



**Woman mayor protests sumo sexism in off-ring speech**

TOKYO (AP) — A woman mayor in western Japan has protested sumo’s male-only tradition in a speech she was forced to make outside of the ring — unlike her male counterparts who were allowed in. Takarazuka City mayor Tomoko Nakagawa said she is frustrated and pained by the sexist tradition. In sumo’s tradition, the ring is considered sacred and women are prohibited from entering. Sumo officials cited their male-only tradition when they rejected Nakagawa’s request to speak in the ring. The Japan Sumo Association also caused an uproar this month after asking women first responders to leave the ring while attempting to revive an official who collapsed at an event in Kyoto. They then apologized over the incident. Top government officials asked the association for flexibility.

**Groups say Facebook hasn’t controlled hate speech**

BANGKOK (AP) — Civil society and rights groups in Myanmar say Facebook has failed to adequately act against online hate speech that incites violence against the country’s Muslim minority. Phandeeay, a digital innovation lab, and five other groups wrote an open letter to Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, challenging his contention in a recent interview that the social-media platform had effectively combatted hate speech targeting the Rohingya community that’s being persecuted in western Myanmar. Htaike Htaike Aung, executive director of one of the groups, Myanmar ICT for Development Organization, says Facebook has been a useful tool for people in Myanmar to exercise freedom of expression, but it had failed to effectively enforce rules to make it a safe community for all.

**Singapore court imposes hefty fines for Airbnb rentals**

SINGAPORE (AP) — A court in Singapore has fined two men 60,000 Singapore dollars (\$45,800) each for breaching laws banning short-term rentals by renting out condominiums through online services such as Airbnb, Craigslist, and HomeAway. Terence Tan En Wei and Yao Songlaing pleaded guilty at State Court in February to four charges of illegally renting out four units last year, in the first case of its kind in the Southeast Asian island nation. Defense lawyer Wong Soo Chih said prosecutors requested a fine of 20,000 Singapore dollars (\$15,267) per charge, but the judge set it at 15,000 Singapore dollars (\$11,450) per charge. Airbnb said in a statement after the sentencing that it will work with Singapore authorities to allow the fair use of home sharing.

**Indonesia’s Aceh to take caning indoors after backlash**

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia’s conservative Aceh province says it will no longer allow canings for violations of Shariah law to be carried out in public, apparently in response to international condemnation of the caning last year of two men for gay sex. A memorandum of understanding signed by Aceh Gov. Irwandi Yusuf and Yuspahrudin, head of the provincial Law and Human Rights office, stipulates that caning can only take place inside prisons or other places of detention. It says adults can still witness the punishment, but the numbers will be much smaller than the hundreds who regularly cheered the outdoor proceedings. Hundreds of people have been publicly caned since it was introduced as a punishment in Aceh in 2005. Aceh is the only province in Muslim-majority Indonesia that practices Shariah law.

**Thais help boat with presumed Rohingya refugees**

BANGKOK (AP) — A boat with 56 people claiming to be Muslim Rohingya refugees from Myanmar was helped back to sea by Thai fishermen and navy craft after being damaged in a storm and stopping temporarily in southern Thailand. An official in Thailand’s Krabi province said those aboard were seeking to go to Malaysia when their boat was damaged. He said Thai villagers supplied them with food and fuel before sending them on their way. Rohingya, treated as undesirables in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, flee by sea by the thousands each year. The numbers peaked in 2015, sparking a crackdown on their escape route. About 700,000 have fled western Myanmar.

