



## Palau to ban commercial fishing, promote tourism

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The president of Palau has declared that his Pacific island nation will ban commercial fishing and become a marine sanctuary. President Tommy Remengesau Jr. said in a keynote address to a U.N. meeting on “Healthy Oceans and Seas” that once current fishing contracts expire, only fishing by island residents and tourists will be allowed in its 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone. Remengesau said establishing “a 100 percent marine sanctuary” will enable Palau to preserve “a pristine environment” and promote snorkelling, scuba diving, and ecotourism. “It will make a difference if it’s just a matter of feeding ourselves and feeding the tourists,” he told a news conference. “As it is right now, we’re feeding the tourist[s] and ourselves plus millions of people outside the territory.”

## Watchdog shows illicit money flows in Philippines

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — An anti-graft watchdog says the Philippine government was cheated of \$3.85 billion in tax revenues in 2011, part of massive illicit money flows that totalled more than \$400 billion in the past five decades. Global Financial Integrity said in a report that illicit financial outflows including proceeds from crime, corruption, and tax evasion totalled \$132.9 billion in a 52-year period from 1960. Another \$277.6 billion illegally entered the country, predominantly through false invoicing of imports to evade tariffs. It said the government has lost at least \$23 billion in revenue from customs evasion since 1990 and lost an average of \$1.46 billion in tax revenue each year since 2000. The report estimated that the underground economy was equal to nearly 30 percent of gross domestic product in 2011.

## Germany forgives half of Myanmar’s debt

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Germany has signed an agreement to forgive half the 1.084 billion euro (\$1.48 billion) debt it is owed by Myanmar (also known as Burma), implementing a plan which Germany and other creditor nations accepted a year ago. The state-owned *Myanma Ahlin* newspaper reported the agreement was signed in Myanmar’s capital, Naypyitaw, during a state visit by German President Joachim Gauck, the first by a German head of state in 26 years. Germany’s finance and development ministries confirmed the signing. The Paris Club of 19 mostly western creditor countries agreed in January last year on a debt forgiveness formula to help stabilize Myanmar’s economy as it transitions to democracy after five decades of military rule.

## Director Zhang Yimou pays \$1.2M for having three kids

BEIJING (AP) — Famed film director Zhang Yimou and his wife have paid more than \$1.2 million in fines for having three children in violation of China’s strict family-planning rules. A district of the eastern city of Wuxi said in an online notice that its family-planning office had received the lump-sum payment and the money was remitted to the state treasury. Rumors became public last year that Zhang fathered more children than allowed by China’s family-size policy that limits most urban families like his to one child. Zhang’s studio later confirmed that Zhang, 63, has fathered two sons and one daughter with Chen Ting, 32, and said the film director would cooperate with a government investigation. The district government subsequently levied the \$1.2 million fine against Zhang and Chen. Fines are the usual punishment for exceeding China’s family-size limits and are proportional to a person’s income. Zhang is one of China’s best-known directors with films such as *Hero*, *House of Flying Daggers*, and 2011’s *The Flowers of War* starring Christian Bale. Zhang also designed the opulent opening and closing ceremonies for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

## Myanmar arrests five journalists from private journal

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Myanmar says it has arrested four reporters and the head of a private weekly journal for disclosing what it says are “state secrets” following publication of a story about the construction of a defense factory. *Unity* journal quoted villagers as saying the factory in Pauk, a township in central Myanmar, was for production of chemical weapons — a claim the government decried as “totally baseless.” According to roadside vendors, police took all January 25 editions of the journal off shelves. State-run television reported the arrests, saying the detained had violated the 1923 State Secrets Act by entering a prohibited area and disclosing state secrets. Deputy information minister Ye Htut has acknowledged in local media that it was a Defense Ministry factory, but denied links to chemical weapons.

