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House bill seeks to impose

Hiring moratorium

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff

CITING economic and political difficulties involved in the increasing size of the CNMI's alien workforce, Rep. Maria T. Peter (Ind.-Saipan) has filed a bill that would impose a 12-month moratorium on the hiring of alien workers "in all areas."

House Bill 11-31 was among the 38 measures introduced during the first session of the 11th House of Representatives, which also saw the refiling of legislation that would limit alien workers to a four-year stay in the CNMI.

Co-sponsored by Reps. Jose A. Hocog (D-Tinian), Max L. Olopai (D-Saipan) and Heinz S. Hofschneider (R-Saipan), H.B. 11-31 would affect the hiring of alien workers "of all skills and levels of occupation."

The bill states that the current situation needs to be stabilized, noting the concerns raised by Washington, D.C. over the islands' labor and immigration poli-

cies.

A one-year moratorium, according to the bill, "will provide the community leaders with the time necessary for reflection and assessment of our labor needs as well as relieve some of the social and economic strain posed by a large non-citizen population...."

The bill, which will now likely head to the House Labor and Immigration Committee for review, will take effect immediately upon becoming law.

Meanwhile, House Majority Leader Ana S. Teregeyo (R-Saipan) has reintroduced her bill that seeks to limit alien workers to a four-year maximum stay in the CNMI.

H.B. 11-19, however, exempts professionals, executives or senior management positions from the stay limit.

A similar measure filed in the 10th Legislature cleared the House of Representatives, but ended up in a Senate-House conference

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ANTI-UNION. Anti-union protesters, displaying their placards, mob a group of Local 5 representatives which picketed Hyatt Regency Hotel during an election held last Friday.
Photo by Laila Younis

Union loses in Hyatt poll

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

LOCAL 5 yesterday vowed to "keep the ball rolling" despite a telling blow it suffered on Friday's election at the Hyatt Regency Hotel where workers voted 233 to 47 against the union.

The election, the sixth in a row reportedly lost by Local 5, Hyatt officials said, should "send a strong message that employees... do not want nor need

a union interfering with their relationship with management."

However, Local 5 officials maintain the Hyatt management only succeeded in cowering the workers into voting against them by threatening not to renew their employment contracts should the union wins.

"That is why we have observed that no one from among the Hyatt workers have been encouraged enough to vote for the union," said Local 5 spokesperson, Vic

Perez.

"We now have to keep the ball rolling. I am still here. I will be working on this," he vowed.

Perez said he has received threats about his entry permit not being renewed because of his union-related activities.

Local 5 officials said they will assess the situation and study if it will be possible to lodge complaints.

At least two groups of dem-
Continued on page 8

Palmer ordered arrested

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff

THE SUPERIOR Court has ordered the Department of Public Safety to arrest Tinian Gaming Commission Executive Director Paul T. Palmer for ignoring a hearing over a pending criminal case filed against him.

Associate Judge Edward Manibusan in a bench warrant issued Wednesday asked DPS to bring Palmer "without any unnecessary delay" before the court.

As of press time, no information was available yet whether the police already served the warrant.

Manibusan said Palmer failed to appear in last Tuesday's scheduled hearing.

"This warrant shall be executed at anytime. Bail is set at \$1,000 cash," said the judge in the order.

Police arrested Palmer last October for allegedly beating his wife at their residence in Dandan.

The Attorney General's Office charged the defendant with assault and another count of assault and battery.

Court document showed that the victim was sleeping when Palmer arrived at their house.

Palmer poured beer at his wife and threw the beer can at her, documents stated.

PAC NEWSPAPER STACKS



Paul T. Palmer

Court records said the defendant then slapped his wife on the face.

The court initially set a \$5,000 cash bail for Palmer's temporary release.

Palmer, however, requested the court to modify the bail, prompting Manibusan to free him on \$5,000 unsecured bond.

"Unsecured bond" means Palmer will pay the bail only if he violates court order.

Palmer, through counsel Tred Eyerly, pleaded innocent to the charges last December.

The Senate found Palmer in contempt for failing to show up during an oversight hearing on the alleged irregularities in the operations of the Tinian casino gaming commission.

Former vice speaker, L&T sued

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff

FORMER House Vice Speaker Luis C. Benavente's estranged wife is suing him and L&T International Corporation to block the sale of parcels of land they allegedly acquired during their marriage.

Katherine S. Benavente asked the Superior Court to order Luis and L&T to pay \$250,000 in punitive damages and compensatory damages in an amount to be proven at trial for rents collected from tenants on the lands in question.

Katherine, through counsel Pamela Brown, sought the court's order voiding any agreements entered between Luis and L&T

regarding the lands.

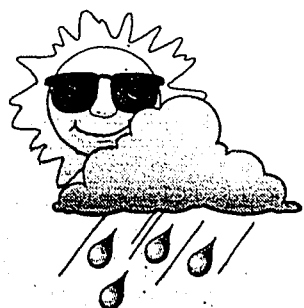
According to the complaint filed on Friday, Luis and L&T entered into agreements which have been ruled to be a mortgage purported to be secured by Luis' rights, title, and interest in the parcels of land to secure the payment of a loan from L&T to Luis for \$600,000.

The lots 010 D 23 (697 square meters) and 010 D 22 (697 square meters) were purchased by Luis and Katherine during the course of their marriage but managed exclusively by Luis, said Brown in the complaint.

Brown said neither Luis nor L&T ever sought or obtained the consent of Katherine regarding either the mortgage agreement

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WEATHER Outlook



Mostly sunny
with isolated
showers

The papal visit to Cuba

Bluntest message yet

'Release prisoners'

By VICTOR L. SIMPSON
HAVANA (AP) - Pope John Paul II, in the bluntest papal messages yet of his historic Cuban visit, called for the release of "prisoners of conscience" and respect for freedom of expression, initiative and association.

He got support from a bold Cuban bishop in the eastern city of Santiago, where the pope spoke Saturday at a morning open-air Mass.

Addressing tens of thousands of faithful, Santiago's Archbishop Pedro Meurice Estiu said too many Cubans "have confused patriotism with a party," that is, the Communists.

The Communists were there to hear the churchmen's reproachful words. In the front "pew" of chairs sat a group of officials led by President Fidel Castro's powerful brother Raul, Cuba's defense minister.

But the Castro government had no immediate official response to their statements.

The pontiff's appeal on behalf

of political prisoners came later Saturday, during a dramatic evening pilgrimage to a hallowed Cuban shrine for the sick - the leprosarium and religious center of St. Lazarus, outside Havana, where he spoke to health workers, lepers and AIDS patients.

"Suffering is not only physical," said the 77-year-old pontiff, himself impaired by a variety of ailments and injuries.

"There is also suffering of the soul, such as we see in those who are isolated, persecuted, imprisoned for various offenses or for reasons of conscience, for ideas which though dissident are nonetheless peaceful."

He said he encouraged efforts to return these "prisoners of conscience" to society.

It would be "a gesture which honors the authority promoting it," John Paul said.

Human rights groups say Cuba holds at least 500 political prisoners. On Thursday, the second day of the pope's five-day visit, Vatican officials asked for clem-

ency on behalf of several hundred Cuban prisoners, both political detainees and common criminals.

Cuban officials said they would consider that request. The Vatican did not release the list of names or specify the number.

"We have a lot of faith that the Holy Father's request will be welcomed by Castro. We are very anxious for his response," said Magali de Armas, wife of Vladimiro Roca, the detained head of the Cuban Social Democratic Party.

Roca was arrested in July on charges of distributing enemy propaganda after publishing a manifesto entitled, "The fatherland is for everyone," in which he suggested changes in government.

"I can't express my feelings," an emotional Gisela Delgado said after learning of the pope's appeal. Her husband, Hector Palacios, head of the group Democratic Solidarity, has been imprisoned since January 1997.



Pope John Paul II is kissed on the hand by a patient at a small hospital converted into a sanctuary for victims of AIDS and leprosy on Saturday, at El Rincon, some 18 miles outside Havana, Cuba. The pope met with 100 leprosy and AIDS patients and about 50 nursing nuns, doctors and others at the St. Lazarus Sanctuary, a leprosarium. AP

Excerpts from John Paul II's remarks at leprosy center

HAVANA (AP) - Excerpts from the official Vatican translation of Pope John Paul II's remarks at a center for leprosy patients, delivered in Spanish on Saturday: "I am aware of the great efforts being made in Cuba in the field of health care, despite the economic constraints which the country is enduring."

"Suffering is not only physical. There is also suffering of the soul, such as we see in those who are isolated, persecuted, imprisoned for various offenses or for reasons of conscience, for ideas which though dissent are nonetheless peaceful. These prisoners of conscience suffer an isolation and a penalty for something for

which their own conscience does not condemn them. What they want is to participate actively in life with the opportunity to speak their mind with respect and tolerance. I encourage efforts to reinsert prisoners into society. This is a gesture of high humanity and a seed of reconciliation, a gesture which honors the authority promoting it and strengthens social harmony in the country."

"... Pastoral work in the field of health care and prison ministry must be given the opportunity to perform its mission of service to the infirm, the imprisoned and their families."

(See story on page 12)

140-yr.-old Malaysian is oldest living man

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — A Malaysian record book due out later this year will feature a man said to be 140-years old, more than two decades older than the woman currently designated as the world's oldest living person.

The book says that while the Malaysian man, Omar Abas, does not have a birth certificate, the registration department where he lives has confirmed his birth date was Sept. 26, 1857, according to a report in Thursday's New Straits Times newspaper.

That would make Omar older than Canadian Marie-Louise Febronie Meilleur, 117, who was deemed the world's oldest person after France's Jeanne Louise Calment died last August at age 122. "As long as his age is certified by the (registration) department, Malaysia Book of Records accepts this as proof of his age," said Irene Liong, spokeswoman for the record book.

Registration department director Wahab Mohd Yasin was quoted in the newspaper report as saying Malaysian citizens were not issued birth certificates until June of 1926. Residents born before then were given ration cards which recorded their particulars.

Wahab said Omar's birth date was transferred from his ration card to a plastic identification card in 1966, when identity cards became mandatory for residents without birth certificates.

Omar, who says he will turn 141 on September 26, has 23 grandchildren, 73 great grandchildren and says the secret to longevity is proper diet and exercise, the paper said.

He married in his late sixties and lives with his 96-year-old wife, Minah.

Suicide bombers attack Sri Lankan temple town

By DILIP GANGULY
COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) - Separatists suicide bombers attacked the western temple town of Kandy early Sunday, leaving at least eight people dead, police said.

Prince Charles of Britain is scheduled to attend Sri Lanka's 50th anniversary celebrations on Feb. 4 in Kandy, the ancient capital of the Sinhalese kingdom. Kandy is 115 kilometers (70 miles) west of Colombo, the modern capital of this Indian Ocean island nation.

"This desperate terrorist attack will not alter in any manner the plans for the government and the people of Sri Lanka to celebrate the 50th anniversary of independence as scheduled in the historic city of Kandy," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Police, speaking on condition of anonymity, said two or three rebels drove a bomb-laden truck into central Kandy and set it off. The rebels were among the eight dead, police said.

There was no claim of respon-

sibility. Suicide truck bombings are a hallmark of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the main group fighting for a separate Tamil homeland on this Indian Ocean island.

At least 20 other people, including a Buddhist monk, were injured in the 6 a.m. attack, hospital officials said on condition of anonymity. Witnesses heard two explosions in downtown Kandy, both near a major Buddhist temple and a cluster of hotels. Buddhists believe a relic of Buddha, a tooth, is kept at the temple.

"I visited the place at 7.30 a.m. and saw a crater," said Ajith De Alwis, a resident reached by telephone. "People there told me that they had seen a truck coming and moment later (it) exploded with a huge bang."

The militants among Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamils accuse the majority Sinhalese, who are Buddhists, of sometimes brutal discrimination against the Tamil minority, who are Hindus.

Over 51,000 people have been killed since the separatist war broke out in 1983.

Snows strand 200,000

BEIJING (AP) - Unusually heavy snows along sections of the railroad between Beijing and the southern city of Guangzhou have left some 200,000 travellers stranded just as the lunar new year's rush reaches its peak, an official report said Sunday.

The Railway Ministry deployed an extra 20 trains to help carry passengers stranded at Guangzhou station due to delays caused by snow further north in central Hunan province, the Xinhua News Agency said.

The snow forced trains to travel at only 20 kilometers (12 miles) an hour rather than the usual 100 kilometers (62 miles per hour). Some travel-

ers were choosing to travel by train rather than bus due to the weather, further straining the railroad's capacity.

