

**Metro Manila traffic costing Philippines \$64 million a day**

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — Metropolitan Manila’s notorious traffic jams are costing the Philippine economy at least 3 billion pesos (\$64 million) a day and infrastructure projects need to be fast-tracked to address the problem, the country’s chief economic planner said recently. A study in 2012 by the Japan International Cooperation Agency found that time lost by people stuck in traffic and the extra cost of operating vehicles in gridlock in metropolitan Manila and nearby areas amounted to 2.4 billion pesos (\$51 million) a day, Economic Planning secretary Arsenio Balisacan said. With a bigger population today and more vehicles on the roads, and taking into consideration other costs including to the health of commuters, Balisacan said 3 billion pesos is a conservative estimate. The cost over a year is 0.8 percent of gross domestic product.

**2.3 million answer Indian state’s post for 368 menial jobs**

LUCKNOW, India (AP) — When a northern Indian state announced a few hundred job openings for low-level office workers who run errands and make tea, the response was staggering. About 2.3 million people applied for the 368 jobs with the government of Uttar Pradesh. Hundreds of candidates with doctorates and other advanced degrees applied for the jobs that pay about 16,000 rupees (\$240) a month and require a fifth-grade education. The massive number seeking the menial jobs reflects high unemployment levels in the state — India’s most populous — and across much of the country. Senior administrative officer Prabhat Mittal said the state government is conducting a written exam to screen the applicants because interviewing all of them would take four years. At least 255 applicants had earned a doctorate and more than 200,000 had graduate degrees. At least 30 trained computer engineers were also in the fray. Job creation is an urgent requirement in the nation of 1.2 billion where 13 million young people enter the job market each year. According to government data, about 6.6 percent of India’s workers are jobless. That doesn’t count the tens of millions who eke out a subsistence-level existence in menial, unsafe, and backbreaking jobs. The situation is worse for young job-seekers, with government statistics placing the number of unemployed at about 10.5 percent.

**China inks deals worth \$38 billion to buy 300 Boeing jets**

HONG KONG (AP) — Boeing says Chinese companies have agreed to buy 300 jets and build an aircraft assembly plant in China. The deals, worth about \$38 billion, were signed during Chinese President Xi Jinping’s recent visit to the United States. China Aviation Supplies Holding Company, ICBC Financial Leasing, and China Development Bank Leasing inked the jet purchase agreement after Xi’s arrival in Seattle. Boeing said the orders were mostly for its 737 models. State-owned Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China, which is better known as Comac, also signed a cooperation agreement with the U.S. plane maker to build a 737 aircraft assembly center in China. Boeing said the new facility will paint the jets and finish their interiors. Xi visited Boeing’s Paine Field assembly plant during the Seattle leg of his trip before moving on to Washington, D.C. to meet President Barack Obama. The assembly plant would be Boeing’s first in China and signals its attempt to match its European rival Airbus’s Chinese presence as the two rivals step up their efforts to win more business in the country’s lucrative aircraft market. Boeing said the Chinese facility won’t reduce employment levels at its plants in Washington state.

**South Korea to probe Volkswagen diesel vehicle emissions**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea says it will investigate emission levels of Volkswagen diesel vehicles after the world’s top-selling automaker admitted cheating U.S. tests. Park Pan-kyu, a deputy director at South Korea’s environment ministry, said four models — Golf, Jetta, Beetle, and Audi A3 — are subject to the probe, which is expected to end in November. About 6,000 vehicles made in 2014 and 2015 were sold under those nameplates in South Korea. Volkswagen AG admitted it rigged U.S. tests so it would appear that its diesel-powered cars were emitting fewer nitrogen oxides, which can contribute to ozone buildup and respiratory illness. Park said Volkswagen could be fined up to \$3.4 million and required to recall the vehicles if wrongdoing is found. Some \$15 billion was wiped from Volkswagen’s market value after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the violations. The automaker faces up to \$18 billion in penalties in the U.S. alone. Volkswagen overtook Japan’s Toyota Motor Corp. as the world’s top-selling automaker in the first half of the year.

