



KFC sues Chinese companies for online rumors

BEIJING (AP) — Restaurant operator KFC says it has filed a lawsuit against three companies in China whose social media accounts spread false rumors about its food, including that its chickens have eight legs. The case filed by China's biggest restaurant operator comes as the government intensifies a campaign to clean up rumors on social media. Internet marketers have been convicted of illegal business practices for trying to manipulate online sentiment on behalf of clients by posting false information about competitors or deleting critical posts. In an announcement posted on its Chinese website, KFC said one of the best-known fake rumors was that chickens used by the company have six wings and eight legs because they had been genetically modified.

Birkin sets auction record for handbags: \$222,219

HONG KONG (AP) — Christie's says a Hermes designer handbag has smashed a world auction record in Hong Kong. The auction house did not identify the buyer of the crocodile skin Birkin Bag in fuschia with 18 karat gold and diamond hardware. It sold for 1.72 million Hong Kong dollars (\$222,219). The previous record was set at a U.S. auction in 2011 for another Birkin Bag, in red crocodile skin, that sold for \$203,150. The Birkin Bag was designed for and named after British actress Jane Birkin. It's famous for having a price tag in the thousands of dollars and a years-long wait list. The bag was one of more than 300 that Christie's put on the block in Hong Kong, which has emerged as a global auction center thanks to wealthy mainland Chinese. A similar black Birkin Bag was offered for auction but did not sell after failing to attract the minimum bid of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$130,000).

Body found in suitcase in Tokyo Station locker

TOKYO (AP) — A worker at Japan's Tokyo Station got an unpleasant shock after opening an abandoned suitcase that no one had claimed for a month: the decomposing body of an elderly woman. The Tokyo Metropolitan Police said the corpse was found in a suitcase in a temporary storage area at Tokyo's main train station. The bright yellow suitcase was left in an unlocked coin locker on April 26, according to Japanese media reports. It measured 70 x 50 x 25 centimeters (28 x 20 x 10 inches). The body is 140 centimeters (4'7") tall. Police are trying to establish the woman's identity. The suitcase was held for more than a month to see if the owner would turn up. Major Japanese train stations have banks of coin lockers for travellers to temporarily store their luggage.

Rohingya expert says corpses washing ashore in Myanmar

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — An advocacy group says dozens of decomposed corpses washed ashore last month in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine. Chris Lewa of the Arakan Project, which has been monitoring activities in the isolated, northern tip of Rakhine for more than a decade, said 47 bodies washed up on beaches between May 12 and 24. Some were believed to be Rohingya Muslims trying to escape trafficking ships parked off the western coast, while many more were Bangladeshi. Lewa believes most victims drowned while trying to swim to shore.

2026 FIFA World Cup bidding postponed amid turmoil

SAMARA, Russia (AP) — The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has suspended the 2026 World Cup bidding process amid a widening corruption scandal implicating previous bid contests. FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke says it would be "nonsense" to begin the process now. FIFA planned to write to its 209 member federations to explain the bidding timetable and rules. The 2026 host is expected to be chosen by the 209 members at their May 2017 meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Potential bidders include the United States, Mexico, Canada, and countries from Europe. Valcke spoke at a news conference with Russian organizers of the 2018 World Cup and defended his role in alleged bribes paid by South Africa during the 2010 bidding contest.

Drone is latest weapon against cheating in school exam

BEIJING (AP) — The latest weapon in the fight against cheating for China's all-important college entrance exam is a six-propeller drone. The contraption flew over two testing centers in Luoyang city in central China's Henan province to scan for any unusual signals being sent to devices smuggled by students taking the annual test. No such signals were detected on the first day of the test, a Henan province news website said. Almost all Chinese high school graduates must take the test, and their scores are the key criterion for which tier of university they can enter. An official from Luoyang's Radio Supervision and Regulation Bureau said the drone cost hundreds of thousands of yuan (tens of thousands of dollars) and was as big as a gas station pump when extended. The official gave only his surname, Lan. More than 9 million high school students took the test. Pressure is immense and many students spend months cramming for the exam. Parents travel to the cities where the tests are administered and stay with their children during the exam, which can last two or three days. Cheating is common given the high stakes, and methods include selling supposed answers, hiring surrogate test-takers, and using wireless equipment to communicate during the test. The Education Ministry said it had arrested 23 people since late May over attempts to arrange cheating. Students caught cheating can be barred from taking the test for up to three years.