The report did not provide details on how much snow had fallen.

It said the Yangcheng Railway Corp., which runs the line, expected to be able to get all those stranded out of the Guangzhou station by Monday, two days before the Jan. 28 new year holiday.

Many Chinese chose to return to their family homes for the lunar new year, their most important holiday. This year, railroad officials have predicted 139.3 million travellers during the holiday season.

Palmer resigns from casino commission

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff

PAUL PALMER has resigned as executive director of the Tinian Casino and Gaming Control Commission, but Sen. David M. Cing (D-Tinian) on Friday said he's still not "off the hook."

In his Jan. 16 letter to TCGCC members, Palmer said he "deeply regrets" having to resign, adding that his decision would be in the commission's best interests.

He then blamed the Cing-led Senate probe of TCGCC, the CNMI government, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and

the media for "marring" and "degrading" the commission through "speculations and accusations."

"All...apparently do not understand the importance of the autonomous and confidential nature that must be preserved in (TCGCC)," said Palmer, who is now facing contempt charges after he again failed to show up before the Senate investigating committee chaired by Cing.

Palmer said he has always instilled "pride, dignity, integrity, honesty and responsibility" into TCGCC, but added that he has also been "falsely accused of ir-



Paul Palmer

regularities and alleged wrongdoings because of my protectionism of our rights to operate as an autonomous and confidential organization."

He described the TCGCC members he worked with as "wonderful" individuals, saying that his resignation "should take away some of the unwarranted and antagonizing pressures and burdens (that resulted from) past government and news media actions to discredit our organization."

According to Cing, however, the Senate is still after Palmer.

"We just adopted a resolution

banning anyone found in contempt of the Legislature from getting employed by the Legislature," Cing said.

He did not elaborate, but Variety sources said the resolution was to ensure that none of the other Tinian legislators—Sens. Herman M. Manglona (Unity), Joaquin G. Adriano (Unity) and Rep. Jose A. Hocog (D)—could hire Palmer.

As mayor, it was Manglona who appointed the members of TCGCC now under Senate investigation due to the commission's

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DFW says CNMI waters are getting warmer

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

LEANER fishing months lie ahead as waters off the Commonwealth continue to get warmer due to the El Niño weather phenomenon, according to the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Citing data culled by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, Richard Seman, acting DFW Director, in an interview, said temperature of the waters surrounding the islands has gradually been increasing since late last year.

This, he said, is causing difficulties to fishermen as well as a "slightly unusual experience" to beach lovers who may find the water warm even at 9:00 in the evening.

"The water is getting warmer. That's what we know as of now," said Seman.

Warm ocean surface water, he explained, gives fishes little time to be within striking reach of fishermen.

"They (fishes) would expectedly stay deeper or even farther away where the water is cooler," said Seman.

Seman, it will be recalled, has earlier raised the alarm on what he called as the dwindling commercial fish catch brought about by El Niño.

CNMI's yearly commercial fish catch is pegged at 400,000 lbs, all consumed locally.

The figure, noted Seman, is a conservative estimate since a lot of island residents "also go out there (at the sea) and catch fish for their meal."

With El Niño creeping by, Seman said this year's fish catch may only reach 200,000 lbs.

"We may not be having enough fishes. This could be a bad year for fishermen," said Seman.

An El Niño occurs when the westward trade winds blowing across the tropical Pacific Ocean weaken, scientists say.

This, according to them, allows a mass of warm water that the wind normally pushes toward Australia to move eastward toward

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DOLI on the lookout for 7 illegal aliens

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Immigration has ordered a "man-hunt" for seven overstaying aliens after the court issued a default judgement on their immediate deportation last week, it was learned.

This developed as five overstaying male Thai nationals gave themselves up to authorities on Friday while two Filipino nationals — a male and a female — have been arrested.

Two other foreigners are now under detention pending their deportation.

The arrests and surrender have brought the total number of foreigners, mostly Filipinos, found overstaying in the Commonwealth to 16 this month.

In an interview, JOHN Taitano, Special Agent for DOLI's Immigration Enforcement Unit, refused to identify the seven overstayers — four

Filipinos and three Chinese — for fear of jeopardizing the search.

"They (overstayers) did not appear in court and a judgement was issued in their absence," said Taitano.

"The order is for them to be arrested and deported as soon as possible," he added.

Meanwhile, the two Filipino nationals were nabbed in their Dandan homestead residence reportedly following a tip off from unnamed sources.

The two sentry permits, according to Taitano, expired in 1993. They have managed to earn a living by taking on odd jobs.

"They (two overstayers) go from house to house," said Taitano.

The two were arrested Wednesday night.

They did not resist arrest.

For their part, Taitano said the five Thai nationals gave themselves up

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Court clears Finance dep't

By Ferdie de la Torre
Variety News Staff

THE SUPERIOR Court has cleared the Department of Finance from liability in a lawsuit over alleged fraud involving a poker business deal.

Associate Judge Timothy Bellas in an order issued Thursday dismissed Finance from the suit with prejudice for following court's order.

Businesswoman Jin Ja Song sued a businessman, NMI Star Corp., Finance, and two other businessmen seeking to collect \$819,190 in damages.

Song in the complaint said the defendants, except Finance, con-

victed her to form a corporation to conduct a gambling business within CNMI.

When Song asked to take back her money, she was removed from the company.

Song included Finance in the suit only to prevent the agency from disbursing \$270,000 to any of the defendants.

Finance, through Assistant Atty. Gen. Mary P. Williamson, filed a counterclaim asking the court to discharge the agency from all liability in the suit.

Bellas said following Nov. 14, 1997 hearing the court ordered Finance to interplead the sum of

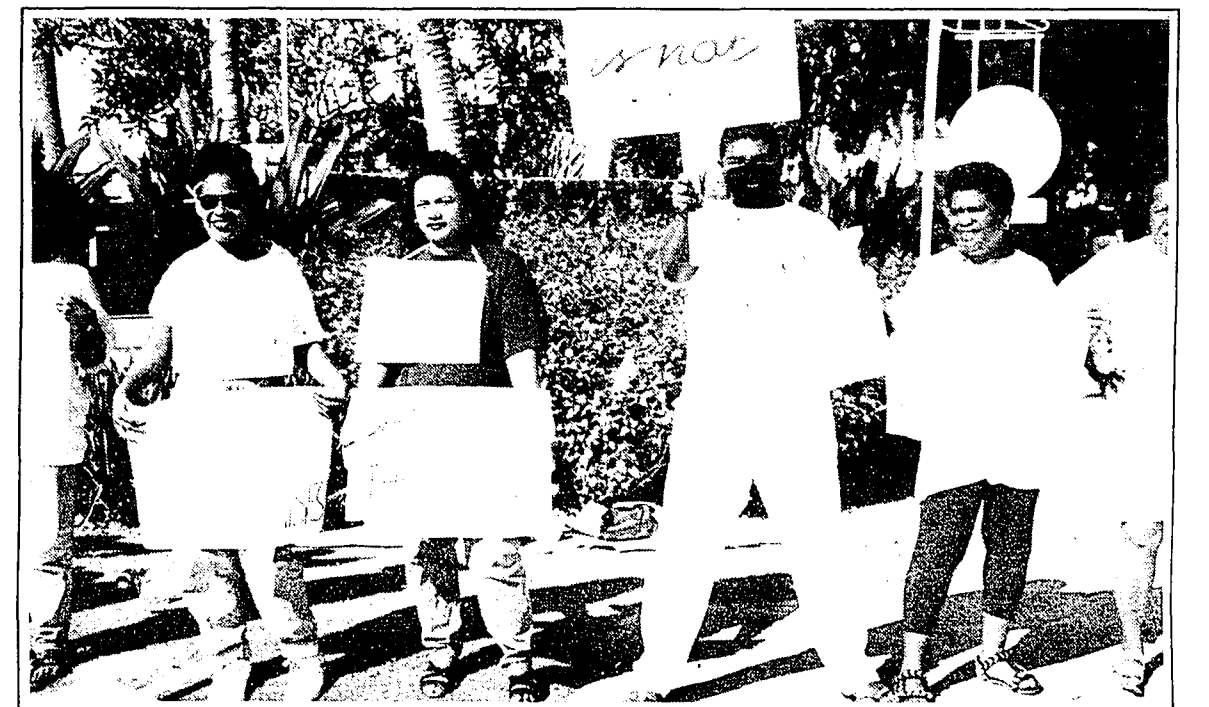
\$200,257 into the court's registry by Dec. 31, 1997.

"The Court having received the deposit into its registry on Dec. 31, 1997, the sum of \$200,257, representing the refund of poker machine license fees paid by the defendant NMI Star and pursuant to the stipulated order of Dec. 16, 1997 and good cause appearing, order that Finance is dismissed from this action with prejudice," he said.

By "dismiss with prejudice" means the plaintiff could no longer reopen the case against Finance.

Bellas said plaintiff and Finance shall bear their own costs and attorneys' fees.

Union expected to have better chances in Dai-Ichi election



No to Union. Hyatt employees and demonstrators wave signs and posters against Local 5 at the entrance of Hyatt Regency Hotel during union elections last Friday.

Photo by Laila C. Younis

By Jojo Dass
Variety News Staff

UNLIKE at the Hyatt Regency Hotel where it suffered a humiliating defeat, the picture looks better for Local 5 at the upcoming Dai Ichi Hotel union election as "there are no anti-union elements there," a spokesperson for the establishment's employees said on Friday.

"The trend looks good for now," said Ernie Coronejo, a Dai Ichi employee helping Local 5 organize a union among the hotel's nearly 300 workers.

"We don't have groups oppos-

ing the union at Dai Ichi," he added.

Coronejo refused to provide an outlook for the Feb. 5 election. An estimated 276 employees including at least two supervisors will participate in the election.

He maintained though that "things look better" at Dai Ichi.

"We try to educate the employees on the importance of having a union. We try our best," he said.

Coronejo said obstacles in organizing a union vary from one establishment to another.

He conceded though that work-

ers who receive better benefits tend to be more difficult to persuade citing Hyatt Regent Hotel as an example.

Local 5 suffered a blow in its union organizing activities on Saipan Last Friday after Hyatt employees voted 233 to 47 against the union (see related story).

Variety has repeatedly tried but failed to reach Kinoshita Izumi, Dai Ichi Hotel General Manager and other official for comments on the scheduled election.

Likewise, Ronald Sablan, President of Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands

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Senate overrides pay hike veto

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff
THE ELEVENTH Senate, in its first session Friday, passed the Legislature's \$5.3 million "piecemeal" budget for the current fiscal year, and voted 7 to 1 with 1 abstention to override then governor Froilan C. Tenorio's veto of the pay hike bill for the CNMI's elected officials.

Senate Majority Leader Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan) cast the lone dissenting vote, while Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota) abstained.

[A congressman, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a similar motion for a veto override will be made in the next House session.]

The Senate also completed the veto override process on H.B. 10-428, which seeks to prevent wastewater manholes on Saipan from overflowing.

The bill, which would require all garment factories, hotels and restaurants to install bar screens within their sewer laterals, is now law.

Meanwhile, House Bill 11-37, which was passed by the House of Representatives Wednesday and includes funding for the legislative bureau, now goes to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, who has said he will sign the piecemeal budget into law.

But the House, during its session Wednesday, did not take up the veto override on H.B. 10-308 due to concerns by the House legal that it would only lead to lengthy litigation.

The bill was enacted by the 10th Legislature before it adjourned *sine die*, and was quickly vetoed by then outgoing governor Tenorio who lashed out at the legislators for "not having the guts" to pass it before the general elections last November.

There are legal questions involved in the legislators' acting on a bill passed by their predecessors.

Moreover, even if the 11th Legislature could override the veto, the pay hike would not take effect during the term of the legislators who enacted it, and some may

argue that this prohibition could extend to the term of the incumbent governor.

According to the Senate's legal counsel, however, the legislators could argue that the pay hike bill was enacted by the 10th Legislature, and therefore could apply during the term of the 11th Legislature if it succeeds in a veto override.

The counsels said there are no guarantees that the Legislature could win a possible court challenge, but added that it is "worthwhile" to pursue the veto override.

"The worst thing that could happen," lawyer Steve Woodruff said, "is for the court to rule that the payhike could only apply during the term of the next Legislature."

It was Senate Vice President Thomas P. Villagomez (R-

Saipan) who moved for a veto override, saying that the governor and the other elected officials should be "fairly compensated."

At present, Villagomez said, judicial branch officials and even their staffer receive more than what the governor—the Commonwealth's highest elected official—gets.

"That's not fair," he said.

