



**Four richest Indonesians wealthier than poorest 100 million**

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A report on inequality in Indonesia says its four richest men now have more wealth than 100 million of the country’s poorest people. The report by Oxfam said Indonesia, with a population of more than 250 million, has the sixth-worst inequality in the world. Within Asia, only Thailand is more unequal. It blames “market fundamentalism” that has allowed the richest to capture most of the benefits of nearly two decades of strong economic growth, concentration of land ownership, and pervasive gender inequality. The investment returns on the wealth of just one of the four richest, which according to the *Forbes* rich list include cigarette tycoons Budi Hartono, Michael Hartono, and Susilo Wonowidjojo, would eliminate extreme poverty in a year. The report said extreme poverty of less than \$1.90 per day in income has declined sharply since 2000, but 93 million Indonesians still live on less than \$3.10, which is defined by the World Bank as the moderate poverty line. Oxfam said social instability could increase if the government doesn’t tackle the gap between rich and poor.

**Rohingya activist says 1,000 refugees returned to Myanmar**

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — About 1,000 members of the Rohingya ethnic minority who fled Myanmar (also known as Burma) during its army’s four-month counterinsurgency operation have returned to their villages in Rakhine state after the government announced it was halting military operations in the area, according to activists in Bangladesh. The army’s campaign began in October after nine police officers at outposts on the border with Bangladesh were killed. Human-rights groups said the army burned down more than 1,000 homes and killed an unknown number of civilians, among other abuses. About 70,000 Rohingya villagers fled to Bangladesh and 20,000 fled within Myanmar. More than 100,000 Muslim Rohingyas have been forced to live in squalid displacement camps after communal violence with members of the country’s Buddhist majority in 2012. The estimated 1 million Rohingya face official and social discrimination and are generally denied citizenship, even if their families have lived in Myanmar for generations.

**Minister appeals to Washington to avoid ‘trade war’**

BEIJING (AP) — China’s commerce minister has appealed to Washington to negotiate disputes with Beijing and avoid a “trade war” that he warned would hurt both sides. Gao Hucheng, responding to a question about U.S. President Donald Trump’s promise to raise taxes on Chinese imports, said at a news conference the two governments should work together to promote trade. Gao said a trade war “should not become an option.” He appealed to Washington to “properly solve” disputes through “dialogue and cooperation.” Trump promised during his election campaign to raise import duties on Chinese goods to 40 percent, but has yet to take formal action. He also promised to declare Beijing improperly manipulated the exchange rate of its yuan to give its exporters a price advantage, which would open the way to other sanctions.

**Hong Kong Disneyland posts 2016 loss on tourism softness**

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong Disneyland has posted a wider annual loss as attendance by mainland Chinese tourists dropped amid a softer tourism market. The park said it lost 171 million Hong Kong dollars (\$22 million) on revenue of HK\$4.8 billion for its most recent financial year, which ended October 3. Some 6.1 million people visited the park last year. That’s down from the previous year, when it drew 6.8 million people and lost HK\$148 million. Visitors from mainland China, a key market for the resort, accounted for 36 percent of total attendance in 2016, down from 41 percent the year before. Resort owners, The Walt Disney Co. and the Hong Kong government, which has a 53 percent stake, last year announced a \$1.4 billion expansion for the park, which has been criticized for being too small and having too few big-ticket rides. The expansion project, scheduled to begin next year, will add new themed areas based on the movie *Frozen* and Marvel superhero characters and an attraction based on the film *Moana* as well as renovations to the park’s castle. However, Disney’s board and Hong Kong lawmakers need to approve the funding. Hong Kong is also working to improve its competitiveness as an Asian tourism destination following last year’s launch of Shanghai Disneyland, which raised concerns it would siphon off mainland visitors.