PUFFING PROHIBITED. Dancers perform in front of anti-smoking banners displayed on the iconic Bird's Nest National Stadium on World No Tobacco Day in Beijing on May 31, 2015. Beijing has introduced new regulations requiring all indoor public places — and many outdoor public places — to be 100 percent smoke-free. (AP Photo/Ing Han Guan)

In country of smokers, Beijing bans lighting up indoors

BEIJING (AP) — China's capital has begun imposing the country's toughest ban on indoor smoking in hopes of stemming a looming health crisis.

Smoking in Beijing is now prohibited in all indoor public places, including offices, shopping malls, and airports. Beijing's main terminal will close its three smoking rooms and special smoking areas will be set up at the city's 600 bus stops.

Fines for violators have been raised to 200 yuan (\$32), up from the 10 yuan (\$1.6) charged under the former partial ban.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says 300 million Chinese smoke, including about half of all men, and 740 million Chinese are

exposed to secondhand smoke. The group says lung cancer kills more than 1.3 million people in the country each year, one-third of the global total.

Bans have been imposed in other parts of the country and cigarette sales to minors are technically forbidden, although enforcement is spotty at best.

Low taxes keep the price of cheaper brands at as little as \$1 per pack and smoking rates appear to be rising, especially among the young.

According to the official Xinhua News Agency, more than 50.99 million cartons of cigarettes were sold in China last year, an increase of 37 percent over the previous year.

Anniversary of first Everest climb marked as industry frets

By Binaj Gurubacharya
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Everest Day, the anniversary of the conquest of the world's tallest peak 62 years ago, was marked quietly by officials, people in the mountaineering business, and a few climbers, little more than a month after an earthquake-triggered avalanche swept base camp and killed 19 people.

The low-key gathering in Kathmandu, the capital, reflects worry over mountaineering in Nepal, a vital source of income for guides and the nation's economy. The April 25 earthquake, which killed more than 8,000 people across the Himalayan country, cut the spring climbing season short. The 2014 spring climbing season also ended early, after an avalanche killed 16 Sherpa guides.

New Zealander Edmund Hillary and his Sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay climbed the 29,035-foot mountain on May 29, 1953.

Each year, thousands of foreigners attempt to conquer the country's soaring peaks. Sherpas can earn up to \$7,000 after a successful summit bid, while those who work at Everest base camp can receive half that amount — huge sums in a nation where the annual per capita income is around \$700.

Both avalanches hit Everest right at the beginning of climbing season, when expeditions had gathered at the base camp and were preparing their summit assaults, which typically take place in May.

After last year's avalanche, which hit April 18, the surviving Sherpas refused to work, resulting in the cancellation of the season.

This year, the Sherpas refused to rebuild the

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Asian Currency Exchange Rates

Units per U.S. dollar as of 6/12

Bangladesh Taka	77.78
Cambodian Riel	4070.1
China Renminbi	6.2084
Fijian Dollar	2.0768
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7532
Indian Rupee	64.06
Indonesian Rupiah	13335
Iranian Rial	28690
Japanese Yen	123.7
Laos New Kip	8120.5
Malaysian Ringgit	3.761
Nepal Rupee	102.35
Pakistani Rupee	101.75
Papua N.G. Kina	2.7285
Philippine Peso	45.407
Russian Ruble	55.075
Saudi Riyal	3.7504
Singapore Dollar	1.3483
South Korean Won	1114.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	134.09
Taiwan Dollar	31.076
Thai Baht	33.726
Vietnam Dong	21800