



S. Korean scholars boycott state-issued textbook project

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Hundreds of South Korean scholars have boycotted the writing of state-issued history textbooks out of concern they will teach distorted views on the country’s recent past. Conservative President Park Geun-hye’s government plans to require middle and high schools to use textbooks edited by the government after 2017, instead of allowing schools to choose from eight private publishers, as is currently the case. South Korea’s move toward state-issued textbooks is the latest in a series of efforts by conservative leaders in Seoul and Tokyo to shape school history books to reflect their political views, and has sparked fierce criticism from academics and opposition parties. Professors from more than 20 South Korean universities said they would not contribute to the textbooks because they believe the government is moving to soften descriptions of South Korea’s brutal dictatorships that preceded a bloody transition toward democracy in the 1980s. The Korean History Research Association, the country’s largest group of historians with nearly 800 members, has declared it won’t participate in the writing process.

Robert Mugabe wins China’s version of Nobel Peace Prize

BEIJING (AP) — Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has been awarded China’s alternative to the Nobel Peace Prize for what the prize committee called his national leadership and service to pan-Africanism. Mugabe is the latest in a series of critics of the west who have received the Confucius Peace Prize, first awarded in 2010 amid Beijing’s anger over the granting of the Nobel Peace Prize to imprisoned Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo. Mugabe, 91, is a resilient leader who fought in a guerrilla war, denounces the west, crushed or co-opted dissent at home, and has been in power for 35 years with no clear successor. Prior recipients of the prize, which is awarded by a non-governmental committee composed mainly of scholars, include former Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

AFC bans five in Nepal amid match-fixing probe

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has banned the four players and an official recently arrested in Nepal amid an investigation into match-fixing. Nepal captain Sagar Thapa and four others were arrested and accused of taking money from bookmakers in Malaysia and Singapore to lose matches. A police official said the alleged match-fixing dated from 2009 and included matches against Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The AFC issued a statement saying a year-long investigation in conjunction with Sportradar and Nepali police resulted in the provisional suspensions, and it had asked the sport’s international governing body to have them imposed worldwide. The other players identified were Bikash Singh Chhetri, Sandip Rai, and Ritesh Thapa, and the official is listed as Anjan K.C.

Filmmaker John Woo surprised by trailblazer award

TOKYO (AP) — John Woo was surprised to receive an award honoring trailblazers who have made outstanding contributions to the art of filmmaking. “I have made a lot of films, but it hardly qualifies as making a special contribution. I’m just a hardworking filmmaker,” the Hong Kong director said in Tokyo before the award presentation. “I’m very thankful to receive this award and also very surprised.” Past recipients of the Tokyo International Film Festival’s Samurai Award include fellow directors Takashi Kitano and Tim Burton. Woo said when he began his career in the 1960s, he watched films from other countries, especially Japan, and is still inspired today by Japanese cinema. “Japan has had so many great filmmakers, actors, and writers,” he said at the ceremony. The 1986 action drama *A Better Tomorrow* cemented Woo’s place in Hong Kong cinema, breaking box-office records at the time. *The Killers* and *Hard Boiled* followed. The director’s signature style of bullet-flying action scenes or slow-motion gunfight sequences defined Hong Kong cinema in the ‘90s and led to Hollywood projects like *Face/Off* and *Mission: Impossible II*. His next film, a remake of the Japanese action classic *Manhunt*, is in pre-production with the cast still to be set.

Three detained for stealing human body for ghost wedding

BEIJING (AP) — Police in northern China have detained three people suspected of stealing a corpse to sell as a bride in the ancient Chinese rite of ghost weddings, which join single people who died for a belated marriage in the afterlife. The official Xinhua News Agency said the main suspect had heard about the death of a young woman in a nearby village in Shanxi province and thought of selling the corpse to relatives of a single dead man. Xinhua cited police in Ruicheng county, where calls rang unanswered. Xinhua said the three suspects pretended to be relatives of the woman and negotiated a sale price of 25,000 yuan (\$4,000) with a buyer, but while raiding a tomb for the body, they were caught by villagers.