**Money-losing Toshiba to sell medical leasing unit to Canon**

TOKYO (AP) — Embattled Japanese electronics maker Toshiba Corp. is selling its stake in a medical equipment leasing company to Canon Inc. for 31.4 billion yen (\$277 million). Toshiba said it is selling its entire 65 percent stake in Toshiba Medical Finance Co. to Canon, a Japanese camera maker, effective March 31. Tokyo-based Toshiba has been in talks with Canon since late last year on the sale. Toshiba, which owns U.S. nuclear company Westinghouse, is in deep trouble after suffering massive losses in its nuclear business. It has been selling off lucrative businesses such as its computer-chip operations. It is projecting a 712.5 billion yen (\$6.3 billion) loss for its nuclear business and has been unable to report April-December financial results. Its chairman resigned to take responsibility for the mess. Toshiba has already sold part of its chip business; its president said it is thinking about selling all of it to get out of the massive red ink. It has also sold its household appliance unit to Midea of China, which is maintaining the Toshiba brand name. Toshiba has also had its reputation tarnished in recent years by a scandal over the doctoring of accounting books to meet unrealistic profit targets.



**BYE-BYE, BAO BAO.** A worker feeds U.S.-born giant panda Bao Bao after her arrival at the Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Center in Chengdu, China. Bao Bao was born at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. to panda parents on loan from China. Under an agreement between China and the U.S., such panda cubs must be returned to China before they turn four years old, the earliest age at which they might begin breeding. The three-year-old landed in the city of Chengdu in Sichuan province after a 16-hour flight on a Boeing 777 emblazoned with a picture of a giant bamboo-eating panda. (AP Photo/China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Pandas, HO)

**U.S.-born panda Bao Bao lands in China after leaving D.C. zoo**

BEIJING (AP) — An American-born panda has started settling into her new home in southwest China where she’ll eventually join a breeding program.

Bao Bao was born at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. to panda parents on loan from China. Under an agreement between China and the U.S., such panda cubs must be returned to China before they turn four years old, the earliest age at which they might begin breeding.

The three-year-old landed in the city of Chengdu in Sichuan province after a 16-hour flight on a Boeing 777 emblazoned with a picture of a giant bamboo-eating panda. She was accompanied by veterinarian panda keeper Marty Dearie from the National Zoo, which had put on six days of commemorations to mark her departure.

Transported to the nearby Dujiangyan panda breeding base, Bao Bao emerged from her crate looking somewhat timid and curious, but soon settled in with a snack of fresh bamboo, according to a news release from the China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Pandas.

Bao Bao, whose name means “precious” or “treasure,” will first go through a month-long quarantine at the Dujiangyan base, the research center said. Keepers will monitor her diet, activities, and health during that time, including checking her blood and feces, it said.

“Once Bao Bao the panda completes this month of quarantine, she’ll go on display to the public and I welcome everyone to come see her

then,” research center expert Li Desheng was quoted as saying in the news release.

An enclosure of 1,100 square feet was prepared for her at the base. It has indoor and outdoor play areas, is equipped with rubber balls and a tire swing for entertainment, and has fresh bamboo and apples for eating.

Keepers will work on helping Bao Bao adapt to local bamboo and Chinese steamed bread made from corn, soybeans, rice, and eggs, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

She is the 11th panda to be born overseas and returned to China, and since she does not understand commands in Chinese, she’ll be looked after for a time by an English-speaking keeper, Xinhua said.

China’s unofficial national mascot, giant pandas live mainly in the mountains of Sichuan, with some also found in neighboring Gansu and Shaanxi provinces.

They have long been considered one of the world’s most endangered animals, although last year a leading international group lowered their classification to “vulnerable.”

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature cited conservation efforts that helped the wild panda population jump to 1,864 in 2014 from 1,596 in 2004. However, the Chinese government rejected the group’s decision, saying the panda’s status was no less serious because its natural habitats have been splintered by human and natural causes.

More than 200 giant pandas also live in captivity.

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**Asian Currency Exchange Rates**

Units per U.S. dollar as of 3/03

Bangladesh Taka	79.38
Cambodian Riel	4065.0
China Renminbi	6.904
Fijian Dollar	2.092
Hong Kong Dollar	7.763
Indian Rupee	66.805
Indonesian Rupiah	13383
Iranian Rial	32404
Japanese Yen	114.04
Laos New Kip	8115.6
Malaysian Ringgit	4.4542
Nepal Rupee	106.9
Pakistani Rupee	104.8
Papua N.G. Kina	3.2758
Philippine Peso	50.38
Russian Ruble	58.237
Saudi Riyal	3.7503
Singapore Dollar	1.4107
South Korean Won	1157.8
Sri Lankan Rupee	151.25
Taiwan Dollar	31.05
Thai Baht	35.024
Vietnam Dong	22744