Sen. Juan P. Tenorio (R-Saipan), for his part, said the proposed salary adjustments was recommended by a commission on compensation created by the previous administration.

"Even the (previous governor) agreed that there's a need for a pay hike, and (the only reason he vetoed it) was because he didn't like the way it was (enacted)," Tenorio said.

"Anyway," he added, "the public will have the chance to

judge us (when we seek reelection)."

For Sen. David M. Cing (D-Tinian), legislators should vote for a veto override "if they feel they deserve a pay raise."

In an interview with the Variety after the session, he said the pay hike may even be "bad" for the incumbent CNMI elected officials who may seek reelection.

"With this pay hike, more intelligent individuals will be attracted to run for office," Cing said.

H.B. 10-308 would increase the governor's salary from \$70,000 to \$100,000, while the Lt. governor's and the resident representative's pay would be raised from \$60,000 to \$80,000. The mayors' \$43,200 would be "adjusted" to \$52,522, while legislators would get an \$8,000 increase—from \$39,300 to \$47,380.

Nogis returns to JTPA

By Zaldy Dandan
Variety News Staff
GOVERNOR Pedro P. Tenorio on Thursday named Felix Nogis as executive director of the Job Training Partnership Program, which is the same post he was forced to resign from last month for "disloyalty" to then governor Froilan C. Tenorio.

In his letter of appointment, the new governor said he has been made aware of Nogis's "excellent leadership" at JTPA that has "definitely been good for the Commonwealth."

Tenorio said Nogis's appointment does not require Senate confirmation and will take effect immediately.

At the same time, the governor, in a media conference Thursday, confirmed that the board members of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. (CUC) have tendered their courtesy resignation.

Tenorio added, however, that he has yet to accept any of the board members' resignation.

"I want (CUC) to continue functioning," he said.

Meanwhile, Tenorio has asked Saipan's garment manufacturers to put up an incinerator for disposing their waste materials as he reiterated his vow the close the Puerto Rico dump in the first 100 days of his administration.

The dump has already been

cited by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for posing an "environmental hazard."

In a media conference held after his meeting Thursday with Saipan's garment manufacturers, the governor also revealed that he has formed a special committee now working with EPA on the possible use of the Marpi land fill as a new dumpsite.

The governor added that some companies from the mainland United States have expressed interest in shipping out Saipan's garbage which would then be recycled into such products as car cushion.

"We're looking into it," he said.

Reyes concerned over firing of local workers

By Mar-Vic C. Munar
Variety News Staff
SENATE Majority Leader Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan) on Friday reminded foreign investors of the CNMI's local-hiring policy. Reyes issued the reminder upon getting reports that many local employees are the ones being displaced by retrenchment in some foreign companies.

The Saipan senator singled out the LSG Lufthansa Service Sky Chefs which had started terminating the services of some of its employees.

LSG Lufthansa stopped its catering services to Northwest Airlines and Korean Airlines early last year.

LSG manager Martin Reiner, in a contract-termination letter to one of its employees, Freddy



Pete P. Reyes

Songao, said the company might also discontinue its services to Continental Airlines.

These circumstances, according to Reiner, have prompted the company to reduce its staff.

The Variety tried but failed to get a comment from LSG. John Fujinaka, the company's assis-

tant manager, said only Reiner could issue an official statement for the company.

Reiner could not be reached for comment.

In an interview with reporters, Reyes said he was "concerned that the locals are the ones being fired."

"As foreign investors, they should give priority to the local people especially if they are leasing public lands," Reyes said.

The locals, Reyes added, are the ones "who own the lands that foreign investors are using for their business."

Reyes said he will write a letter to LSG Lufthansa, to be signed by the Senate leadership, to formally air the local population's sentiments.



CNMI can't do without tourism

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
THE NORTHERN Mariana Islands is not likely to do well without the tourism and garment industries, an economist said Friday.

"The Commonwealth has to do its best to enrich the leading industries it has, which are tourism and garments," Edward Stephens Jr. told the Variety.

In dealing with recession 'Business environment must stay friendly'

By Aldwin R. Fajardo
Variety News Staff
THE NORTHERN Marianas can hardly brave the economic slump brought about by a downturn in the number of tourist arrivals unless the islands' business environment remains friendly.

This was the suggestion made by an economist who has predicted a drop in the number of economic activities on the island, following the currency turmoil in the Asian region.

Economist Edward Stephens Jr. said the best thing to do during the recession period is for the CNMI administration and the policy makers to make sure that the business atmosphere remains investor-friendly.

The commerce department has been very vocal on its stand against what it claimed are "protectionist and restrictive" foreign investments law which welcome investors with many restrictions, deposits without real benefits.

Foreign investment was frozen on Saipan until 1973, and was opened in 1982 after it has become a Commonwealth of the United States and the foreign investment law was abolished.

The DOC has said that Guam, which is only about 100 miles south of Saipan, is attracting the bulk of foreign investors because of non-protectionist laws that offer benefits and incentives.

Foreign investors can get a green card and a US citizenship after five years of operations in Guam for a minimum capital of \$250,000.

Protectionist policies, according to retired Commerce chief Pedro Dela Cruz, has led to bankruptcy wherever it was tried including the United States.

At the same time, Stephens believes non-restrictive laws will entice foreign investors to set up businesses on the island which will eventually lead to a heightened economic activity.

He stressed the need to have favorable business and tax regulatory body that will help the CNMI government come up with better investments policy.

He did not elaborate. He only said the CNMI can brave the recession depending on how the policy makers react to the slump

This, even as he predicted that both industries will suffer a big blow because of the economic crisis in the Asian region brought about by the plunge in local currencies.

Stephens said hotels, restaurants, and retail stores, among other establishments related to the tourism and garments sectors will suffer during the recession.

He could not make any fore-

casts as to how long the recession would last, he only said the adverse effects of the economic slump will be likely felt "long enough."

He added that the economic slowdown in the Asian region and in the CNMI, in a longer term, will take an impact on the garments sector, explaining that the appreciation of the US currency makes it a lot cheaper to do business in countries with devalued currencies.

Stephens said the CNMI's leading industries will remain tourism and garments, citing a not-so-clear picture in the financial services sector.

"CNMI is going to concentrate on tourism and garments...industrial Asia is our market and there is an ample demand for this market," he said.

in the local and regional economies.

The commerce department has previously proposed the creation of an independent body that will work with the executive and the legislative branches of the government in drafting and approving omnibus legislation.

The independent body was originally seen to take a coordinated and enlightened positive approach to foreign investment, labor and immigration, and investment incentives for foreign, American and local businessmen.

However, Stephens also expressed confidence the Northern Marianas' economy will stabilize and grow in the long run.

Earlier, banking officials are optimistic that a healthy and sound banking industry in the Marianas will put the islands on the world's business map, considering that local banks are doing well.

Pawnshop boom
While tourism and garments industries take a back seat during the economic slowdown, pawnshops and household lending firms are expected to make a good profit.

"There will be more people who would be needing money right away, and they will definitely resort to pawnshops or household lending companies," Stephens said.

Automobile repair shops and spare parts retail stores are also anticipated to experience a tremendous growth during the recession since more people are likely to keep their cars longer.

This may be caused by massive retrenchment which comes along with the downturn in the economy. Economists have also made forecasts on the laying off of employees as a cost-cutting measures for

various industries. Some firms have reportedly started retrenchment while others resorted to shortening working hours from eight to six hours or less.

However, despite the slowdown in the tourism industry, the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands said there are no reports of retrenchment among HANMI members.

HANMI spokesperson Lynn Knight said not one among the 16 members of the hotel organization has reported any lay offs or plans to streamline the number of employees.

"Not in the large hotels. Nothing has been reported from among the (HANMI) members," Knight said when asked about unconfirmed reports of cost-cutting measures among businesses in the tourism sector.

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DOLI puts up workers' hotline

By Jojo Dass

Variety News Staff

THE GOVERNMENT'S efforts to have the estimated 200 displaced Bangladeshi workers land employment are paying off, albeit slowly.

This being the case, the Department of Labor and Immigration has put up a hotline on 664-3157 for interested employers to contact the department's officials.

About 15 of the workers, all of whom used to be employed with

guard duty firms on the island, have been temporarily hired by employers who have responded to calls made by the Department of Labor and Immigration for them to take the foreigners.

Nancy Gottfried, DOLI lawyer who publicly initiated the appeal late last month, said she is renewing efforts to have the workers land jobs.

"I really like employers to hire the workers. They only need to call," she said.

"If they are interested in hiring people who are on the island and have authorizations to work but no employer and they have a job to offer they should call the department," she added.

"I'll help them out." Initial responses to Gottfried's appeal was "frustrating," according to DOLI officials, as there were only about a weekly average of three employers coming in to inquire about the workers.

Continued on page 20

Lone DOLI lawyer gets AGO support

By Jojo Dass

Variety News Staff

THE LONE government lawyer assigned to the Department of Labor and Immigration on Friday expressed hopes the Attorney General's Office can finally as-

sign a permanent additional staff to the department's legal office.

Nancy Gottfried, in an interview, nonetheless said AGO has been providing her assistance, pulling out lawyers from its Civil and Criminal Divisions "as the

need arises." Such setup, Gottfried said, "has been making things easier" for her to handle the department's pending cases.

The bulk of these cases is composed of immigration and depor-

Health and obesity

By Aldwin R. Fajardo

Variety News Staff

IF YOU think you're "healthy" because you're fat, think again.

Health and nutrition experts are now warning of an escalating epidemic of overweight and obesity in many countries in the world, including the Northern Mariana Islands.

"If action is not taken now to stem the pandemic, millions of people will develop noncommunicable diseases and other health disorders," the World Health Organization said.

Health experts said obesity, which is now recognized as a disease in its own right, is a major determinant of many noncommunicable diseases and induces diabetes, mellitus, coronary heart disease and stroke.

The disease increases the risk of several types of cancer, gallbladder disease, musculoskeletal disorders and respiratory problems, and because these complications are particularly common in those with high abdominal circumference, experts are recommending that obesity should be used as an additional indicator for identifying noncommunicable diseases.

Recent studies have shown that overweight and obesity affect over half of the adult population in many countries. It is common in industrialized countries and is rapidly increasing in many developing countries.

Obesity prevalence among adults ranges between 10 percent to 25 percent in most countries of Western Europe and 20 percent to 25 percent in some American countries.

This figure shoots up to 40 percent among black women in the USA, and for women in eastern European and Mediterranean countries.

Continued on page 20

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tation matters. "I have not heard of a decision (on a permanent appointment). Maybe they (AGO officials) have not told me yet. But we are hopeful," said Gottfried.

"There is no official person (assigned) but we are getting a lot of help," she added.

"So, although I'm the only one down here, I'm getting a lot of support."

Gottfried failed to give an estimate on the number of cases that has piled up at the department.

She said that between 15 and 25 deportation cases are being filed "every week."

"We also have lots of labor cases coming in every week," she added. Aside from these, there are also a number of civil and criminal suits which are now being handled by other AGO staff, Gottfried said.

DOLI used to have at least three fulltime lawyers.

However, one of them, Dan Aguilar, has tended his resignation in Sept. last year while the contract of the other one, Mark Zachares, was not renewed when it expired in Dec. also last year.

Continued on page 20

Man charged for stealing

By Ferdie de la Torre

Variety News Staff

THE ATTORNEY General's Office charged yesterday a man who allegedly stole \$3,000 cash from another person last year.

Alex Amor Alexander, of Garapan, was charged with theft before the Superior Court.

Assistant Atty. Gen. Aaron Williams in the complaint said Alexander unlawfully took the money, checks, a brief case, and other papers last Oct. 19.

No other details were given.

The 19-year-old Alexander was summoned to appear and answer the charge on Feb. 9.

In another case, the government

Continued on page 20

CPA urged to OK contract

By Aldwin R. Fajardo

Variety News Staff

AFTER temporarily freezing the proposed 25-year lease contract with Island Fresh Company, the Commonwealth Ports Authority was urged Friday to approve the contract.

Citing the benefits of the project for the Commonwealth, Senate vice president Thomas P. Villagomez (R-Saipan) expressed confidence on the land-lease agreement proposed by Island Fresh.

"It is not a fair action to deny our own local businessmen the opportunity to promote that area," Villagomez

said during the Senate's first session Friday.

He stressed that it is unfair to deny a local businessman's project in the light of the recent approval of another big land lease deal with Tan Holdings.

"I hope CPA does not deny Island Fresh (the chance to pursue the project) because of this," he added.