**43 Cambodians convicted of felonies repatriated from U.S.**

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) — Forty-three Cambodians arrived in Phnom Penh, Cambodia’s capital, after being deported from the United States under a law allowing the repatriation of immigrants who have committed felony crimes and have not become U.S. citizens. The group is the largest to be sent to Cambodia under a 2002 bilateral agreement. More than 500 other Cambodians have already been repatriated. The program is controversial because it breaks up families, and in some cases, the returnees have never lived in Cambodia, having been the children of refugees who fled to camps in Thailand to escape the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime that ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1979. Critics of the deportation policy say many of those convicted fell into crime as a result of social dislocation. The returnees are seen as having difficulty reintegrating into Cambodian society because many have spent most of their lives in the United States. Two Cambodian ex-convicts on March 30 received pardons from California governor Jerry Brown, at least temporarily removing the risk they might be deported. Gen. Dim Ra, a senior immigration police officer overseeing the returnees, said the group that arrived included three women. He said any returnees who still have family members in Cambodia will live with their relatives, and those who do not will receive vocational training by a private group funded by the U.S. government before being integrated into Cambodian society. The deportation policy has hurt already cool relations between Cambodia and the United States.



**SUPER SUMMITER.** Veteran Nepalese Sherpa guide Kami Rita, left, receives a Khada, or ceremonial scarf, before leaving to the airport in Kathmandu, Nepal. Rita is attempting a record-breaking 22nd summit of Mount Everest. (AP Photo/Niranjana Shrestha)

**Sherpa guide tries to reach top of the world for 22nd time**

By Binaj Gurubacharya  
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Three men have climbed to the top of the world 21 times, all of them mountain guides who grew up in the shadow of Mount Everest. Two of these famed Sherpa guides have retired. But 48-year-old Kami Rita says he’ll be summiting Everest for years to come.

“My goal is to reach the summit of Everest at least 25 times,” he told The Associated Press in Kathmandu, Nepal’s capital, shortly before heading back to the mountain for what he hopes will mark a record-breaking climb. “I want to set a new record not just for myself, but for my family, the Sherpa people, and for my country, Nepal.”

For Rita, climbing is a family tradition. His father was among the first professional guides after Nepal opened to foreign trekkers and mountaineers in 1950. His brother has scaled Everest 17 times. Most of his male relatives have reached the top at least once.

He decided to become a guide when he was a child. “Growing up in the village I envied the good clothes and things that people in the village brought back after expeditions,” he said.

He first scaled the 29,035-foot Everest at age 24, and has made the trip almost every year since then. He has also climbed many of the region’s other high peaks, including K-2, Cho-Oyu, Manaslu, and Lhotse. In the autumn, he guides clients to smaller peaks in Nepal.

As a veteran guide, he earns about \$10,000 for each Everest climb, an enormous income in a country where most people earn just \$700 or so per year.

Life had changed for many Sherpa families since 1950. Yak herders and traders who lived in the Himalayan foothills, the Sherpas’ knowledge of the mountains and stamina built over years of walking high-altitude trails made them ideal guides.

The other two summit record-holders are also Sherpas. Apa, a 58-year-old guide who uses only one name, retired in 2011 and moved to Utah. Phurba Tashi, 47, retired from high-altitude climbing in 2013 but still works at Everest’s Base Camp, helping organize expeditions.

It is not an easy life. “There are many risks in climbing, which is always unpredictable and dangerous. But I have had to keep doing this because I don’t know anything else,” Rita said. Some of the hardest moments for him came when he lost friends in mountaineering accidents.

He was at Base Camp when an avalanche struck in 2014, killing 16 Sherpa guides, including five from his team. The next year, an earthquake triggered another avalanche that ripped through Base Camp, killing 19 people. He escaped only because his team’s tents were set up that year on the far side of Base Camp.

Sherpa guides now have better insurance coverage, and the Nepal government has begun issuing certificates for successful climbs to guides too.

“Now we have proof to show our clients of the climbs we have achieved, which helps us,” he said.

In many ways, he says, climbing has become safer in the three decades he’s been working in the mountains, with better equipment and complex weather forecasting to warn of the mountain’s deadly storms.

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Fijian Dollar	2.03
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8499
Indian Rupee	62.215
Indonesian Rupiah	13755
Iranian Rial	42015
Japanese Yen	107.35
Laos New Kip	8291.7
Malaysian Ringgit	3.8798
Nepal Rupee	104.52
Pakistani Rupee	115.6
Papua N.G. Kina	3.2356
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