Ferry firm head sentenced to seven years over sinking

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea’s highest court sentenced the head of a ferry operator to seven years in prison over the April 2014 sinking of the *Sewol* that killed more than 300 people. The Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that sentenced Kim Han-sik, president of Chonghaejin Marine Co., to seven years in prison on charges including manslaughter. The court found Kim responsible for failing to prevent the overloading of cargo and improper storage on the ship that judges said contributed to the sinking. Four other Chonghaejin officials were sentenced to two-and-a-half to four years in prison on similar charges, the court said in a statement.



RESTRICTED REUNIONS. South Korean Kim Chun-yeol, 54, left, presents a watch to his North Korean uncle, Kim Yun Ju, 85, during the Separated Family Reunion Meeting at Diamond Mountain resort in North Korea last month. Hundreds of elderly Koreans from the divided North and South held three days of reunions with loved ones, many of which they have had no contact with since before the war between the countries more than 60 years ago. (Kim Do-hoon/Yonhap via AP)

Koreans hold reunions across the DMZ, first in more than a year

By Hyung-jin Kim and Kim Tong-hyung
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — Tears run down the deeply wrinkled face of the North Korean man in the wheelchair while embracing his now elderly South Korean daughter for the first time since she was two. An 88-year-old South Korean woman looks on with an expression of shock as she sees her North Korean husband for the first time since war drove them apart more than six decades ago.

As the rival Koreas held brief reunions of families separated by the 1950-1953 fighting, dramas like this took place everywhere at the North’s scenic Diamond Mountain resort.

Ri Hung Jong, 88, had no words as he gazed at his daughter, Lee Jeong-sook, 68. She had been raised in South Korea since being separated from her father during the war. Ri simply wept in silence as his daughter touched his face and smiled.

Hundreds of South Koreans travelled to the mountain resort to reunite with their relatives. Dressed in business suits, formal dresses, and traditional *hanbok*, they brought long johns, medicine, parkas, calligraphy works, and cash to give as presents to family members who live in the North.

The reunions, as always, are a mixture of high emotion and media frenzy. Some of the participants were speechless around the reporters and the flashing cameras. Journalists crowded around South Korean Lee Ok-yeon, 88, as she reunited with her husband, Chae Hun Sik, for the first time in 65 years. She lives in the same house her husband, also now 88, built and that the couple

shared as newlyweds. Both appeared to be in shock at the reunion.

“Father, why can’t you say anything? Didn’t you tell me you had a lot to say?” Kang Mi Yong, Chae’s North Korean daughter-in-law, asked Chae as he struggled for words.

The images were broadcast throughout South Korea, where the reunions are big news. North Korea’s government worries that scenes of affluent South Koreans might influence its grip on power, analysts say. In a typical piece of propaganda, Pyongyang published a report about the reunions through its state media that said the North Korean participants explained to their South Korean relatives how their lives have been “happy” and “worth-while” under the North’s socialist system.

The deep emotions stem partly from the elderly reuniting after decades spent apart, partly from the knowledge that this will be their only chance. None of the past participants has had a second reunion.

At a table covered with a white cloth, bottled water and soft drinks, and a vase of flowers, South Korean Kim Bock-rack wept as he clasped the hands of his sister as a cameraman silently filmed.

South Korean Lee Soon-kyu, 85, reunited with her North Korean husband, Oh In Se, 83. As camera flashes bathed them in glaring white light, she cocked her head and looked with amazement at Oh, who wore a dapper suit and hat and craned backward to take in Lee.

The reunions are a poignant yet bitter reminder that the Korean Peninsula is still in a technical state of war because the Korean

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Units per U.S. dollar as of 10/31

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Cambodian Riel	4061.3
China Renminbi	6.3174
Fijian Dollar	2.1084
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7506
Indian Rupee	65.265
Indonesian Rupiah	13684
Iranian Rial	29957
Japanese Yen	120.62
Laos New Kip	8145.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.3012
Nepal Rupee	104.55
Pakistani Rupee	105.47
Papua N.G. Kina	2.9197
Philippine Peso	46.85
Russian Ruble	63.955
Saudi Riyal	3.7504
Singapore Dollar	1.4012
South Korean Won	1140.5
Sri Lankan Rupee	141.1
Taiwan Dollar	32.594
Thai Baht	35.623
Vietnam Dong	22336