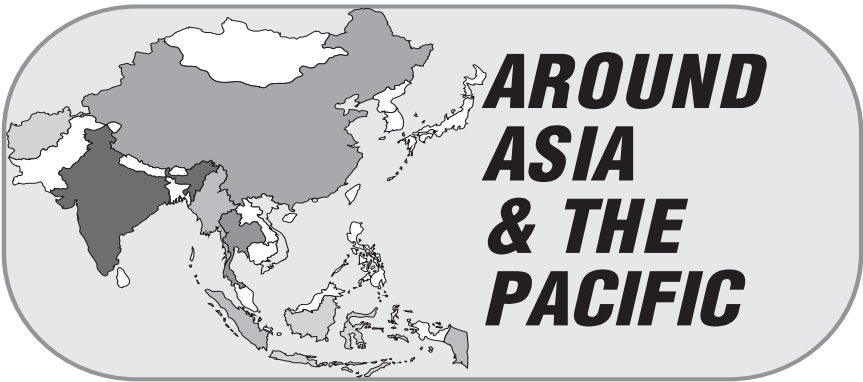




China to crack down on strippers at rural funerals

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese officials say they are cracking down on stripteases and other lewd shows that have become popular at funerals in some rural areas. The ministry of culture said in a statement that it will tighten control over rural culture, where vulgar performances have been thriving because of a general lack of cultural events. The ministry cited a performance by six strippers at a funeral in the northern province of Hebei and a lewd show by three performers at a funeral in the eastern province of Jiangsu. People have complained on social media for some time about lewd shows at funerals. Many rural people believe that a large attendance at funerals is a sign of honor for the deceased.

Hard Rock Cafe removes ‘rock star’ orangutan ads

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Hard Rock Cafe has withdrawn a promotional campaign in Malaysia following public anger at the photoshopped depiction of an orangutan baring its teeth and playing an electric guitar. The campaign was meant to promote the U.S. chain’s latest restaurant which was launched April 1 in Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Sabah state on Borneo, a rainforested island refuge for the endangered orangutan. It drew sharp criticism on social media and from the Sabah government and wildlife groups. The large ginger primate is a treasured mascot of Sabah, on the northern tip of Borneo. The state is home to a large orangutan rehabilitation center that rescues orphaned baby orangutans and trains them to survive in the wild. Sabah wildlife department director William Baya said the advertisement was a “distasteful exploitation” of the orangutan and gave the wrong impression about how Sabah treats its beloved icon. In a statement, Hard Rock Cafe Kota Kinabalu said it apologized to those who were offended by the advertisements. It also said all promotional banners were removed and it is now working with local authorities to ensure all future advertisements are “culturally sensitive.” Orangutans are native to rainforests in Borneo and Indonesia’s Sumatra island.

Eritrea, North Korea called world’s most censored states

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The small African nation of Eritrea tops even North Korea in its restrictions on the media, a new global report says. The New-York-based Committee to Protect Journalists has issued its annual list of the world’s top 10 most censored states. The rest of the list includes Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Azerbaijan, Vietnam, Iran, China, Myanmar, and Cuba. How nations restrict internet access is an important factor in the report. Eritrea allows only dial-up access and North Korea allows internet access to a small number of elite. And Eritrea has the world’s smallest percentage of citizens with mobile phones, at five percent. The report says 44 journalists are imprisoned in China, more than any other country. That’s the highest number since the journalism group started keeping track a quarter-century ago.

Jamaica: Cruise ship brings ‘record’ of Chinese tourists

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Roughly 1,000 Chinese tourists recently disembarked from a cruise ship in a Jamaican resort town in what the Caribbean island touts as a “groundbreaking” visit. The Chinese tourists arrived in the northern town of Ocho Rios aboard the 12-deck cruise ship *Costa Atlantica*. Jamaica’s tourism ministry says the group is on an 86-day cruise that began in Shanghai on March 1. It says Jamaica is the ship’s only Caribbean port call. Tourism minister Wykeham McNeill said the ship has brought a “record-number of Chinese visitors to our shores.” Last year, Jamaica allowed visa-free travel for vacationers from China as the island tried to develop new markets for its tourism industry. In recent years, Jamaica has also relaxed visa requirements for nationals of countries such as Russia, Venezuela, and Colombia.

Chinese and foreign film producers sign deals worth \$2.3B

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese and foreign film producers, companies, and investment firms have signed 36 deals to make movies and build cinemas worth \$2.3 billion. The deals were signed last month on the sidelines of the Beijing International Film Festival, an annual event in its fifth year. Zhao Zhiyong of the festival organizing committee said the deals were worth about a third more than those signed last year. The former chairman of Walt Disney Studios signed a deal with CITIC Guoan, a unit of state-owned CITIC Group Corporation, to invest \$150 million into his new Dick Cook Studios. Beijing Hairun Pictures and Village Roadshow Pictures Asia signed a deal to co-produce five feature films. One will be a biopic of former National Basketball Association player Stephon Marbury.