The CPA, during its previous board meeting December last year, unanimously deferred action on the proposed 25-year lease contract with Island Fresh, with Vice Chairman Antonio S. Camacho stressing that



Thomas P. Villagomez

the CPA board needs more time to review the proposal for a 25-year lease agreement.

All board members agreed to suspend the discussion on the lease contract, though Board member Pedro

Nakatsukasa expressed intentions to put everything that was agreed upon in black and white.

Nakatsukasa aired concerns that a voice vote may not be sufficient to sustain the board decision but the CPA legal counsel promptly said it is enough unless there is an objection.

A lawyer from Transition Committee has previously blocked the approval of the lease contract since it was not among the items listed in the published agenda.

Earlier former Gov. Lorenzo I. DL. Guerrero has threatened to file charges against the Teno-Pepero Transition Committee if he fails to get the lease contract with the CPA.

Guerrero's application for a lease on the property dates back to March 23, 1994 when he wrote former

Marianas Public Land Corp. executive director William Concepcion.

The former governor, in 1995, again sent two letters to Division of Public Lands Director Bertha A. Camacho, expressing his interest to lease the property, which Camacho answered on February 9, 1996.

Guerrero negotiated with the CPA when the property was transferred under the agency, where the lease application had been granted.

Its present 10-year contract with the CPA on the 60,235-square foot property, signed on March 1, 1997, will last until February 2007.

The draft contract guarantees Island Fresh a 25-year lease extension and an option to renew for another 15 years.

Teno OK's Japan travel

By Laila C. Younis

Variety News Staff

THE MARIANAS Visitors Bureau has received "the blessing" of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio for upcoming travel only to Japan, according to MVB Managing Director Anicia Q. Tomokane.

"The governor has given his approval for the planned trips to Japan, however, all other trips are still in question," said Tomokane in an interview last Friday.

"We had to cancel our trip to California for the DEMA Trade Show. We had already purchased

a booth and made arrangements, but we will find a way to use it," she said.

According to MVB Marketing Director Norman Berg, the DEMA booth space cost MVB around \$1,800 and a lot of plan-

Continued on page 8

Worker hurt in 'baseball attack'

By Ferdie de la Torre

Variety News Staff

A DAI-ICHI Hotel worker was injured after a man reportedly struck him with a baseball bat on the head in Garapan Wednesday afternoon.

The victim, described as a 32-

year-old man, suffered injury on the head and was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center, according to acting Public Safety Information Officer Sgt. Franklin Babauta.

Babauta said initial investiga-

Continued on page 8

MOM'S ROUND TWO Menu for the Week

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Home made meat loaf with gravy served with mashed potato mix vegetables and roll, Sloopy Joes on bread \$3.50 only	Baked pork chop Hawaiian style served with rice, vegetable of the day and roll \$7.00 Shrimp tempura served with sushi rice, mixed vegetables and soup of the day \$7.00	Spaghetti with meat balls served with garlic bread and green salad \$7.00
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
Home made beef fajitas served with refried beans, green salad \$7.00 Chef Salad, choice of toppings, grilled yellow fin, ham and chicken \$7.00	Fish & Chips \$7.00 Parmesan in crusted grilled chicken breast with sausage gravy served with mashed potato, mix vegetables and roll \$7.00	

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Hiring . . .

Continued from page 1

committee after both houses failed to agree on the number of years alien workers should be allowed to stay.

There were also disagreements on how long should an alien worker remain outside the CNMI before he or she could return.

Due to continuing concerns raised by the White House and its allies in Congress, bills affecting the islands' alien workers—who now constitute more than half of the CNMI population—are expected to be "seriously considered" by the Legislature in the following months.

Union . . .

Continued from page 1

onstrators—one opposing the union and the other, urging workers to vote for Local 5—displayed placards and streamers outside the hotel premises throughout the election period.

Despite this, the exercise remained peaceful.

Greg Elliott, Local 5 representative, explained the election was held after the union won in its bid to hold it again following a recent move by the National Labor Relations Board which upheld its contention that there were irregularities during the last Hyatt election held in Dec. 1995.

It was after this election that the

Legislature reportedly passed a resolution declaring then Local 5 representative Elwood Mott *persona non grata*.

"The union alleged there were illegal activities committed by management (during the 1995 election). As a result of the charges the union brought against the hotel, the (Hyatt management officials) agreed to hold another election," said Elliott.

Elliott, in an earlier interview, has said he will be "surprised" if Local 5 wins at all considering that the union "was not given much access to the workers to send out its message as management was."

For his part, Mustafa Issa Hyatt General Manager has expressed confidence over an overwhelming Local 5 defeat.

Former . . .

Continued from page 1

with, nor the loan from, L&T which is purportedly secured by the lands.

The lawyers said Luis and Katherine obtained several other parcels of land during their marriage, all of which are managed and controlled by Luis except for the Benavente Apartments, which Katherine manages.

Brown said Katherine repeatedly questioned Luis regarding the lots since she heard rumors regarding various problems between Luis and creditors.

Katherine said Luis told her there was no basis for concern.

The complaint said Katherine has not received any support from Luis

since their separation in Jan. 1994 but has supported herself and their six children out of rental income derived from the Benavente Apartments.

"Since 1994, L&T has collected rents derived from tenants in buildings located on the lots pursuant to the agreements between Luis and L&T which were not consented to nor known by Katherine," said the complaint.

Brown said Luis and L&T's business dealings encumbering the lands, acquired during the marriage of Luis and Katherine, without the notice and consent from Katherine is in violation of the statute and voidable.

The Supreme Court upheld last November the decision of the lower court allowing L&T to foreclose a property belonging to Luis for nonpayment of loan.

Worker . . .

Continued from page 7

tion showed that the victim came out from Wendell's Store when the suspect who was standing outside confronted him.

The suspect then struck the victim with the baseball bat, sending

the latter to the ground. The suspect ran away.

No arrest was made yet. Residents in the area told the Variety that the weapon used was a golf club and not a baseball bat as reported to the police.

Shortly before the incident, the victim and some kids in the area engaged in a verbal tussle, wit-

nesses said.

Meanwhile, Dai-Ichi workers appealed to the police to act into alleged harassment by the same suspect and some residents in the area.

A witness said last week's incident was the third assault case against hotel workers in the past few weeks.

Dai-ichi's barracks is located near Wendell's Store and Garapan Elementary School.

"Police must do something now before things would come to a bloody end," said a concerned resident.

In another report, the management of Cash and Carry Store in Dandan sought

police's help in solving the burglary last week at the establishment.

The suspect broke into the store when a brown out occurred, and stole cash and 15 cartons of assorted cigarettes.

Information had it that the suspect probably sold the cigarettes to another store.

Chinese . . .

Continued from page 7

officials said, were mostly arrested working in the island's tourist districts of Susupe and Garapan.

They were employed as Karaoke Bar girls and were oftentimes suspected to be involved with a prostitution syndicate preying on the island's Japanese and Korean tourists.

Another sizeable number of the Chinese deportees, it was also gathered, were overstayers

who have taken on odd jobs while eluding government agents.

The rest of those deported last year were Bangladeshi nationals who have opted to return home after their luck ran out in the Commonwealth; and Filipino nationals who have also managed to elude arrest by constantly changing residence and taking odd jobs mostly as farmhands and construction workers.

A number of Koreans, Thais and other Asians were likewise deported last year.

It will be noted that about a third of

the Commonwealth's estimated 34,000 guest workers, or about 14,000 are Chinese nationals while close to 25,000 are Filipinos.

Government has placed the estimate on the total number of overstaying and illegally employed guest workers in the CNMI at close to 3,000.

DOLI agents hot on the trail of these overstayers have conceded though that the figure will only be slightly reduced as there will always be new workers opting to overstay.

Teno . . .

Continued from page 7

ning had gone into the trip scheduled for Jan. 28-31.

"We will ask either the Guam Visitors Bureau or Continental Micronesia depending on the booth location to extend their spaces in exchange to hand out our promotional items," said Berg.

"We are working to use the space instead of just having it empty," he said.

Tomokane and other members of MVB staff left yesterday evening for the Mainichi Shinbun-sponsored "A Evening in the Marvelous Marianas" expected to host 200 travel agents and other delegates in Japan.

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The Pacific Nali orders probe of Pansat payment

PORT MORESBY

(Pacnews)—Papua New Guinea's acting prime minister, Michael Nali, has ordered an investigation into the authorisation of K19.5 million (\$US11m) payment to Pansat Communications company of Singapore.

He directed Justice Minister Jacob Wama Wednesday to investigate and advise cabinet on

the out-of-court settlement of Pansat's breach-of-contract claim, and all other state liabilities, the Post-Courier reports.

Wama's office said he was seeking an explanation from the Attorney General's Department on the matter. In a statement Wednesday night, Nali said cabinet had not been made aware of the case, when it was entitled to know first.

Consultative group meets

PORT VILA (Pacnews)—The Asian Development Bank is holding consultative group meetings for the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands in Tokyo from January 26 thru 30.

The meetings will enable the international donor community to coordinate assistance to promote economic and public sector reforms in the three countries.

Discussions will focus on

Health office warns against aspirin use

SUVA (Pacnews)—Fiji's Ministry of Health has warned against the use of any medicine containing aspirin by suspected dengue patients.

The warning follows an advertisement in this week's Fiji Times on another pain-killer disprin, Radio Fiji reports.

Ministry spokesperson Doctor Asinate Boladua says disprin contains aspirin which should never be taken by the dengue patient as it could result in dengue haemorrhagic fever.

She says there have been seven deaths at the Colonial War Memorial hospital in Suva, due to suspected dengue haemorrhagic fever.

Meanwhile, health authorities say the dengue virus is still around and have warned the public to be wary of it.

Medical Superintendent Doctor Mary Schramm says because there has been NO deaths in the past few days does not mean the authorities have managed to contain the virus.



Hospital closed due to water lack

PORT MORESBY

(Pacnews)—Kudjip Hospital in Western Province of Papua New Guinea has been closed to all except emergency cases because of water shortages.

Although it had been raining heavily in the province

and the Highlands region generally for six weeks, there is no water in the hospital's reserve tank, the Post-Courier reports.

Staff at the hospital, run by the Church of the Nazarene, said that minor-case patients

had been discharged from the wards and since Monday the outpatients department had been seeing only emergency cases. A spokesperson said the hospital will be closed for the rest of this week until the problem is solved.

ANZ bank to lay off 80

SUVA (Pacnews)—Up to 80 staff of Fiji's ANZ Bank may lose their jobs as the bank goes through a major restructuring phase over the next few months.

The figure was disclosed by Bank Employees Union leader Diwan Shankar at a special meeting Wednesday of the ANZ Bank members in Suva, Radio Fiji reports.

Shankar says the union is unhappy with the ANZ's restructuring plans claiming they have not been consulted properly.

Meanwhile, ANZ's general manager, Robin Taylor, confirmed that staff will be retrenched, but did not disclose numbers.

Cops question march leaders

APIA (Pacnews)—Police in Samoa have begun questioning leaders of last Thursday's anti-government protest march which was held without a police permit.

The march was organised by the coalition of chiefs, Tumua ma Pule ma Aiga, to protest price increases and demand the resignation of Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana.

Tumua ma Pule Chairman Faamatuainu Tala Mailei said he had been visited by police who asked him per-

sonal information such as his age and number of children. The Samoa Observer publisher/editor Saeva Sano Malifa and his wife and advertising manager, Jean Malifa, were also questioned.

Over 2000 marchers were estimated to have taken part in the protest which passed through the capital, Apia's main street, Beach Road, without a police permit. Police have said they were in a process of charging everyone who took part.

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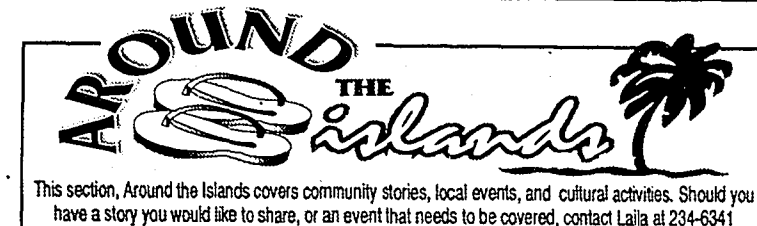
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Summa cum laude



PROUD PARENTS. Rep. Karl T. Reyes and wife, Ginny, with daughter Rheta after her graduation at the HPU.

RHETA Inez Barto Reyes was recently awarded a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration in Human Resource Management and Computer Information from Hawaii Pacific University.

Rheta's proud parents are Rep. Karl T. Reyes and Ginny Reyes.

