



ASIAN DOMINATION. The Ladies Professional Golf Association season began with Lydia Ko (pictured) at number one in the Rolex Rankings, after just missing winning the top spot for the second-straight year in 2016. In this photo, Ko is seen hitting an approach shot along the 12th fairway during the first round of the U.S. Women's Open Golf tournament in Bedminster, New Jersey. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

Young Asian golfers take turns atop LPGA

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Jutanugarn, however, has completely lost her groove, in part due to a flare-up of an old injury. In the tournament following the Meijer LPGA Classic, she missed the cut at the PGA Championship after shooting a poor 77 on the first day. She shot a 78 at the Thornberry Creek LPGA Classic a week later, then withdrew because her right shoulder was bothering her.

This was the same shoulder Jutanugarn had surgery on in 2013 to fix a torn labrum. It undoubtedly contributed to her missing the cut at the U.S. Women's Open after again opening with a disastrous round — this time a 79 — and following it up with a 72. She is currently in third in the Rolex Rankings, just a whisker away from Jutanugarn and American Lexi Thompson. Along with Canada's Brooke Henderson, Thompson is one of just two non-Asian golfers in the Top Ten.

These two, along with the other top-ten golfers, will continue to put pressure on Ryu. In addition to Jutanugarn, Ryu, and Ko, the top-ten Asian group includes four South Koreans — Sung Hyun Park, In Gee Chun, Inbee Park, and Amy Yang — along with China's Shanshan Feng.

All of these Asian golfers are formidable forces; each has won at least one event this season except for Chun, who has merely come close, with four second-place finishes. And there's more Asian talent behind them: 16 of the top 25 golfers have Asian roots.

As the east continues to dominate the women's tour, Asian sports fans can look forward to more dramatic battles, whether it's last season's down-to-the-wire finish or this season's Asian triumvirate atop the Rolex Rankings. And golf fans from all nations can appreciate the skill, passion, and drive for excellence these women bring to the game.

Nepal woodcarvers inspired to restore quake-toppled temples

By Niranjana Shrestha
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — In the rubble of Nepal's 2015 earthquake, a team of dedicated woodworkers is finding inspiration to re-create what was lost.

Centuries-old Char Narayan and Hari Shankara temples were completely destroyed by the massive April 2015 earthquake that shook the Himalayan nation, killing nearly 9,000 people. The temples were the jewel of Patan Durbar Square, which is thronged by thousands of tourists and local visitors every day. The structures were crumpled by the force of the tremor and the carved doors, roof, and brick lie in ruins.

A team of dedicated woodworkers is now trying to restore Nepal's heritage. They have been working six days a week for nearly two years, repairing the beautifully handcarved wooden doors and windows.

The broken wooden beams are being replaced by new ones, but the workers are trying to use the salvaged portions as much as possible.

The "Silpakars" — as woodworkers from the Newar ethnic community are known — have passed down their craft and skills for generations.

"I am proud to continue my

Myanmar says no crimes against humanity in Rakhine violence

By Esther Htusan
The Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar — The Myanmar government's inquiry into violence in northern Rakhine state last year that forced tens of thousands of Muslim Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh and led to U.N. accusations of crimes against humanity by the army has concluded that no such crimes happened.

Speaking at the release of the Rakhine Investigative Commission's final report, vice president Myint Swe — a former general — told reporters "there is no evidence of crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



LABOR OF LOVE. A woodworker from the Newar ethnic community carves wood in Lalitpur, Nepal. In the rubble of Nepal's 2015 earthquake, a team of dedicated woodworkers is finding inspiration to re-create what was lost. They have been working for nearly two years repairing the beautifully handcarved wooden doors and windows. (AP Photo/Niranjana Shrestha)

ancestral trade and help restore a big part of Nepal's history that was destroyed by the earthquake," said Shyam Krishna, chiselling away the wood pieces.

He and his fellow workers are paid only about \$15 a day each, which is much less than they would earn as building furnishers.

"It is not about the money. We might make less money, but this is a moment of pride for us to be able to restore the heritage of our country,"

claimed."

He also denied charges that there had been gang rapes by the military as it swept through Rohingya villages in a security clearance operation. The army was reacting to deadly attacks against border police posts by a previously unknown insurgent group in October 2016 in the Maungdaw area of Rakhine.

The commission's report did accept that some things might have happened that broke the law, attributing it to excessive action on the part of individual members of the security forces.

Rights groups have previously expressed their doubts over the commission's work, saying it lacked outside experts, had poor research methodologies, and lacked credibility because it was not independent.

The U.N. has mandated its own fact-finding mission to travel to the Maungdaw area to conduct its own

he said.

Already two years at work, they will likely need another year to just get the windows, doors, and beams ready.

Nepal faces criticism from the international community for slow progress in reconstruction work despite a \$4.1 billion international pledge, and the low priority it has given to restoration of heritage sites.

Associated Press writer Binaj Gurubacharya contributed to this report.

inquiry, but the government has said its members will not be allowed to go.

Zaw Myint Pe, a senior member of the government commission, said the report released in early February by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which included accusations of rights abuses by security forces, failed to take into consideration violent acts committed by Muslim groups.

"The report does not contain forward-looking constructive recommendations but instead accuses Myanmar of committing genocide and ethnic cleansing by killing Muslims and it is terribly affecting our country's image," said Zaw Myint Pe.

The government has shut down northern Rakhine, where the allegations of right abuses are ongoing, to independent journalists, rights experts, and humanitarian workers for almost nine months. The security forces launched an aggressive clearance operation in Rakhine in October 2016 after shadowy insurgents killed nine border guard police officers.

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