



**Veteran guide who first scaled Everest 10 times hospitalized**

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — A Nepalese mountaineering official says a former Sherpa guide who was the first person to scale Mount Everest 10 times has been hospitalized after suffering a brain hemorrhage. Ang Tshering of the Nepal Mountaineering Association said Ang Rita was rushed to a hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, after he fell unconscious. The 68-year-old Ang Rita scaled Everest 10 times from 1983 to 1996. He quit climbing because of pressure from his family and health-related problems. Several other climbers have passed his record, but he remains one of the most famous Everest climbers.

**China launches country's first cargo spacecraft**

BEIJING (AP) — Preparations are underway for the launch of China's first unmanned cargo spacecraft on a mission to dock with the country's space station. The Tianzhou 1 blasted off atop a new generation Long March 7 rocket from China's latest spacecraft launch site at Wenchang on the island province of Hainan. It is programmed to conduct scientific experiments after reaching the now-crewless Tiangong 2, China's second space station. A pair of Chinese astronauts spent 30 days on board the station last year. Since China conducted its first crewed space mission in 2003, it has staged a spacewalk and landed its Yutu rover on the moon. The two Tiangong, or "Heavenly Palace," space stations are considered stepping stones to landing a rover on Mars.

**Companies not complying with Bangladesh garment plan**

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — An international rights group says dozens of global clothing companies are not complying with a plan to ensure better safety in Bangladesh garment factories following the deadly collapse of a building four years ago. Human Rights Watch said in a report that only 29 out of 72 recently contacted companies are releasing information about how they source their products in Bangladesh. It said many brands have held out completely. Bangladesh's garment industry has invested more than \$1 billion in safety improvements since April 24, 2013, when the Rana Plaza garment factory complex collapsed outside Dhaka, killing more than 1,130 workers and injuring 2,500. The collapse highlighted grim conditions in the country's garment industry, the second largest in the world with about 4,000 factories employing about 4 million workers.

**Blogger found stabbed to death in the Maldives**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Police in the Maldives say they are investigating the stabbing death of a prominent blogger and social-media activist. Police said in a statement that Yameen Rasheed was found with multiple stab wounds in a house in the capital of Male. He died at a hospital. The motive for his killing was not immediately known. Rasheed was an advocate of human rights and freedom of speech. He discussed politics and other social issues on the internet, including health, migrant labor rights, and policing. He was a friend of journalist Ahmed Rilwan, who went missing in 2014 after being abducted, and has been on the forefront in the campaign to locate him. The opposition Maldivian Democratic Party called for an investigation with foreign assistance into Rasheed's death, saying the country's police do not have the capacity or impartiality to conduct such an investigation. It said Rasheed had recently filed a case against the police over their inaction in determining Rilwan's fate.

**Indonesian military threatens news site after coup story**

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia's military said it reported an online news site to the police after it wrote about an Intercept story alleging current and retired generals plotted to overthrow President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo. The Intercept, co-founded by Glenn Greenwald, a journalist known for his stories about the U.S. National Security Agency's mass surveillance, had published the coup article by freelance journalist Allan Nairn. Citing intelligence documents, unnamed generals, and other figures, it alleges that huge protests in Jakarta against the capital's minority Christian governor were a front for a movement to unseat Jokowi. Separately, amid protests in December and March, Indonesian police arrested a total of 16 people for suspected treason, including a former general and Islamic radicals. The military's statement said an account of the Intercept story published by the Indonesian site Tirto was either "not true" or a "hoax." It said it was reporting Tirto so it could be "investigated and proceeded against in line with existing laws." On its website, Tirto said it had permission from Nairn and Intercept to translate the article and had interviewed Nairn in detail about his reporting. Decades of army rule in Indonesia ended in 1998 with the ouster of late dictator Suharto during mass protests sparked by an economic crisis. The military, however, remains one of the Muslim majority country's most powerful and respected institutions.