Rheta graduated as summa cum laude, the highest academic achievement for a college graduate. She was a member of the Dean's List from 1993 to 1998 and was a member of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society. The Society's membership is limited.

Continued on page 20

CCAC solicits poster designs

THE COMMONWEALTH Council for Arts and Culture is currently in the planning stage for the 17th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, tentatively scheduled for April 24, 25 and 26, 1998.

The Arts Council is calling on all interested artists to submit "rough" designs for this year's Festival poster and program cover. All designs must

GED test schedule

THE General Educational Development test schedule for February has been released by the Adult Basic Education/GED Office of the Northern Marianas College.

The tests on Feb. 10 and 24 will take place at the Training Room, Human Resource Office, Building P of NMC, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The Feb. 14 and 28 tests will be at K-1, Building K, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

For more information, visit the ABE/GED Office, Building G, or call at tel. 234-3690, extension 1720 or 1724.

be turned in to the Arts Council Office no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 4, 1998.

Submissions may include up to four colored "roughs" per artist. The "roughs" must include the layout and design of the following text: "17th Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, American Memorial Park-West of the Belltower". Final posters will be approximately 11 inches by 17 inches. "Roughs" may be any size, however, they must be to scale.

The selection of a design will be made on February 5th and 6th, after which, the respective artist will be notified and asked to complete a finished design. The selectee will receive a \$200.00 stipend and copies of the printed poster and program.

For further information, please contact Flame Tree Arts Festival Coordinator, Cincy Macaranas or Acting Executive Director, Robert Hunter at the Arts Council Office at telephone 322-9982 or 322-9983.



Visiting Filipino actor Aga Muhlach (5th from right) poses with members of Blocks band and 42nd Street dance group members Friday. He held a concert at Hyatt Regency Saturday.

Photo by Bing Chavez

Palmer...

Continued from page 3

highly irregular and questionable expenditure of the \$2.6 million it "borrowed" from the Office of the Governor under the previous administration.

The loan, the legality of which is also being questioned, now stands at \$3.4 million after then outgoing governor Froilan C. Tenorio allowed the release of an additional \$800,000 last month.

The Senate has recently decided to pursue its investigation of TCGCC's finances and "spending habits."

DFW...

Continued from page 3

South America.

The warm water heats the atmosphere and other parts of the ocean altering storm tracks.

Scientists have however predicted a difference this year as signs of the weather disturbance began appearing earlier than anticipated.

This is seen to increase the uncertainty on the phenomenon's catastrophic effects.

The 1982-83 El Niño, according to reports by the Associated Press, killed 2,000 people and cause about \$13 billion in damages around the globe.

Government officials said the ocean's temperature is seen to get higher in the coming months.

DOLI...

Continued from page 3

saying they just wanted to go home and did not intend to wait for their deportation orders.

The Thais, according to Taitano, have been overstaying for almost a year.

It will be recalled that seven other foreign nationals, also mostly Filipinos, have been deported by government in the second week of this month.

Organized crime coming in undetected

By Aldwin R. Fajardo

Variety News Staff

BECAUSE of alleged flaws in its immigration policies, foreign criminals can reportedly enter the Northern Mariana Islands almost undetected.

A report submitted to the US Congress by Monica Heppel, who is among those who conducted a visit to the NMI last year to assess the Commonwealth's labor and immigration laws, said few foreign criminals have been detected at the port-of-entry or apprehended while in the Marianas.

Heppel, in her report, said certain aspects of crime in the North-

ern Marianas, as well as drug use, have been tied to the CNMI's inability to better control immigration.

She said elements of organized crime, including the Japanese Yakuza, Chinese Triads from Fujian Province, and the Russian Mafia are felt to be active in the Commonwealth.

"Their activities include racketeering, prostitution, drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, extortion, illegal gambling, murder and public corruption," she added, citing the Federal-CNMI Initiative Third Annual Report.

Heppel said this report claims

that Chinese operatives, many of whom obtained business permits after the issuance of invitation letters from the CNMI, operate a front company, often in karaoke bar business.

The CNMI government said, however, that it has stopped issuing "invitation letters."

Heppel said that from this base, these operatives obtain fraudulent immigration documents for associates and encourage and intimidate Chinese women into engaging in prostitution.

Japanese organized crime members, according to the report, are allegedly involved in the traffick-

ing of crystal methamphetamine, which is a widespread problem on Saipan, and firearms.

Just last week, the customs division has alerted its personnel at the Saipan International Airport after recent operations yielded a significant amount of crystal methamphetamine from arriving visitors.

The Division of Customs on Friday reported that airport personnel have discovered some 60 grams of the substance, also known in the Northern Marianas as "ice," from a terminating flight into the Commonwealth from Guam.

A press statement has noted that the "ice" weighed 60 grams, with an estimated market value of between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

The Jan. 10 incident was the second in two days following Customs' arrest of a Japanese tourist last Jan. 9, who allegedly tried to sneak in ice at the Saipan International Airport.

Shuntaro Furusa, who reportedly entered into the Northern Marianas as a tourist, was brought in for secondary inspection where customs inspectors found the substance concealed in his socks.

At the same time, Heppel also said various federal agents, as well as local police officers, express deep concern over future problems of money laundering, credit card fraud and organized crime which they feel a casino industry is likely to spawn.

8-day delivery? That's quick, says Pinoy Express

By Aldwin R. Fajardo

Variety News Staff

BRANDING a story published by the Variety as sensationalized and misleading, door-to-door remittance firm Pinoy Express is apparently proud to say that an eight-day delivery period is even two days short of the allowable timetable.

In an unsigned letter to the Variety, Susan Mohammad Bacero said the regulation implemented by the Department of Commerce's Banking and Insurance Division requires the delivery of the money within 10 days from date of collection.

The Banking and Insurance Division confirmed that existing regulations on remittance delivery allow a 10-day delivery period after the collection has been made.

It also said it can impose a fine of at least \$10 per day after the 10-day delivery period expires.

But Filipino workers have been continuously made to believe that their remittances can reach their relatives in 1-2 days if there is no accompanying letter and 3-4 days when the money will go with a letter or voice tape.

The banking body of the commerce department could not act on the reported delays in the delivery of remittances unless a complaint has been filed before the agency.

In an earlier report, the Variety quoted a worker, who sent in money to a relative in downtown Manila, claiming that the remittance reached the consignee eight days after the collection was made.

The worker also claimed that the Pinoy Express frontdesk clerk mistakenly recorded the telephone number to be a bank account number, which led to the late delivery of the remittance.

Bacero explained that the center's clerk committed an "honest mistake," apparently blaming the worker for his failure to check the receipt to see if the data were correctly entered.

She stressed that there was "nary a breath of scandal or complaints as to the custody and delivery of funds," citing the number of years her remittance company has been operating on the island "under the strict supervision of Banking and Insurance."

"...and yet, here is a writer who

can claim these firms are making fast bucks? If the writer proved his claim in the article, the proof could probably win him a journalistic award," she said in her unsigned letter.

Ms. Bacero was apparently referring to a question which cropped up during a random survey conducted by the Variety among Filipino workers on the difference between the foreign exchange rates in Manila and on Saipan.

"As for the rates, perhaps Variety can offer the remittance firms and the Filipino OFWs in Saipan an exchange or rate advisory service... (the) Variety can also offer the same service to Gov. Singson of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines) and the commercial banks levied spreads of more than two peso (some reports six) between their buying and selling rates," she continued.

She added that there is no requirement for remittance firms to offer dollar-to-dollar services, while admitting that some senders have requested that their remittances be delivered in dollars.

Bill offers gov't jobs for retirees

REPRESENTATIVE Heinz Hofschneider has introduced a bill seeking to allow retirees to reenter the workforce as classroom teachers, doctors, nurses and other medical professionals without losing their retirement benefits.

House Bill 11-32 was filed to address the shortage of teachers and medical professionals in the Commonwealth.

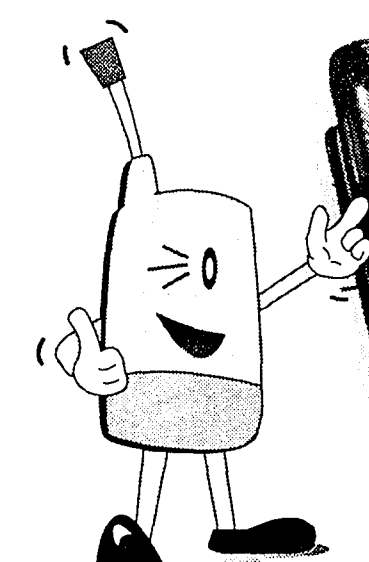
Hofschneider, in filing the bill, noted that there are local retirees who could fill these positions, but are reluctant to do so because, under the existing law, re-employment in the government would terminate their benefits.

Under the proposed measure, retirees would be allowed to return to government service "for a period not to exceed two years without losing their retirement benefits." (MCM)



House Minority Leader Dino Jones and Representative Karl T. Reyes listen in to a presentation by I&S Advertising Agency in an MVB 1998 Promotion Overview Seminar held last Friday.

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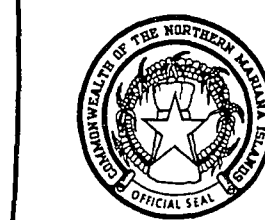
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PUBLIC NOTICE

The following persons with pending Labor and/or Agency Case(s) are hereby notified to report to the Division of Labor, Compliance and Monitoring Section, located on the 2nd Floor of Afetna Building, San Antonio, Saipan, on or before the prescribed date and time indicated below.

AGENCY CASE NO.

CAC# 97-216-12

LC# 97-490

DATE & TIME

02/26/98 at 1:30 p.m.

02/26/98 at 1:30 p.m.

NAME

AN, FUNCHENG	FAN, JIE	LI, KE	LU, QIZENG	SUN, DALI	WEI, HUILAI
BAI, MINGLAI	FENG, HONGTAO	LI, QUIDE	MA, JIUCAI	SUN, PEIYUAN	WEI, SHICAI
CAI, GUOQING	HE, JIANHUA	LI, SHUYI	PIAO, CHENGKUAN	SUN, XIYU	XIAN, FUZHENG
CHEN, SHAOHUA	GAO, FUREN	LI, XIAOWEN	PIAO, JINGZHI	TAI, DONGXIN	ZANG, FUYUN
CHEN, YONGHUA	GAO, YUQIANG	LI, YANJIANG	QIAO, QINGLIN	TAO, YONGJUN	ZHANG, BAOQUAN
CHO, JIN KOO	GAO, ZHONGYAN	LI, YONGJUN	QIU, LIANCHENG	TIAN, XILAI	ZHANG, QIUSHENG
CHO, JUNG WOOK	GONG, QIN	LI, ZHONGFU	REDOR, NORMAN	TONG, GUANGTIAN	ZHANG, YONGGANG
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EOM, HO LIM	LI, FENGSHAN	LIU, PENGCHENG	SONG, HAITING	WANG, ZUOAN	ZHUANG, JI CHENG

Failure to appear at the Division on or before the date and time specified above shall be ground for dismissal of the above cases and appropriate action and/or sanction shall be taken against the above individuals, including the referrals of their matters to the Immigration Office for their actions.

DATED this 8th day of January, 1998.

/s/Gil M. San Nicolas
Acting Director of Labor

Most emotional event in papal visit**Leprosy patients reach out for comfort**

By VICTOR L. SIMPSON
EL RINCON, Cuba (AP) - Hands without fingers reached for his hand. The heads of men doomed by AIDS bowed for his blessing. And a choir of youngsters wiped away tears as the old man in white passed by, bent with infirmity and fatigue.

Pope John Paul II's visit Satur-

day to El Rincon - an "encounter with the world of suffering," the Vatican said - was the most emotional event of his itinerary in Cuba.

He met with 100 leprosy and AIDS patients and some 50 nursing nuns, doctors and others at the St. Lazarus Sanctuary, a leprosarium 18 miles (30 kilometers)

south of Havana.

In his address in the complex's tiny Spanish colonial chapel, the pope made news by calling for the release of political prisoners in Cuba. But for the patients, it was the solace he offered that was important.

"Christ is very close to all who suffer," John Paul told them. "...

No suffering is lost. No pain is without significance."

After his talk, he walked among the AIDS victims and lepers, some in wheelchairs, some missing limbs.

One woman with fingers lost to leprosy clasped his hand in hers. Nuns bowed piously to take his blessing. He embraced an 8-

year-old girl in the choir, which sang the Polish hymn "We Want God," a favorite in the pope's homeland during its communist years.

The center, run by the government and by nuns from the Roman Catholic Order of the Daughters of Charity, draws its name from an early bishop, St. Lazarus.