Indonesia suspends soccer association

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — The Indonesian government has suspended the country’s official soccer association in a lingering dispute over club ownership. A letter signed by Minister of Youth and Sports Imam Nahrawi said the government no longer recognizes any activities of the All-Indonesia Soccer Association (PSSI). The ministry said it sent three written warnings urging PSSI to exclude two clubs from the Indonesian Super League due to ownership disputes but received no response. The government will set up a transitional body to handle all PSSI activities pending the formation of new government-sanctioned management, according to a statement on the ministry’s website, which said the move was in line with Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) regulations. However, FIFA has previously warned the Indonesian government against interfering in the country’s domestic league at the risk of sanctions. The suspension came just before the PSSI elected a new chairman at a recent meeting in Surabaya.



RESCUED FROM THE RUBBLE. A U.S. doctor attends to Pemba Tamang inside an ambulance after he was rescued by Nepalese policemen and U.S. rescue workers from a building that collapsed in Kathmandu, Nepal. Five days after an enormous earthquake shook Nepal, crowds cheered as Tamang was pulled — dazed and dusty — from the wreckage of a seven-story Kathmandu building that collapsed around him on April 25. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup)

Moments of joy in Nepal as two are rescued five days after quake

By Todd Pitman
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — The 15-year-old boy had been buried alive under the rubble of the quake-stricken capital for five days, listening to bulldozers clearing mountains of debris, fearful the incessant aftershocks might finally collapse the darkened crevice where he was trapped.

And then, “all of the sudden I saw light,” Pempa Tamang said, recounting the moment on April 30 that he was pulled from a hole at the bottom of what was once a seven-story building in Kathmandu.

Tamang did not know whether he was alive or dead. “I thought I was hallucinating,” he said.

The improbable rescue was an uplifting moment in Nepal, which has been overwhelmed by death and destruction since the 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit on Saturday, April 25.

After night fell, police reported another dramatic rescue: A woman in her 20s, Krishna Devi Khadka, was pulled from a building in the same neighborhood as Tamang near Kathmandu’s main bus terminal, according to an officer who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn’t authorized to talk to the media.

“Life has become a struggle to survive. It gives us hope,” said Hans Raj Joshi, who watched Tamang’s rescue. “We thought they were only bringing out the dead. It’s hard to believe people are still alive.”

When Tamang was finally extricated, rescue workers inserted an IV into his arm, propped him onto a yellow plastic stretcher — the same kind that has helped convey countless dead —

and carried him through the ruins on their shoulders as if he was a newly crowned king.

Lines of police stood on both sides, keeping back mobs of bystanders and journalists. A dazed Tamang, wearing a dark shirt with the New York Yankees logo and the words “New York Authentic,” blinked at the bright sky.

When the procession turned a corner and entered the main road outside, there was a sound Kathmandu hadn’t heard in days: the jubilant cheers of thousands of ecstatic onlookers.

Nepal, however, is far from normal. More than 70 aftershocks were recorded in the Himalayan region by Indian scientists in the five days following the initial tremor, according to J.L. Gautam, the director of seismology at the Indian Meteorological Department in New Delhi.

Shortages of food and water and worry over the fate of relatives have triggered an exodus from the capital, prompting thousands to board busses provided by the government to their rural hometowns.

“I have to get home. It has already been so many days,” said Shanti Kumari, with her seven-year-old daughter, who was desperate to see family in her home village in eastern Nepal. “I want to get at least a night of peace.”

Although small shops have begun reopening, and the once ubiquitous tent cities have begun thinning out, an air of desperation remains. “We’re still feeling aftershocks. It still doesn’t feel safe,” said Prabhu Dutta, a 27-year-old banker from Kathmandu.

Some residents have begun returning to work, including at Dutta’s bank, but he said it was impossible to concentrate. “We roam around the office. We only have one topic of

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Fijian Dollar	2.0479
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7507
Indian Rupee	63.422
Indonesian Rupiah	12948
Iranian Rial	27993
Japanese Yen	119.92
Laos New Kip	8085.0
Malaysian Ringgit	3.5735
Nepal Rupee	101.66
Pakistani Rupee	101.5
Papua N.G. Kina	2.681
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Sri Lankan Rupee	132.67
Taiwan Dollar	30.624
Thai Baht	33.08
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