**Air China resumes booking flights to North Korea**

BEIJING (AP) — China's state-owned airline is resuming flights from Beijing to North Korea that had been suspended because of poor ticket sales. Tour companies in China have reported waning interest in trips to neighboring North Korea amid safety worries and tensions over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. Chinese state media reported April 14 that Air China was suspending its flights to North Korea's capital beginning April 17. On April 25, the airline was offering twice-weekly bookings between Beijing and Pyongyang beginning May 5 on its website. Air China did not immediately respond to requests for comment. North Korea's Air Koryo is the only other airline operating flights between Pyongyang and Beijing.



**ARTISTIC PREPARATIONS.** Artisans clean the royal funeral chariot (top photo) to be used as part of the cremation of the late Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the Office of Traditional Arts in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand. In the bottom photo, an artist sculpts deities and creatures from ancient Indian epics to decorate the royal crematorium. The cremation is planned for late October. (AP Photos/Sakchai Lalit)

**Artisans prepare for Thai king's funeral**

By Kawewit Kaewjinda  
The Associated Press

**N**AKON PATHOM, Thailand — In a large workshop about an hour west of the Thai capital, fans ease the stultifying heat beating down on artisans hard at work fashioning ornate articles, large and small, to be used at the cremation of King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The work — weaving embroideries, restoring artifacts, and making sculptures, all in the royal style — is overseen by the Culture Ministry's Department of Fine Arts, but around 100 volunteers have signed up to help the experts, demonstrating their devotion to the beloved monarch.

Thailand's military government has allocated 1 billion baht (\$28.6 million) for the funeral of Bhumibol, who died October 13 at age 88 after seven decades on the throne.

Bhumibol's funeral is scheduled for this October in a ceremony that will take place over several days. A huge crematorium is being erected at Sanam Luang, a large field close to the Grand Palace that is a traditional public gathering space.

Thailand's last royal funeral was held at the same place in 2008, when Buddhist and Hindu rites were held for the king's sister, princess Galyani Vadhana.

The scene was unforgettable as crimson-clad soldiers pulled a gilded chariot containing the body of the princess to a seven-story funeral pyre. More than 2,000 soldiers in dress uniform marched alongside in a slow procession that included rows of drummers, trumpeters, and conch-blowers.

Several such golden chariots are in the royal inventory, including one around 38 feet tall with a pinnacle at the top symbolizing the ascent to heaven that will bear the king's body



this year.

Supaporn Saiprasith, a Department of Fine Arts official supervising 50 volunteers who are refinishing artifacts, said she has to make sure the royal chariot looks as if it was just made, "to make sure it is restored well enough to suit the honor of our late king."

"The people who come here, their hearts are in it 100 percent," she said of her team. "They come to help without any sort of compensation from us."

Other items being worked on include larger-than-life-sized sculptures and decorations that use traditional embroidery techniques.

Assadayuth Yooyen, a Thai volunteer sculptor, said eight sculptures will surround the main golden chariot, each around 6.6 feet tall. The funeral proceedings will include around 100 other smaller sculptures that depict images from Thai mythology and former kings and other figures.

"I am very happy and proud that I can be a part of this," said Kasideth Choodam, 19, a student volunteer from the Golden Jubilee Royal Goldsmith College, who is an expert at embossing. "I have the skills, so I wanted to help."

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Units per U.S. dollar as of 4/28

Bangladesh Taka	83.214
Cambodian Riel	4029.7
China Renminbi	6.8935
Fijian Dollar	2.0866
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7784
Indian Rupee	64.246
Indonesian Rupiah	13329
Iranian Rial	32399
Japanese Yen	111.49
Laos New Kip	8237.9
Malaysian Ringgit	4.341
Nepal Rupee	102.93
Pakistani Rupee	104.75
Papua N.G. Kina	3.2021
Philippine Peso	50.105
Russian Ruble	56.928
Saudi Riyal	3.7501
Singapore Dollar	1.397
South Korean Won	1137.7
Sri Lankan Rupee	152.5
Taiwan Dollar	30.21
Thai Baht	34.591
Vietnam Dong	22775