthanized 38-year-old Jia Jia on Sunday, October 16, 2016 to prevent further suffering and for ethical reasons. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung, File)

Jia Jia, world's oldest-ever captive panda, dies at age 38

HONG KONG (AP) — A Hong Kong theme park says the world's oldest-ever panda in captivity has been euthanized because her health was deteriorating.

Ocean Park said a veterinarian euthanized 38-year-old Jia Jia to prevent further suffering and for ethical reasons.

Guinness World Records recognized Jia Jia as the oldest giant panda to live in captivity.

The average lifespan for a panda in the wild is 18 to 20 years, while in captivity it's 30 years, according to Guinness.

Born in the wild, Jia Jia was taken to live at a breeding center in China's Sichuan province in 1980, when she was around two. She and another panda were given to Hong Kong as a gift from Beijing in 1999, two years after China took control of the city from Britain.

Self-driving car hits truck in Singapore; no injuries

By Annabelle Liang
The Associated Press

SINGAPORE — A self-driving car with two engineers on board was switching lanes in Singapore when it hit a truck, according to authorities. No one was hurt.

The vehicle was operated by autonomous vehicle software startup nuTonomy, which made headlines when it offered free rides in its self-driving taxis in a Singapore district.

The Land Transport Authority said the car was "involved in a minor incident" on a public road designated for testing.

"The test vehicle was changing lanes when it collided with a lorry at a low speed. There were no injuries," it said in a Facebook post. The transport regulator said it is working with police to investigate.

NuTonomy, a spinoff from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology which has offices in Massachusetts and Singapore, said in a statement that it is cooperating with the authorities and conducting an investigation of its own.

The company's six cars — modified Renault

Zoe and Mitsubishi i-MiEV electrics — have a safety driver in front who is prepared to take the wheel if necessary and a researcher in back who watches the car's computers.

Its self-driving vehicles were tested in a 2.5-square-mile business and residential district of Singapore called "one north." The official test area has since been doubled by the government, nuTonomy CEO Karl Iagnemma said.

In September, nuTonomy began allowing the Singapore public to take trips in its self-driving vehicles for free. The company's previously invitation-only trial was launched in August, beating ride-hailing service Uber, which began offering autonomous car rides in Pittsburgh weeks later.

NuTonomy was formed in 2013 by Iagnemma and Emilio Frazzoli, MIT researchers who studied robotics and autonomous vehicles for the Defense Department.

The company expects its fleet of self-driving cars to grow to a dozen by the end of the year. It plans to make its Singapore taxi fleet fully self-driving by 2018.

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Asian Currency Exchange Rates

Units per U.S. dollar as of 11/03

Bangladesh Taka	78.457
Cambodian Riel	4036.0
China Renminbi	6.765
Fijian Dollar	2.0455
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7552
Indian Rupee	66.751
Indonesian Rupiah	13102
Iranian Rial	31805
Japanese Yen	102.9
Laos New Kip	8155.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.1927
Nepal Rupee	106.79
Pakistani Rupee	104.75
Papua N.G. Kina	3.169
Philippine Peso	48.425
Russian Ruble	63.632
Saudi Riyal	3.7504
Singapore Dollar	1.3844
South Korean Won	1141.5
Sri Lankan Rupee	148.32
Taiwan Dollar	31.503
Thai Baht	34.947
Vietnam Dong	22505