But Cubans also associate him with the beggar Lazarus described in the book of Luke and with the Yoruba deity Babalu-Aye, associated with help for the ill.

Lazarus is the most popular saint among the vast number of baptized Catholics here who practice Santeria, a mingling of Christian and African beliefs.

The biblical Lazarus was a poor man covered with sores who begged at the gate of a rich man. Lazarus went to heaven and the rich man was banished to hell.

Gardens and lawns surround the dormitories where many of the St. Lazarus Sanctuary's patients live. There also are rows of one-bedroom homes for couples. Patients tend small vegetable gardens, and some play dominoes beneath the shade of trees.

For the pope's visit, the leprosarium was spruced up with new sidewalks and a fresh coat of pale yellow paint, the color associated with St. Lazarus.

The shrine is annually a destination for tens of thousands of Cubans - some crawling on their knees and many asking for cures who pay homage on the feast of St. Lazarus in December.

"These are humble people who identify themselves with Lazarus," said the Rev. Gabriel Torres, who works at the shrine. "Lazarus becomes the road to the church and to God. And it is a road that does not close."

Clinton advisers edge closer to military strike

By BARRY SCHWEID
WASHINGTON (AP)- U.S. President Bill Clinton has edged closer to ordering a U.S. military strike against Iraq and told his senior foreign policy advisers to inform allies and other countries of that prospect.

Iraq's continuing defiance of U.N. weapons inspections is "a serious matter," a White House spokesman said Saturday after Clinton met for an hour with his top security advisers.

In its struggle to open Iraqi suspect sites to inspection, the Clinton administration until now has sought to project a united front, moving in concert with sometimes hesitant allies and other members of the U.N. Security Council. But the United States always has preserved the option of acting alone, and it may strike Iraq this time alone or with the support of Britain and a few others who share U.S. despair with President Saddam Hussein's success in blocking a U.N. special commission from looking at what could be caches of biological and chemical weapons.

Lewinsky lawyer: 'Everything is on table'

By SANDRA SOBIEHAJ
WASHINGTON (AP) - Monica Lewinsky is willing to tell White House prosecutors that she had sex with U.S. President Bill Clinton, making a bid for immunity that could leave Clinton exposed to perjury charges, says a source familiar with escalating legal skirmishes that have entangled the presidency.

The president was out of sight on

Saturday as was Ms. Lewinsky, whose attorneys were working to make a deal with independent counsel Kenneth Starr.

"Everything is on the table and we are still talking," Ms. Lewinsky's lawyer William Ginsburg told The Associated Press. "We're not going to refuse to talk and we're not going to have a lapse of memory."

Ms. Lewinsky's testimony could

expose the president to allegations of perjury in connection with his sworn deposition last weekend in the Paula Jones case.

As the gravity of Clinton's situation settled upon the White House, one of his attorneys, Robert Bennett, accused Starr of being "hellbent on getting President Clinton."

"Everybody can bend if placed under enough pressure," Bennett said

of Starr's tactics in winning damaging testimony from Ms. Lewinsky.

Clinton himself was silent amid a scramble of activity. One pack of aides focused on his looming State of the Union address, which Clinton rehearsed for at least two hours in the family theater, while another group was gathering documents in response to a broad subpoena by Starr.

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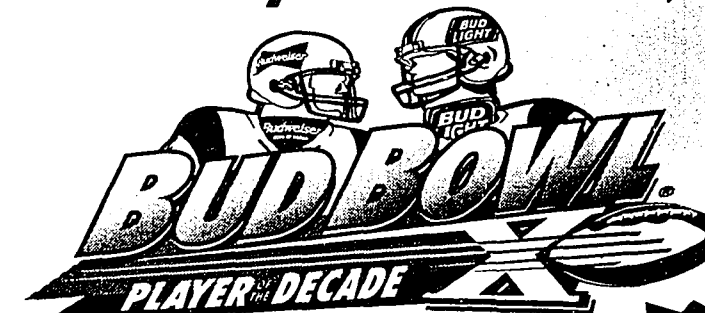
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Mexico police slammed over massacre

MEXICO CITY (AP) - Prosecutors accused police of losing evidence linked to the massacre of 45 people in the southern state of Chiapas and remaining "passive" in the face of the killings.

While stopping short of implicating state police in a cover-up of the Dec. 22 attack, the report noted that one officer is charged with allowing pro-government villagers to carry guns and two police commanders are under investigation for possible involvement in the killings.

"The state police, despite being

timely informed of the violent events in the hamlet of Acteal ... decided, at least to remain passive," according to a 30-page preliminary report by the Attorney General's Office presented to congress Friday.

The report also says that the presence of sympathizers of leftist Zapatista rebels was responsible for the increase of violence in the region.

All of the victims are believed to have been sympathizers of the Zapatistas, a largely Indian rebel group that staged a brief armed

uprising in January 1994. Most of the alleged killers were sympathizers of Mexico's ruling party.

"Since the Zapatista National Liberation Army established itself (in a nearby town) ... robberies, evictions, threats, kidnappings and killings became more serious and more frequent," according to the report.

Police lost key evidence by removing bodies of the victims without noting the positions of the corpses or picking up shell casings, the report said.

At least one local ruling-party

official Jacinto Arias Cruz, the county president of the region including Acteal sent an official vehicle to pick up the alleged killers after the killings, in hopes of concocting a cover story, officials have charged.

However, the truck carrying those men crossed paths with the funeral march carrying the bodies of the victims on Dec. 25. The victims' families pointed out the suspects and they were arrested and charged in the massacre.

The report also provided details of the day of the massacre.

Autopsies showed that most of the 45 victims were shot in the back, but contrary to previous reports, none of the four pregnant women killed that day were mutilated.

At least one man tried to warn the residents of Acteal to flee. "They answered that they would pray for no such thing to happen, and they stayed," according to the report.

Cab driver killed in Belfast

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) - A taxi driver was shot dead in Belfast on Saturday night and his body was dumped on a roadside on the edge of the city, police said.

A bomb badly damaged a nightclub in the County Fermanagh village of Enniskillen, but warnings were given and no one was injured.

The taxi driver, reported to be a Catholic, was the 10th person to be killed in a resurgence of sectarian violence that has cast a shadow over the Northern Ireland peace talks.

Chief Inspector Paddy Timoney of the Royal Ulster Constabulary said the murder was "another tragedy." The killing had to stop, he said, and called on anyone with information to come forward.

The victim picked up his killers in west Belfast's Andersonstown Road. Police said a taxi was flagged down by a number of men and the driver radioed for a colleague to pick up the fare.

The murdered man was found by a passer-by about an hour and a half later, lying by the roadside at the edge of the city.

The killers are believed to have used their victim's cab to make their escape. A vehicle believed to be his taxi was found burning in south Belfast.

Before Saturday's killing, seven Catholics and one Protestant had been murdered since Protestant extremist Billy "King Rat" Wright, commander of the Loyalist Volunteer Force, was ambushed and killed at Belfast's Maze Prison on Dec. 27.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Saturday's murder.

The Ulster Defense Association, Northern Ireland's major pro-British gang, on Friday acknowledged it had been targeting Catholic civilians. It said its killing spree was "unavoidable" but over.

Shortly after the driver was killed, a bomb exploded at the popular River Club in Enniskillen, 80 miles (130 km) southwest of Belfast, causing extensive damage.

No one was injured.

WSU softens blow from Asian crisis

PULLMAN, Washington (AP)- Washington State University says foreign students from five nations hit hardest

by the Asian monetary crisis will be given four extra months to pay spring semester tuition and fees.

The move, announced Thursday at a meeting of 200 of WSU's Asian students, buys time for the students to

raise money and weather a sharp devaluation of currencies in their homelands.

Students from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea and the Philippines will have until May 8 to pay tuition and room and board. The fees were due Jan. 12, when the current spring semester began.

If the students don't pay by the semester's end, the university won't release their grades, said K.J. Kravas, WSU vice provost of student affairs.

"I would urge you to pay your tuition when you can - not to delay," Kravas told the students.

University officials also said they would help students find jobs because they are restricted by immigration laws from working off campus.

Students from the five na-

tions account for about 22 percent of the 1,232 foreign students at WSU.

As nonresidents, foreign students pay the highest tuition on campus. Nonresident tuition is \$4,655 per semester for undergraduates and \$6,493 for graduate students.

That compares with \$1,633 for Washington resident undergraduates and \$5,100 for graduate students.

Korean undergraduates paid the equivalent of 4.14 million won to attend WSU classes last fall.

Because of the recent decline in the won's buying power, Korean students are paying about 6.52 million won for spring semester. That's equivalent to an increase of about \$900 compared with last semester's tuition.



More than 500 fishermen and activists raise their clenched fists and shout anti-Japan slogans during a demonstration march to the Japanese Embassy denouncing Japan for scrapping an old fisheries treaty, at Tapgol Park in Seoul Saturday. Banners read, "Observe Fishery Treaty between Japan and South Korea". AP

S. Korea in the IMF era

By PAULINE JELINEK
SEOUL, South Korea (AP) - "Don't drag your feet," the man yelled to a passing stranger in a Seoul subway. "This is the IMF era."

He meant: Don't waste shoe leather during these hard times.

But what are IMF scholarships, IMF wedding gowns and IMF buffets, taxis and fashions?

Before South Koreans sought their \$57 billion bailout to stave off economic collapse last month, many had never heard of the International Monetary Fund. Even now, many don't know exactly what the English letters IMF stand for. "International Money Foundation?" guessed one woman.

Still, everywhere now the lender's initials are on Korean minds, falling from Korean lips and standing out on Korean-language signs, used - and often abused - by some to show they're tightening their belts, by others to cast off blame for the financial crisis, and increasingly, by others to sell things.

A furrier advertised \$5,000 jackets and coats for \$1,000, promising "bargain prices because of the IMF cold wave."

A bridal store covered its sign with a huge banner, tem-

porarily renaming itself the "IMF wedding gown shop."

And a Dunkin' Donuts franchise started the "IMF-style buffet breakfast" - donut, toast, milk and coffee for 1,920 won (dls 1.10), compared to last year's price of about 6,980 won (\$4).

"I was passing by and thought it was funny," Canadian teacher Sheila Gibb said over a buffet breakfast.

It's also an example of the way this deeply Confucian society has of coming together on an issue, a kind of catchword or rallying cry in a nation that normally values consensus and promotes social harmony - and now demands what it calls "burden-sharing" for an economy gone wrong.

Sogang University established "IMF scholarships" to defray tuition for students whose fathers lost their jobs through cutbacks and spreading corporate bankruptcies. Faculty members contributed 10 percent of their salaries to set up the scholarship fund, the school says.

Lee Sung-hee felt alone and cut off from society when his furniture company briefly went out of business last year. So when he reduced staff and made a comeback in January, he set aside some office space to open the "IMF resting

place" for jobless people.

About 100 people have gone there every day in recent weeks to play chess, read newspapers, commiserate with the fellow unemployed or learn about employment possibilities.

Bank employee Yoon Y.K. is among Koreans who think the IMF puns are healthy.

"Maybe it will give us stimulus," said Yoon. "We do need changes."

That means less over-borrowing and over-expanding by businesses, whose bankruptcies set the financial crisis in motion, he said. It also means lower prices for their goods and reduced salaries for their employees. And it means more reform and oversight by government, seen as business's main partner in the disaster.

Still, others say the IMF name is getting a little hackneyed. More examples and their meanings are:

•IMF syndrome. It means worker fatigue and fear of additional layoffs.

•IMF fashion. It means clothes from second-hand stores and newly popular flea markets.

•And a new one: "This is an IMF car," taxi driver Lee Pyong-dul told a reporter jokingly.

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Worker appeals for detained man

BEIJING (AP) - A dissident from eastern Anhui province has asked the United Nations to help gain the release of an unemployed man who was detained for demanding independent labor unions, a human rights group said Sunday.

In a letter to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Wang Gongxue, who described himself

as an "ordinary worker," asked the organization to urge China to release the man so that he can care for his elderly mother and teenage son, Human Rights in China said.

Police took Li Qingxi from his home in Datong, Shanxi province, on Jan. 16 and confiscated documents and tapes, according

to another group, the Hong Kong-based Information center of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China.

A former worker with the city health department who has been unemployed for four years, 41-year-old Li was detained for writing a document calling for the establishment of independent

unions, it said.

China allows only one government-run labor union. In recent months some Chinese advocates for workers' rights have been calling for independent unions.

