

## 20-year-old athletes mark 2,020 days to Tokyo Olympics

TOKYO (AP) — For those into quirky milestones, on January 12 — the day that there was only 2,020 days until the 2020 Tokyo Olympics — a group of enthusiastic spectators and 20-year-old athletes gathered to form a giant ‘2020’ at a plaza in front of the Tokyo 2020 organizing committee headquarters. Among those attending the ceremony were 20-year-old swimmer Kosuke Hagino, who won a bronze medal at the London Olympics and will be a gold medal hopeful five years from now. The event coincided with Coming of Age Day, a national holiday in Japan when the country celebrates young people who turned 20 years old in the past year and have reached the age of majority. Other Japanese athletes who celebrated Coming of Age Day were Olympic gold medal figure skater Yuzuru Hanyu and baseball standout Shohei Otani.

## Guards shoot three suspected poachers at rhino reserve

GAUHATI, India (AP) — Officials say wildlife rangers in remote northeastern India shot three suspected poachers dead in a gunbattle at a famed rhino reserve. National Park director M.K. Yadava said the rangers received a tip about the poaching attempt and spotted four armed poachers before dawn. A shootout then erupted with three of the poachers killed and one escaping. It was the second case of violence within two weeks in the 166-square-mile park, after another three poachers were killed by rangers. India’s army has been helping rangers by providing intelligence on gangs of illegal hunters that make regular forays into the park, known for having the world’s largest number — at 2,329 — of endangered one-horned rhinoceroses. Poachers have already killed four rhinos this year, after killing 27 last year.

## Chinese travellers open emergency exits in protest

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese police say two passengers were jailed for opening aircraft emergency exit doors as the plane was taxiing to protest a lengthy flight delay. The latest in a growing number of air rage cases involving Chinese passengers happened in the early morning in the southwestern city of Chengdu, after the China Eastern flight was delayed by a snow storm. Angry passengers complained about a lack of ventilation and a man surnamed Zhou opened two emergency exits to prevent the plane from taking off, forcing it to return to the gate. Kunming police said Zhou and a tour guide named Li were placed under 15-day “administrative detention” for opening the doors and incitement with false information.

## Cambodian prince returning as royalist party chief

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a former prime minister of Cambodia who was ousted in a coup and later kicked out of the political party he helped found, is seeking a comeback. The 71-year-old said in a letter seen by The Associated Press that he accepted an invitation from the royalist Funcinpec party to reassume its presidency. It had kicked him out in 2006. Ranariddh, a son of the late King Norodom Sihanouk, led the party to victory in U.N.-sponsored elections in 1993, but had to accept Hun Sen, head of the rival Cambodia People’s Party, as co-prime minister. Hun Sen staged a coup against his partner in 1997. Ranariddh’s restoration is seen as a backroom maneuver by Hun Sen to split the opposition in the 2018 general election.

## Bootleg liquor kills at least 38 in India, 160 hospitalized

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — A bad batch of bootleg liquor killed at least 38 people and sent 160 others to hospitals in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, according to officials. Many of the victims had gathered to watch a cricket match in a village about 20 miles southwest of the state capital, Lucknow, government official Anil Garg said. Within two days, 28 people had died, including 11 in a nearby village, police officer Mukul Goel said. Doctors in Lucknow said some of those hospitalized were in serious condition and were breathing with respirators, and some had lost their eyesight. Police arrested the shop owner who sold the pouches of homemade alcohol for about 30 cents each. A raid of the shop uncovered large containers of chemicals, which were sent to a laboratory for testing, district official R.K. Pandey said. “The symptoms gave a clear indication that these patients were served methyl alcohol,” which despite being toxic is sometimes mixed with ethyl alcohol to make a brew cheaper, said Dr. Kausar Usman, head of the trauma center at Lucknow’s King George’s Medical College. Deaths from drinking illegally brewed alcohol are common in India because the poor cannot afford licensed liquor. The state’s highest elected official, chief minister Akhilesh Yadav, suspended six police officers suspected of taking bribes to ignore complaints about the shop and its alcohol, and announced that a “drive will be launched against those involved in the illicit liquor trade.”