## Alleged Chinese ivory smuggler caught in Kenya

BEIJING (AP) — A suspected Chinese ivory smuggler has been apprehended in Kenya and extradited in the first time that China has arrested a wildlife crime suspect overseas, according to the country’s official news agency. Xinhua News Agency said the countries worked together to catch the suspect who is alleged to have led an ivory trafficking group in Kenya and hired couriers to smuggle ivory into China. Kenyan authorities working with Chinese customs officials and police apprehended the suspect with the surname Xue in Nairobi on January 17 and extradited him a day later, Xinhua said, citing China’s Endangered Species Import and Export Management Office. A man from the office’s law enforcement branch said the Xinhua report was accurate, but wouldn’t give further details. Xinhua said the final two suspects of the group were arrested when entering China January 16 and 17. One was a man called Zheng who allegedly helped buy ivory in Kenya and paid smugglers \$820 to \$1,640 each time. The other, a woman called Li, is said to be Xue’s girlfriend, who helped get the ivory through customs.



**FLAWLESS FEAT.** Gold medallist Sang-hwa Lee, left, of South Korea sets a new Olympic record in her second heat race against China’s Beijing Wang during the women’s 500-meter speedskating race at the Adler Arena skating center during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. The South Korean lived up to the hype as the favorite in women’s 500-meter speedskating, zipping around the big oval with the two fastest runs to win her second straight Olympic gold medal. (AP Photo/Matt Dunham)

## South Korea’s Lee wins gold in women’s 500 meters

By Paul Newberry  
AP National Writer

SOCHI, Russia — Sang-hwa Lee burst off the line with a flawless start. She built up speed with each stride on the front straightway — her arms swinging powerfully, her body low to the ice.

By the time Lee came around the final turn, the gold medal was a formality.

“Right now,” said silver medallist Olga Fatkulina, “she is almost Usain Bolt.”

The South Korean lived up to the hype as the favorite in women’s 500-meter speedskating, zipping around the big oval with the two fastest runs to win her second straight Olympic gold medal.

Lee dominated the World Cup circuit this season, winning every event she entered.

The 24-year-old kept up that form at Adler Arena.

“It’s not easy to repeat that,” said Lee’s Canadian coach, Kevin Crockett. “It was a lot of pressure. She is a real champion.”

Lee led after the opening heat and went even faster the second time, an Olympic-record time of 37.28 seconds to beat the mark of 37.30 set by Catriona Le May Doan at the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics.

Lee’s combined time of 1 minute, 14.70 seconds was also an Olympic mark, beating Le May Doan’s record of 1:14.75 at the high-altitude Utah Olympic Oval.

“She responds to the pressure of it,” Crockett

said. “Some people will cave and crumble, and some people will step up. Sang-hwa steps up every single time.”

When Lee saw the “1” beside her name on the scoreboard, her head dropped back in obvious relief. She slapped Crockett’s hand and grabbed a South Korean flag, revelling in a triumph that seemed assured the moment she toed the line in Sochi.

“Let’s look at the last Olympic record,” Crockett said. “It was set on extremely fast ice. Altitude and everything. To be able to set an Olympic record at sea level on ice that was average today, it is extraordinary.”

The only real race was for second and third. The Russian crowd roared when Fatkulina took the host country’s second speedskating medal, finishing in 1:15.06.

Margot Boer claimed bronze with a combined time of 1:15.48, giving the Netherlands its eighth speedskating medal in Sochi. It was the first event they failed to win at Adler, but was still a pleasant surprise for a team that had never been a strong contender in the all-out sprint.

Lee wasn’t so dominant four years ago, edging Germany’s Jenny Wolf by a mere five-hundredths of a second over two runs.

This time, there was never any doubt.

“Her technique is perfect,” said Wolf.

Lee shied away from all the accolades.

“I don’t like to be considered a phenomenon in my country,” she said through a translator.

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## Asian Currency Exchange Rates

Units per U.S. dollar as of 2/14

Bangladesh Taka	77.625
Cambodian Riel	3980.0
China Renminbi	6.0662
Fijian Dollar	1.8678
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7553
Indian Rupee	61.93
Indonesian Rupiah	11831
Iranian Rial	24721
Japanese Yen	101.88
Laos New Kip	8015.0
Malaysian Ringgit	3.3064
Nepal Rupee	99.061
Pakistani Rupee	104.83
Papua N.G. Kina	2.4343
Philippine Peso	44.73
Russian Ruble	35.078
Saudi Riyal	3.7503
Singapore Dollar	1.2617
South Korean Won	1063.4
Sri Lankan Rupee	130.84
Taiwan Dollar	30.316
Thai Baht	32.334
Vietnam Dong	21100