"A few of us familiar with Li Qingxi's situation have sent public appeals to our national leaders and departments concerned, but

they have gone unanswered," Wang wrote, according to a copy of his letter provided by the New York-based group Human Rights in China.

"I ask that you please do what you can to help the destinies of Chinese workers and to direct the authorities to release detained Shanxi worker Li Qingxi soon," he said.

Shanghai bracing for fallout from Asian bust

BEIJING (AP) - Shanghai, China's top financial center, is taking precautions to help lessen the impact of the economic troubles that have swept through Asia.

City authorities have banned new property development and trimmed their economic growth

target, the official newspaper China Daily's Business Weekly said Sunday.

The city also plans to send at least seven trade missions overseas to help protect its exports from a decline in China's competitiveness vis a vis neighboring countries that have devalued their

currencies, it said.

China has escaped the worst of the turmoil that has shaken most of the rest of Asia, partly because its financial markets are protected from speculative assaults and its currency is not traded freely overseas.

But Chinese planners are bracing

for some impact. With the Chinese yuan pegged at a relatively higher value than other Asian currencies, exporters expect to face stiff competition.

Economic troubles elsewhere also are likely to cut into foreign investment at a time when China's own growth is slowing as it struggles to reform outmoded

state-owned industries and to set up a welfare and reemployment system to cope with massive layoffs.

With many new apartments and office blocs sitting empty, Shanghai decided to try to prevent a speculative "bubble" by banning new projects, the Business Weekly report said.

UN rights chief says much work needed to be done in Cambodia

By ROBIN McDOWELL
PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP) - The United Nations human-rights chief ended a four-day visit Sunday after warning that Cambodia's government, installed by a coup last July, needs to do much work if elections planned for July are to be free and fair.

Mary Robinson said that investigations the government has promised into killings during the coup and a deadly grenade attack against demonstrators three months earlier were "an important part of preparing for an environment of free and fair elections." "The focus of the world will not go away," Robinson, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights, told a news conference Saturday. She left early Sunday without further comment to reporters.

Robinson laid a wreath Saturday at the site of the grenade attack, which targeted a political rally led by opposition figure Sam Rainsy. He narrowly survived, but at least 16 people were killed and more than 100 injured.

The attack was widely believed to be an assassination attempt orchestrated by Hun Sen. In July, he ousted his co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, in a bloody coup that ended a tense dual premiership installed by U.N.-organized polls in 1993.

Investigators for the U.N.'s human rights center in Phnom Penh have documented the killing of at least 43 Ranariddh supporters by Hun Sen's men. No investigation has been made despite Hun Sen's repeated assurances the killers would be punished.

Robinson said she raised the lack of progress during a meeting with Hun Sen, who dramatically tried to discredit the report Friday by presenting three people he said were listed as dead in it.

The center refuted the claims Saturday, saying that two men he

produced had only been listed missing. The third was killed, the center said, claiming Hun Sen produced his surviving brother.

Robinson said she was pleased that Hun Sen had at least agreed to a proposal that an international expert be sent to Cambodia to help expedite the long-overdue investigations.

Hun Sen has scheduled elections for July 26 to restore the international legitimacy and foreign aid lost due to the coup, but has threatened Ranariddh with arrest if he returns from exile, alleging he was plotting his own coup.

Robinson arrived Thursday and visited Tuol Sleng, the high school converted into torture center by the Khmer Rouge during their murderous rule between 1975 and 1979.

The site is now a museum commemorating Cambodia's genocide in which as many as 2 million people perished.

Robinson said Hun Sen seemed receptive to an offer for a team of international experts to do preliminary investigations of Khmer Rouge atrocities and explore the possibilities for a genocide tribunal.

A tribunal is highly unlikely. Though the Khmer Rouge were toppled 19 years ago by a Vietnamese invasion, no leader has ever been brought to justice. Hun Sen himself was a Khmer Rouge official before he defected to Vietnam in 1977 to escape bloody purges.

Most of the historic leaders remain at a guerrilla base in northern Cambodia, with the most notorious, Pol Pot, under house arrest by former comrades who turned against him last year.

The hardliners are fighting alongside Ranariddh's loyalists in armed resistance against Hun Sen, himself a former Khmer Rouge who defected to Vietnam in 1977 to escape bloody purges.

Korean fishing boats test Japan waters

By YURI KAGEYAMA
TOKYO (AP) - Eight South Korean fishing boats entered off-limits waters off the coast of northern Japan early Sunday in protest of Tokyo's decision to pull out of a fishing treaty, a Japanese official said.

The alleged infringement raised a notch the escalating tensions between the often uneasy neighbors over Japan's decision Friday to pull out of the treaty, after nearly two years of talks to extend it deadlocked.

That decision outraged South Korea, where anti-Japanese sentiments linger from bitter memories of Japan's harsh 1910-45 colonial rule over the Korean Peninsula.

On Saturday, hundreds of South Korean fishermen and activists marched on the Japanese Embassy in Seoul in protest.

The Korean boats had not ventured into Japanese territorial waters, said Fisheries Agency official Kitashi Mochizuki.

But they lingered just south of Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido, in an area that was declared off-limits to Korean fishing boats since the early 1990s under a special agreement between the two nations, he said in a telephone interview from Hokkaido.

South Korean foreign and maritime ministry officials in Seoul were not immediately available for comment. South Korea said Friday that it would allow its boats to fish freely in Japan's coastal waters in defiance of Tokyo's decision on the treaty.

A Korean boat radioed the Fisheries Agency Saturday that they were going to ignore the previous restriction on that area in protest, Mochizuki said.

The boats have paid no heed to repeated warnings from Japanese authorities to stay clear of that area, and were quietly fishing for cod, he said. He did not know how many people were aboard

the ships or how much fish they had caught.

Five Fisheries Agency patrol boats have been sent to monitor the Korean boats, and two more are on their way. Hokkaido Prefectural (state) boats and Japanese coast guard boats have also been sent, although no action will be taken until there are orders from Tokyo, Mochizuki said.

"It is very dangerous," he said. "We hope the boats will voluntarily leave."

The treaty that Tokyo scrapped Friday sets exclusive fishing rights within 12 nautical miles (14 miles or 22 kilometers). It remains in effect for a year after either side decides to throw it out.

The two countries have been negotiating new fishing areas to comply with the 1994 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, which allows a country exclusive fishing rights within 200 nautical miles (230 miles or 370 kilometers) of its shores.

Japan and South Korea are less than 400 nautical miles (460 miles or 740 miles) apart, so there are overlapping areas, and the two sides have been unable to come up with a compromise.

Korean and Japanese media reported Sunday that President-elect Kim Dae-jung was canceling his trip to Japan, planned for after his inauguration late next month.

In Seoul, Yoon Young-doo, a spokesman for Kim's party, declined comment, saying the dates for Kim's visit to Japan had not yet been set.




More than 500 fishermen and activists fight with riot policemen in melee in front of Japanese Embassy in Seoul after an anti-Japan rally denouncing Japan for scrapping an old fisheries treaty Saturday. Japan pulled out of a 1965 fishing treaty with South Korea on Friday after talks to extend the pact stalled and the decision triggered an angry reaction in South Korea sending the already rocky relations between the neighbors to a new low. AP



Angeles Sanchez a representative of Danza Azteca Cuauhtemoc, a group of Mexican "warrior dancers," dances with others in a demonstration on behalf of the children of Chiapas, Mexico, Saturday, in Los Angeles. The group believes that United States military involvement aids in the killing of indigenous children. AP



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION



PUBLIC NOTICE

to

ALL HOME OWNERS

and

APARTMENT OWNERS

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is soliciting the immediate availability of vacant houses or apartments in Saipan which must pass Housing Quality Standards, as follows:

1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom units

NMHC is a Public Housing Agency which administers Housing Assistance Programs under the Section 8 Voucher and Certificate Programs. Recipients of the programs are eligible applicants/families who will be assisted with their monthly rent, subsidized by the Federal Government.

If you have any available houses or apartment for rent, please contact Mr. William S. Agulto, Housing Specialist, at telephone numbers 234-9447/7689/7670 during regular business hours or meet with him at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan.

/s/ **MARYLOU S. ADA**
Corporate Director

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.



HIV-positive blood donor gets jail term

SINGAPORE (AP) - A Singapore man whose blood infected two transfusion patients with the virus that causes AIDS has been sentenced to a year in prison for lying about his sexual activities in a blood donor registration form.

Senior District Judge Richard Magnus said he handed down the maximum term for Loo Wah Yew, 43, to deter others.

The court found that Loo lied to Singapore health officials last year when he was asked whether he had traveled abroad in the last four years or had sex with anyone other than his usual partner, the Sunday Times reported Sunday.

But Loo's passport disclosed he had traveled to Indonesia in the past year. During the investigation, Loo admitted he had sex with prostitutes in Indonesia, but said he did not know he was infected until after his last blood donation in September 1987.

PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PSS RFP98-003

The CNMI Public School System is soliciting proposals from firms interested in providing a service for the removal of trash refuse from all Public School System school sites on Saipan, and the offices situated at Lower Base. The scope of work will be available by January 30th, 1998. All firms interested must submit their proposals no later than 2:00 p.m. February 27, 1998 at the Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the Nauru Building, Susupe, Saipan. All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Price	30%
2. Adequacy and availability of dumpster truck to be used	15%
3. Adequacy and availability of metal waste container to be used for dumpster	20%
4. Proposed schedule of service for removal of trash refuse at the sites	15%
5. Qualification of firm	10%
6. Adequacy of staffing	10%
Total	100%

A pre-bid conference will be held on February 06, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. at the Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd floor of the Nauru Building, Susupe, Saipan. All prospective bidders are required to submit their questions pertaining to the proposal package two days prior to the pre-bid conference at which time and place indicated above. All questions must be submitted directly to Louise Concepcion at the Procurement & Supply Office and may be contacted at telephone number 664-3763.

All interested firms are requested to submit their responsibility determination documents in compliance to PSSPP3-301. Responsibility determination documents must be submitted in separate envelope and facemasked "RFP98-003 Responsibility Determination". Responsibility determination documents are due on the same date, time, and place of the proposal deadline.

All documents received shall be the sole property of the Public School System, Government of the Northern Marianas. Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure a full understanding of, and responsiveness to, solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revision of proposals and such revisions may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. In conducting discussions, there shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

The Public School System reserves the right to award, amend, reject any or all proposals if its in the best interest of the Public School System. Any question(s) pertaining to this announcement can contact the PSS Procurement & Supply Office at telephone number 664-3763.

/s/ MARGARET C. DELA CRUZ /s/ LOUISE CONCEPCION
Acting Commissioner of Education Procurement & Supply Officer

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

J.C. TENORIO ENT., INC.... a leader in the Saipan community is committed to providing excellent customer service and employee satisfaction. We are currently seeking qualified candidates for the following opportunities.

FULL TIME OR PART TIME SUPERVISOR

- Minimum high school graduate
- 1-2 yrs. experience preferred
- Must be reliable/flexible
- Customer service oriented
- Highly motivated/good work ethics.

HUMAN RESOURCES CLERK

- Minimum High School graduate
- Basic Computer skills
- Customer service oriented
- Willing to learn, energetic & good communication skills
- Must be reliable

EXCELLENT BENEFITS AND COMPETITIVE SALARIES.
IF INTERESTED, PLEASE APPLY IN PERSON AT THE
J.C. TENORIO ENTERPRISES, INC.
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE LOCATED ON THE 2ND FLR. OF
JOETEN SHOPPING CENTER, SUSUPE
NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE

• LOCAL HIRE ONLY •

Clinton administration
defends Asian bailouts

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeking to answer growing criticism of multibillion-dollar bailouts of reeling Asian economies, the Clinton administration warned of serious threats to the U.S. economy and the global financial system if the crisis is not contained.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said in the administration's most detailed review of the Asian currency turmoil that the administration plans to call in the spring an international meeting of finance ministers to repair the world's financial system.

Rubin said Wednesday that Japan has an "especially crucial role to play" to resolve the crisis by jump-starting its own economy and cleaning up problems in the Japanese banking system.

He welcomed statements by Chinese officials that they will not devalue their currency, which economists feared the Chinese might do to combat the threatened loss of its export markets.

Rubin's remarks came on a day when separate reports showed that the Asian crisis has yet to affect America's trade deficit but is beginning to impact on the well-being of manufacturing firms.

The Federal Reserve, in its latest survey of regional U.S. economic conditions, said Wednesday the Asian crisis is being felt in most parts of the country.

"Manufacturers and agricultural firms report weaker exports to Asia, and there is some evi-

dence of increased competition from Asian products in U.S. markets," the central bank said. The economic status report will be used when Fed policy makers next meet on Feb. 3-4 to set interest rates.