## China arrests dozens for selling pork from diseased pigs

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese police have arrested more than 110 people on suspicion of selling pork from diseased pigs in the country’s latest food safety scandal. The Public Security said in a statement that more than 1,000 tons of contaminated pork and 48 tons of cooking oil produced from the meat had been seized in the operation that began last year across 11 provinces. The ministry said the suspects belonged to 11 different syndicates who purchased pigs that had died of disease from farmers at cut-rate prices then processed them into bacon, ham, and oil. It said the producers sourced the pigs by bribing government livestock insurance agents, several of whom were also sent for prosecution. A series of scandals in China have deeply undermined public trust in food safety.



**PAPAL VISIT.** Pope Francis waves to the faithful as he arrives at Rizal Park to celebrate mass in Manila, the Philippines, on January 18, 2015. Millions filled Manila’s main park and surrounding areas for his final mass in the Philippines, braving a steady rain to hear the pontiff’s message of hope and consolation for the Southeast Asian country’s most down-trodden and destitute. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

## Pope Francis leaves Manila after drawing record crowd of 6 million

By Nicole Winfield and Teresa Cerojano  
The Associated Press

MANILA, The Philippines — Pope Francis flew out of the Catholic bastion in Asia after a weeklong trip that included a visit to Sri Lanka and drew what Filipino officials says was a record crowd of 6 million faithful in a Manila park where he celebrated mass.

President Benigno Aquino III, church leaders, and 400 street children yelling “Pope Francis we love you,” saw him off at a Manila air base, where the pontiff, carrying a black travel bag, boarded a Philippine Airlines plane for a flight to Rome. Standing at the top of the stairs, the pope waved to the crowd, slightly bowed his head, then walked into the plane.

Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos lined Manila’s streets, with police keeping a close watch, to have their final glimpse of Francis, who smiled and waved aboard an open-sided, white popemobile.

“He’s my No. 1 world leader,” said Rita Fernandez, a 63-year-old mother of four, who stood on a street near the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila where Francis stayed during his four-day visit.

“He rides on a bus. He flew to Tacloban to visit the typhoon survivors despite the storm and he stops to talk to the poor. He’s a living saint,” said Fernandez, who held a cellphone with a camera and wore a yellow shirt showing a smiling Francis.

A crowd estimated at a record 6 million people by officials poured into Manila’s rain-soaked streets and its biggest park as Pope Francis ended his Asian pilgrimage with an appeal for Filipinos to protect their young from sin and vice so they can become missionaries of

the faith.

The crowd estimate, which could not be independently verified, included people who attended the pope’s final mass in Rizal Park and surrounding areas, and lined his motorcade route, said the chairman of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Francis Tolentino.

The Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said the Vatican had received the figure officially from local authorities and that it was a record, surpassing the 5 million who turned out for St. John Paul II’s final mass in the same park in 1995.

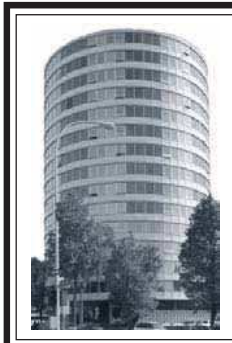
Francis dedicated the final homily of his Asia trip to children, given that the mass fell on an important feast day honoring the infant Jesus. His focus was a reflection of the importance that the Vatican places on Asia as the future of the church since it’s one of the few places where Catholic numbers are growing — and on the Philippines as the largest Catholic nation in the region.

“We need to see each child as a gift to be welcomed, cherished, and protected,” Francis said. “And we need to care for our young people, not allowing them to be robbed of hope and condemned to a life on the streets.”

Francis made a triumphant entry into Rizal Park, riding on a popemobile based on the design of a jeepney, the modified U.S. Army World War II jeep that is a common means of public transport in the Philippines. He wore the same cheap, plastic yellow rain poncho handed out to the masses during his visit to the typhoon-hit eastern city of Tacloban a day earlier.

The crowd — a sea of humanity in colorful  
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## Asian Currency Exchange Rates

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Bangladesh Taka	77.875
Cambodian Riel	4075.9
China Renminbi	6.2077
Fijian Dollar	1.9861
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7511
Indian Rupee	61.871
Indonesian Rupiah	12590
Iranian Rial	27073
Japanese Yen	117.51
Laos New Kip	8126.9
Malaysian Ringgit	3.5587
Nepal Rupee	98.776
Pakistani Rupee	100.77
Papua N.G. Kina	2.5806
Philippine Peso	44.675
Russian Ruble	65.306
Saudi Riyal	3.754
Singapore Dollar	1.3271
South Korean Won	1077.2
Sri Lankan Rupee	131.39
Taiwan Dollar	31.548
Thai Baht	32.542
Vietnam Dong	21340