



## Norway restores, donates 1927 silent film to China

BEIJING (AP) — Norway has donated a restored Chinese silent film from the 1920s to China's national film archive despite a prolonged diplomatic chill between the countries over the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. Two representatives of the National Library of Norway presented the film to the China Film Archive. The library said in a statement that it found a damaged print of the 1927 Shanghai Film Company production *The Cave of the Spider Spirit* in its archives in 1999 during an attempt to identify around 9,000 boxed reels. The film, based on a chapter of the Chinese classical folktale "Journey to the West," was restored and a copy made. The library said the film premiered in Oslo in January 1929 with title cards in both languages. It is unclear how this version of the film ended up in Norway or whether other copies still exist. The film exchange marks a rare point of official contact between the sides.

## Mt. Gox headed for bankruptcy, not rehabilitation

TOKYO (AP) — The Mt. Gox bitcoin exchange in Tokyo is headed for dissolution after a court rejected its bankruptcy protection application. Mt. Gox said the Tokyo District Court decided the company would not be able to resurrect itself under a business rehabilitation process filed in February. The exchange's CEO, Mark Karpeles, said then that 850,000 bitcoins worth several hundred millions of dollars were unaccounted for, blaming a weakness in the exchange's systems. Later, some 200,000 bitcoins were found, changing the estimate for the lost virtual currency to 650,000 bitcoins although the exact amount is still under investigation. Bitcoins were created in 2009 as a way to make transactions across borders without third parties such as banks. Mt. Gox. has suggested the bitcoins were stolen.

## Sri Lanka says Canada holds Commonwealth to ransom

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Sri Lanka has accused Canada of using its funding of the Commonwealth as a political tool by suspending its \$10 million annual contribution while Sri Lanka chairs the group's secretariat. Canada, a leading funder of the 53-member Commonwealth of former British colonies, said it will redirect its contribution to programs that promote the group's values because of concerns over Sri Lanka's human-rights record. Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry accused Canada of taking the step based on "political compulsions, thereby holding the membership of the wider Commonwealth to ransom." Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper boycotted last year's Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting hosted by Sri Lanka and urged an independent investigation of rights violations during the final stages of the country's decades-long civil war with Tamil Tiger rebels.

## China Film takes first stake in Hollywood movies

HONG KONG (AP) — China's state-owned film distributor is making its first investment in Hollywood movies by taking a stake in two Legendary Entertainment productions. China Film Co. will make an "eight-figure equity investment" in two upcoming films, *Seventh Son* and *Warcraft*, according to the Chinese unit of Legendary Entertainment. The exact amount of the U.S. dollar investment was not specified. *Seventh Son* is a fantasy adventure starring Jeff Bridges and Julianne Moore that is scheduled for release on February 6, 2015. *Warcraft*, based on a popular video game series, is slated for release March 11, 2016. If approved for release in China, China Film would distribute the movies under current rules and regulations for foreign films, which are limited to just 34 per year. The deal calls for China Film to be credited on the movies.

## Filipino positive for MERS virus home from UAE

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — A Filipino health worker who tested positive for the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS) has arrived home from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), according to Philippine officials. It's the first known case of the deadly virus in the country. Health secretary Enrique Ona said the Filipino's blood tested positive but he has no symptoms of the disease. He has been isolated and people who were in contact with him are being traced and quarantined. In addition, Malaysian authorities confirmed its first MERS virus death in Malaysia. Ona said the Philippine man had personal contact with another Filipino hospital worker who died of the virus in the UAE. Blood test results in the UAE were released after he arrived in the Philippines with his family, and authorities immediately informed the Philippine Embassy. MERS belongs to a family of viruses that includes both the common cold and SARS, which killed some 800 people in a global outbreak in 2003. It can cause fever, breathing problems, pneumonia, and kidney failure. It was first identified in 2012 in the Middle East, where most cases since have been diagnosed. Globally, the World Health Organization said it has been informed of 238 laboratory-confirmed cases, including 92 deaths, since September 2012. While MERS does not seem to spread as quickly between people as SARS did, it appears to be more deadly.

## Ford to sell Lincoln cars in China for first time

BEIJING (AP) — Ford Motor Co. says it will introduce its high-end Lincoln brand to China later this year with plans to open eight dealerships in seven cities. Lincoln is a late comer to China's luxury car market but Robert Parker, president of Lincoln China, said the brand is being introduced after much deliberation and research. He says Lincoln will bring to China models that have padded backseats because of China's higher expectations for backseat comfort and a custom fragrance pleasing to Chinese noses. Parker says he believes there is strong interest in Lincoln among Chinese luxury car consumers and that the company aims to open 60 dealerships in 50 Chinese cities by 2016.