**Filipino in Singapore jailed for sedition through Facebook**

SINGAPORE (AP) — A Filipino nurse working in Singapore has been sentenced to four months in jail for describing Singaporeans as losers on his Facebook account, and subsequently providing false information to police investigators. Ello Ed Mundsel Bello, 28, pleaded guilty to a charge of promoting feelings of ill-will and hostility under the country’s sedition act, and two charges of providing false information to the police. An additional charge under the sedition act, and another for lying to the police, was also considered during sentencing. In a Facebook post on January 2 that received more than 600 hostile replies, Bello called Singaporeans “losers (sic) in their own country.” Singapore will soon be the “new Filipino state,” he wrote. He added: “We take their jobs, their future, their women, and soon, we will evict all SG losers out of their own country.” The Filipino also stated that he was “praying that disasters (sic) strike Singapore and more Singaporeans will die,” and that he would “celebrate” if this happened. Following the hostility his comments generated, Bello deleted them and lodged a police report, claiming that someone logged into his Facebook account without permission.



**RISING INFLUENCE.** A screen shows Afghanistan actress Marina Golbahari, right, and South Korean actor Song Kang-ho on the eve of the opening ceremony of the Busan International Film Festival at Busan Cinema Center in Busan, South Korea. Asia’s largest movie festival kicked off at a time when the region’s influence on the global movie industry is on the rise. (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

**Asia’s largest movie festival set to kick off in Busan**

By Youkyung Lee  
The Associated Press

**B**USAN, South Korea — Asia’s largest movie festival kicked off October 1 at a time when the region’s influence on the global movie industry is on the rise.

Entering its 20th year in the South Korean port city, the Busan International Film Festival has seen its influence and size expand in stride with the growth of box-office sales in the region.

Asian countries fuelled growth in the global film industry last year, while box-office sales in the U.S. and Canada declined. With box-office sales of \$12.4 billion in 2014, the Asian region is the biggest and fastest-growing movie market in the world, according to the Motion Picture Association of America.

Despite the growing influence of Asian cinema in the world, the non-competition movie festival has kept its bar of pretense and hierarchy low, unlike the historic yet hierarchical Cannes Film Festival, which turned away some women in flat shoes from a premiere this spring.

Busan cinemagoers — in flats or heels, part of the media or not — do more than just gaze at award-winning directors, K-pop stars, and

Hollywood celebrities gracing the red carpet. They happily stay in queues from the wee hours to get tickets, ask questions to filmmakers and actors after screenings, and join public talk shows with them on the beach.

While the glamour and glitz will not be lost in Busan, most moviegoers and industry officials travel to South Korea’s second-largest city to discover the next-generation Wong Kar Wai or Ang Lee. The festival’s New Currents section, which premieres Asian feature movies from novice directors, has broken major talents, including Venice Film Festival Golden Lion winner Jia Zhangke. Its Asian Cinema Fund program has provided financial lifelines to promising filmmakers.

“There are a lot of movies completed by support from the Asian Cinema Fund, introduced in Busan for the first time in the world and then went on to international acclaim,” said Kim Jiseok, the Busan Film Festival’s executive programmer.

The festival has not been without challenges during its 20-year ride. The most recent setback was the budget cut by South Korea’s government after the festival went ahead with the screening of a controversial documentary

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**Nepal mulls new restrictions for Everest climbing permits**

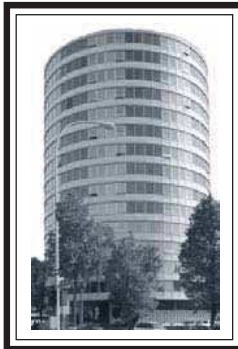
By Post Bahadur Basnet  
The Associated Press

**K**ATHMANDU, Nepal — Nepal is considering placing new age and fitness restrictions on people who want to climb Mount Everest, according to officials, as the country looks to enhance safety on the mountain after several disasters in recent years.

The government is mulling barring people under 18 and over 75, as well as those with disabilities, said Mohan Sapkota, a spokesman for the Himalayan country’s ministry of tourism. The new rules could also require that climbers attempting to scale the 29,035-foot mountain have experience on medium-size peaks.

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**Asian Currency Exchange Rates**

Units per U.S. dollar as of 10/02

Bangladesh Taka	77.775
Cambodian Riel	4073.0
China Renminbi	6.3571
Fijian Dollar	2.1575
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7501
Indian Rupee	65.513
Indonesian Rupiah	14646
Iranian Rial	29956
Japanese Yen	119.19
Laos New Kip	8152.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.415
Nepal Rupee	104.76
Pakistani Rupee	104.5
Papua N.G. Kina	2.8818
Philippine Peso	46.737
Russian Ruble	66.419
Saudi Riyal	3.7506
Singapore Dollar	1.4324
South Korean Won	1180.5
Sri Lankan Rupee	141.25
Taiwan Dollar	32.964
Thai Baht	36.56
Vietnam Dong	22480