



Clean water plant brings hope to village in north India

NAI BASTI VILLAGE, India (AP) — Schoolchildren cheered and village women clapped as a gush of clean water flowed through a set of gleaming steel taps connected to a newly installed water filtration plant in a dusty north Indian village. India has the world's highest number of people without access to clean water. UNICEF says nearly 78 million Indians — about five percent of the country's 1.3 billion population — must make do with contaminated water sources or buy water at high rates. The lack of clean water contributes to increases in stomach ailments, diarrheal diseases, and deaths from waterborne diseases. Around 140,000 children die of diarrheal disease in India each year, a third of the 315,000 such deaths of children worldwide. Nai Basti is about 35 miles east of New Delhi.

11 endangered wild elephants rescued from mud

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Eleven endangered wild elephants were rescued in Cambodia four days after getting stuck in a three-meter-deep mud hole, officials said. The animals were rescued in northeastern Monduliri province, home to about 250 wild elephants, said Wildlife Alliance official Botumroat Lebung. The chief of Monduliri's environment department, Keo Sopheak, who headed the rescue team, said the elephants apparently got stuck in the mud when they went to drink water at a 10-foot-deep hole that was left over from U.S. bombing during the Vietnam War. After being rescued, the elephants were sent back to the jungle where they normally live, Keo Sopheak said. He said if local villagers had not reported the incident, the elephants would have died from thirst and starvation.

China lifts ban on Brazilian beef

BEIJING (AP) — China has lifted an import ban on beef from Brazil after Brazilian authorities promised to block shipments by producers at the center of a product-quality scandal, a foreign ministry spokeswoman said. Brazil also promised to take stricter measures to ensure the quality of meat shipped to China, said the spokeswoman, Hua Chunying. Brazil's meat exports collapsed after investigators accused inspectors of taking bribes to ignore outdated meat and chemicals. China, the European Union, Japan, and Mexico banned or limited imports. "The Brazilian side has formally informed China that it decided to suspend the export of the involved companies to China and promised it will take stricter measures to ensure the safety and reliability of meat products exported to China," Hua said. "Therefore, China has removed the preventive and temporary protective measures and restored normal examination and quarantine work."

Police arrest militants setting up jihadi camp

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia's counterterrorism squad says it has arrested four suspected Islamic militants who were trying to establish a jihadist training camp in eastern Indonesia and who likely had links with Abu Sayyaf militants in the southern Philippines. National police spokesman Boy Rafli Amar said the men were arrested in several locations on the island of Java and were connected to four militants ambushed by police on the same day near Jakarta. Amar said all eight were members of Jemaah Anshorut Daulah, a network of Indonesian extremist groups that formed in 2015 and pledges allegiance to Islamic State group leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. One of the suspects told police his role was to purchase rifles from militants in the Philippines and he had travelled there several times.

Cambodia bans export of breast milk by U.S. company

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Cambodia has permanently banned the export of human breast milk by a company headed by a former Mormon missionary that pioneered the business two years ago. A letter issued by the cabinet to the Health Ministry said Prime Minister Hun Sen has ordered a halt to U.S.-based Ambrosia Labs Ltd. buying and exporting the milk. The product is marketed as food for babies and a nutritional supplement and sells for as much as \$4 an ounce. The letter gave no reason for the ban, but said Cambodia was not so afflicted by poverty that its mothers needed to sell their milk. The milk's export was recently suspended while the Health Ministry investigated its effects on babies and whether the business violated a law on trafficking in human organs.

Iranian club fined for laser-flashing fan misconduct

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Iranian football club Esteghlal FC has been ordered to pay fines totalling \$51,000 over the misconduct of its spectators who flashed laser beams at opposing players and the referee during two recent matches. The Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) disciplinary committee also said if there are further similar breaches over the next two years, Esteghlal FC will be forced to play a home game in an empty stadium. AFC said home fans at Azadi Stadium in Tehran on February 7, in addition to flashing the lasers, also threw projectiles on the field that caused explosions during a 0-0 draw with Al Sadd of Qatar, a qualifying match for the Asian Champions League. It said Esteghlal FC fans also flashed lasers during the club's 2-0 win in an ACL match in Tehran on March 13 against Lokomotiv of Uzbekistan. Esteghlal leads the group with two wins from two matches. In other sanctions, AFC said it banned four players and three officials from the Lebanon beach soccer team from football-related activity over varying periods after they were found guilty of bringing the game into disrepute following their semifinal match against United Arab Emirates in March.



MONITORING MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS. Trekkers hike to Everest Base camp on March 11, 2017 near Lobuche, Nepal. The 2017 spring climbing season is expected to be busy on Everest. Hundreds of climbers were able to scale the peak last year following two years of disasters on the mountain. The 2015 season was scrapped after 19 climbers were killed and 61 injured by an avalanche at base camp triggered by a massive earthquake. In 2014, an avalanche at the Khumbu Icefall killed 16 Sherpa guides. (AP Photo/Tashi Sherpa)

Nepal to strap some Everest climbers with GPS devices

By Binaj Gurubacharya
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Some climbers attempting to scale Mount Everest during the upcoming spring climbing season will be strapped with a GPS device to locate them in case they are in trouble and to prevent false claims of reaching the summit, according to officials.

Hundreds of climbers are expected to attempt to climb the world's highest peak in April and May, but only a few will be fitted with the devices as an experiment.

The chief of Nepal's tourism department, Durga Dutta Dhakal, said the devices, costing about \$300 apiece, would help locate climbers who are in trouble on the mountain so rescuers can be sent.

The devices will also track the movement of the climbers while they are on Everest. The data will be checked after they get back from the mountain to determine whether they reached the summit and should be issued a climber's certificate.

Contrast in style as Duterte meets Myanmar's Suu Kyi

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP) — Regional politics makes for strange bedfellows, and at first glance, it is hard to imagine more of an odd couple than tempestuous Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and his cerebral de facto Myanmar counterpart, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who met recently in Naypyitaw, the capital of Myanmar (formerly known as Burma).

The main purpose of Duterte's visit to Myanmar, which took place in late March, was

Last year, an Indian couple claimed they scaled the peak and received a certificate from mountaineering authorities, but it was later determined they altered their photo of the summit. It was a huge embarrassment for Nepalese mountaineering authorities.

Climbers only need a photo showing them on the 29,035-foot-high summit and a report from a government-assigned liaison official. The officials, however, rarely stay on the mountain to monitor the climbers.

Climbers are also covered with heavy clothing, climbing gear, and oxygen masks, making it difficult for them to be clearly recognized in photographs.

The 2017 spring climbing season is expected to be busy on Everest. Hundreds of climbers were able to scale the peak last year following two years of disasters on the mountain.

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to complete visits to nine fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN.

While their meeting was said to have covered the usual pro forma talk about trade and investment, it had a tangible result when Duterte promised \$300,000 in humanitarian aid for Myanmar's Rakhine state, where communal conflict has displaced more than 100,000 people, mostly Muslims, from their homes.

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Cambodian Riel	3998.0
China Renminbi	6.8872
Fijian Dollar	2.0865
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7709
Indian Rupee	64.85
Indonesian Rupiah	13322
Iranian Rial	32472
Japanese Yen	111.39
Laos New Kip	8199.0
Malaysian Ringgit	4.4255
Nepal Rupee	103.9
Pakistani Rupee	104.83
Papua N.G. Kina	3.2863
Philippine Peso	50.2
Russian Ruble	56.245
Saudi Riyal	3.7502
Singapore Dollar	1.3971
South Korean Won	1118.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	152.13
Taiwan Dollar	30.348
Thai Baht	34.353
Vietnam Dong	22580