**FERMENTED FISH.** A skate seller puts slices of skate into styrofoam boxes for shipment to customers around South Korea at a fish market in Mokpo, a port city on the southwestern tip of the Korean Peninsula. The aroma of one of southwestern South Korea's most popular delicacies regularly gets compared to rotting garbage and filthy bathrooms. And that's by fans. The unusual dish is typically made by taking dozens of fresh skate — a cartilage-rich fish that looks like a stingray — stacking them up in a walk-in refrigerator, and waiting. Up to a month in some cases. (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

# South Koreans crave Asia's smelliest fish

By Foster Klug  
The Associated Press

**M**OKPO, South Korea — The aroma of one of South Korea's most popular delicacies is regularly compared to rotting garbage and filthy bathrooms. And that's by fans.

The unusual dish is typically made by taking dozens of fresh skate — a cartilage-rich fish that looks like a stingray — stacking them up in a walk-in refrigerator, and waiting. Up to a month in some cases.

"You know when it's done by the smell," said Kang Han-joo, co-owner of a seafood store in the bustling fish market of Mokpo, a port city on the southwestern tip of the Korean Peninsula, a region that's considered the food's spiritual home. As Kang spoke, he sliced small, stinking, glistening, dark-pink fish steaks with a large knife and laid them in plastic foam boxes for shipment to customers around South Korea.

The smell of the fish, called *hongoe* in Korean and usually eaten uncooked, is unmistakable, unavoidable, and a deal-breaker for many. A profound, pungent stink of ammonia radiates from the animal after it's been ripening for weeks. First-timers often squeeze their eyes shut as they chew. Tears stream down the cheeks. The throat constricts with the effort of swallowing.

Kang notes, in a dramatic understatement: "When it's fermented a long time, the smell becomes deeper."

Americans are still getting used to gentler fermented Asian foods — spicy Korean kimchi and Japanese miso, for example — yet many

South Koreans claim a love, an addiction even, for this extreme form of fermentation. Restaurants specializing in the fish can be found throughout the country. One online hongoe appreciation society boasts more than 1,300 members.

"Some people start to crave it as soon as they smell the ammonia," said Shin Jin-woo, a seafood store worker in Mokpo. "There's no need to advertise how intense the smell is. Everyone already knows."

Shin's store has two fermentation refrigerators. Walk into one and a blast of ammonia burns the eyes, the nose and sinuses, the tongue, throat, and lungs. Skate are fermented up to 15 days in the first refrigerator, where the temperature is 2.5° Celsius (36.5° Fahrenheit), and up to another 15 days in the second at 1° C (34° F).

Shops in Mokpo custom-ferment the fish and ship the results to restaurants and hongoe fans around South Korea.

The vast majority of the more than 11,000 tons of hongoe consumed in the country comes not from South-Korean-caught fish, but from cheaper frozen imports. Shop owners thaw and clean the imported fish, which can cost up to five times less than the local version, and place the hongoe in refrigerators to ferment.

Hongoe's history is murky, but it emerged in the days before refrigeration, when food that could keep for a long time without rotting was prized. Someone — maybe a fisherman on a long voyage or a clever, hungry, or desperate farmer — discovered that skate didn't spoil as easily as other fish and a dish was born.

Shop owners say the traditional method of

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Languages spoken: English, Mandarin,  
Cantonese, Hakka, Min Nan, and Indonesian.

### Asian Currency Exchange Rates

Units per U.S. dollar as of 4/18

Bangladesh Taka	77.72
Cambodian Riel	4009.9
China Renminbi	6.2243
Fijian Dollar	1.8332
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7545
Indian Rupee	60.291
Indonesian Rupiah	11424
Iranian Rial	24897
Japanese Yen	102.39
Laos New Kip	8046.5
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2405
Nepal Rupee	96.45
Pakistani Rupee	97.65
Papua N.G. Kina	2.7624
Philippine Peso	44.438
Russian Ruble	35.552
Saudi Riyal	3.7502
Singapore Dollar	1.2521
South Korean Won	1037.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	130.61
Taiwan Dollar	30.213
Thai Baht	32.182
Vietnam Dong	21100