There is a widespread belief that the central bank will leave interest rates intact, believing that the dampening effects of the Asian crisis will be enough without rate increases to slow U.S. growth and keep inflation in check.

In his speech to students at Georgetown University, Rubin said so far the Asian crisis' impact on the U.S. economy was expected to be modest, with continued steady growth this year.

But he said complacency by U.S. policy makers would be wrong.

"The United States cannot turn its back on this crisis in the hope that we will remain insulated from its effects and markets alone will cure the problem," Rubin said.

He noted that a third of U.S. exports are sold to Asia and 40 percent go to developing countries, including those of Latin America.

"If the crisis were to spread more broadly to other emerging markets, then the impact on American workers and businesses could be much greater," he said. "We cannot afford to stand back and gamble that the crisis will resolve itself."

Rubin said the formula put forward by the International Monetary Fund, which offers financial support to countries that adopt economic reforms, was the best approach to take.

A leading critic, Rep. Jim Saxton, chairman of the congressional Joint Economic Committee, said the IMF is not being forthcoming about its role in the crisis. He demanded that the 182-nation lending agency release an internal study that reportedly raised questions about the agency's handling of the Indonesian crisis.

The IMF has put together rescue packages totaling more than \$100 billion to help Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea regain the confidence of global investors.

They have sent currency prices and stock markets plunging in the three countries to avoid catastrophe if the three defaulted on their foreign obligations.

Rubin said discussions were under way with the world's seven richest industrial countries and other nations aiming at convening a conference in the spring to see if wide-ranging reforms should be implemented to try to prevent future crises.

In another development Wednesday, the U.S. Commerce Department reported the U.S. trade deficit narrowed unexpectedly to \$8.04 billion in November, the best showing in eight months.

Private economists called the improvement a short-term reprieve.

They predicted the deficit could balloon to perhaps \$160 billion this year as the Asian crisis cuts into U.S. export sales in the region and currency devaluations make Asian imports cheaper in the U.S. market.

American businesses growing
wary of investing in China

By SALLY JACOBSEN
NEW YORK (AP) — American businesses are growing wary of investing in China because of the economic turmoil buffeting its neighbors.

The turmoil is proving to be a drag on the economy in China at the same time that U.S. companies have become frustrated by government red tape and trade barriers.

Electronics maker Motorola has found sales slowing for its pagers. Caterpillar bailed out of a diesel engine plant in Shanghai after the market failed to develop. And Ameritech abandoned a 2-year-old cellular phone venture because of regulatory hassles.

If China is pulled into the economic maelstrom of its neighbors, the going could get even rougher.

"American businesses are becoming more cautious about China," said economist Sung Won Sohn of Norwest Corp., a Minneapolis-based bank.

So far, China has been spared the body blows that since the summer have pummeled the stock and currency markets of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and South

Korea. Hong Kong, recently returned to mainland China's control, has been shaken, however.

Government restrictions on stock and currency trading have sheltered it from the turbulence. Its currency, the yuan, doesn't trade freely on global currency markets, and its value is fixed by the government.

"The big unknown right now: Will China get drawn into the economic problems in Asia?" said Greg Mastel of the Economic Strategy Institute in Washington.

The government insists it has no plans to devalue the currency, also called the renminbi, to boost its exports.

But the country will be under pressure to do just that. With its neighbors' currencies tumbling, their goods will cost less in overseas markets. That is likely to hurt China's exports.

Moreover, labor costs in nearby countries also may be cheaper because of the slumping currencies.

"American businesses are thinking twice about locating in China, especially now because Thailand, Korea and Indonesia are attractive due to the currency

devaluations," Sohn said.

Businesses like Motorola have gone in to China in a big way, betting its 1.2 billion people will turn into a lucrative market for everything from cars and computers to soft drinks and hamburgers.

According to Commerce Department figures, U.S. companies had invested \$2.88 billion in China at the end of 1996, sharply up from \$183 million a decade earlier.

The big push came after leader Deng Xiaoping implemented economic reforms in the late 1970s to turn China toward capitalism. Even after Deng's death early last year, the reforms have gone ahead.

But there are difficulties along the way. Plans to revamp state-run enterprises will mean millions of layoffs. The banking system is shackled by bad loans.

Foreigners complain about an unpredictable legal system, lack of modern roads and telecommunications, and corruption and bribery.

"A lot of companies are having some bad investment experience and rethinking strategy in China," Mastel said.

'Slam' bags top award at fest

PARK CITY, Utah (AP) — "Slam," a gritty story of an imprisoned poet, has won the top prize at the Sundance Film Festival, the United States' top showcase for movies made without studio money.

The film by director Marc Levin won the Grand Jury Prize in the festival's dramatic competition. One of the film's fourscreenwriters is Richard Stratton, the editor and publisher of Prison Life magazine.

Also Saturday, two documentaries — "The Farm" and "Frat House" — shared the Grand Jury Prize in the nonfiction contest. "The Farm" examines maximum-security inmates while "Frat House" investigates hazing at college fraternities.

In voting by the festival audience, awards went to the Native America drama "Smoke Signals" and the documentary "Out of the Past," a profile of a 17-year-old student's attempt to form a gay club at a Salt Lake City high school.

New book on
Di opposed
by queen

LONDON (AP) — The man who was Princess Diana's private secretary for eight years is planning to publish a book about that eventful time, over the opposition of Queen Elizabeth II, a tabloid reported on Sunday.

The newspaper, The Mail on Sunday, said Patrick Jephson had "an astonishing eyewitness account to tell of the making and breaking of the Princess of Wales."

"Unlike her other biographers, who have had to rely almost solely on Diana's version of events, Mr. Jephson was there."

Jephson, a 41-year-old former Royal Navy commander, was employed by Prince Charles and Princess Diana in 1987 as an equerry, or assistant.

He became Diana's full-time private secretary — her most senior adviser — when the couple separated in 1992.

The Mail on Sunday said Jephson arranged Diana's public engagements, advised her on speeches and correspondence, and was the person "who kept lines open between the princess and the increasingly critical and impatient Buckingham Palace."

Jephson resigned Jan. 12, 1996, eight weeks after Diana gave a controversial BBC-TV interview in which she discussed her marriage, her husband and her adultery with James Hewitt.

She did the interview without telling him, the newspaper said.

"Mr. Jephson was said to be 'devastated' by what he saw as a betrayal of his trust and, after a brief but terminal confrontation with the princess, he emptied his desk and left," the newspaper said.

Filmmakers Trophies, selected by the movie makers at the festival, honored "Smoke Signals" and the documentary "Divine Trash," a look at the making of the movie "Pink Flamingos." Directing awards went to the filmmakers of "Moment of Impact," a documentary, and the drama "Pi." The documentary "Wild Man Blues" and the drama "2by4" took cinematography prizes.

The festival has launched some of the best-known independent movies in recent years, including "Shine," "The Full Monty," "In the Company of Men," "Hoop Dreams," "The Brothers McMullen" and "House Party." A total of 32 films competed for jury prizes in the dramatic and documentary categories.

Other awards presented Saturday:

Freedom of Expression award: "The Decline of Western Civilization, Part III."

Waldo Salt screenwriting award: "High Art."

Special jury prize for acting: Andrea Hart, "Miss Monday."

Special recognition in Latin

American cinema award: "Who the Hell Is Juliette?"

Special recognition in short

filmmaking award: "Snake Feed."

Honorable mention in short filmmaking: "Human Remains."



Actress Gwyneth Paltrow poses Saturday in Park City, Utah. Her latest film, "Sliding Doors," a story of a woman's romantic predicaments was shown opening night at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival in Park City. AP

Kelly's Place

Saipan's Discreet Drinking Establishment

Home To

DAVID'S DEN OF INIQUITY

Announces a unique gathering for friends and acquaintances, and customers — both Regular and Irregular.

On January 26th, in the Year of Your Lord, 19 and 98 we will:

PARTAY, PARTAY, PARTAY

We gather to celebrate a most unusual coupling between a daughter of Mao Tse-Tung and a son of Uncle Sam.

Said celebration will commence at 8:00 P.M. and boogie on til 2:00 A.M.

We will be offering abnormally idiosyncratic discounts on beverages: The more \$\$\$ you have spent in the last year at our Playful Pub, the less you will pay this date.



The bartender is the sole and final arbiter on drink prices, with Kelly's approval of course.

For those who wish to bring their own SEALED, UNOPENED, VIRGIN and UNSULLIED container of their favorite beverage, it will be permitted this one and only evening — of course the remainder of your jug, at evening's end, stays at the bar and will be adopted and properly cared for, by that Slimy, Slutish, Ex-Pat Marine — Publican David.

At around 9:00 we will have victuals provided by the Hyatt available for consumption at NO, Zero, Nil, None charge at all — but don't tell Kelly, the cheap Scottish Broad would have a conniption fit if she knew.

We might have Live Music, or we might not — it depends on our mood that night.

We will close the downstairs bar and operate out of the second floor joint, so you need to take the Stairway To Heaven in order to AVAIL (who came up with this word?) yourself of the good times.

Since this is to be considered a semi-private party we reserve the right to bar, ban, exclude, cast out anyone whom we don't want.

If you show up drunk — don't come in.

If you have stolen money from us — don't come in — unless you pay up first.

If you have an ATTITUDE — don't come in — ever!!!

For all others, Come on Down!!! Eat, Drink and be Merry, for tomorrow — is just another day on Saipan.

Arizona Building,
Susupe
Tel. 235-0888

USED RESTAURANT
EQUIPMENT/FURNITURE
FOR SALE

Please contact RIA or CECILE at 322-3830
From 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday

1. BLODGETT BAKING OVEN
2. UNIVEX DOUGH MIXER
3. CHEESE WARMER
4. 2-DOOR STAINLESS STEEL FREEZER
5. DELFIELD REFRIGERATED PREP STATION
6. MEAT SLICER
7. HOBART CHEESE GRATER
8. AIRCONS
9. TAP BEER DISPENSER
10. SODA CHILLER WITH GLASS DOOR
11. DOUGH ROLLER
12. CASH REGISTER
13. GRIDDLE
14. DINING TABLES & CHAIRS
15. STAINLESS STEEL TABLES AND A LOT MORE...

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Bank of Hawaii, Plaintiff, vs. Margio L. Muna, Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 96-960

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to a Writ of Execution issued by the Court in its order on July 31, 1997, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title and interest of Defendant in and to the following property:

1. Tract No. 21686-17, situated in San Vicente, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a corner designated as Corner No. 1, having plane rectangular coordinates of 48,404.70 meters North and 52,625.45 meters East on the Mariana Islands District Coordinates System of 1966; Thence N 65° 33' 57" W, 45.29 meters to Corner No. 2; Thence N 52° 00' 39" E, 35.76 meters to Corner No. 3; Thence S 37° 59' 21" E, 17.91 meters to Corner No. 4; Thence along the arc of a circle having a central angle of 36° 42' 00" and a radius of 13.71 meters, connecting to the left an arc distance of 8.78 meters, the chord of said arc having a bearing of South 56° 20' 21" E, 8.63 meters to Corner No. 5; Thence S 19° 18' 39" W, 26.32 meters to Corner No. 1, the point of beginning; and Beginning at a corner which is designated as Corner No. 1, having plane rectangular coordinates of 48,404.70 meters North and 52,625.45 meters East on the Mariana Islands District Coordinates System of 1966; Thence N 65° 33' 57" W, 45.29 meters to Corner No. 2; Thence N 52° 00' 39" E, 35.76 meters to Corner No. 3; Thence S 37° 59' 21" E, 17.91 meters to Corner No. 4; Thence along the arc of a circle having a central angle of 36° 42' 00" and a radius of 13.71 meters, connecting to the left an arc distance of 8.78 meters, the chord of said arc having a bearing of South 56° 20' 21" E, 8.63 meters to Corner No. 5; Thence S 19° 18' 39" W, 26.32 meters to Corner No. 1, the point of beginning; and

Containing an area of 2,133 square meters, more or less; Being that same tract of parcel of real property which was conveyed to Margio L. Muna by a Deed of Gift dated January 4, 1988, Commonwealth Recorder's file no. 88-002.

2. Tract 21686-17, situated in San Vicente, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a corner which is designated as Corner No. 1, having plane rectangular coordinates of 48,404.70 meters North and 52,625.45 meters East on the Mariana Islands District Coordinates System of 1966; Thence N 65° 33' 57" W, 45.29 meters to Corner No. 2; Thence N 52° 00' 39" E, 35.76 meters to Corner No. 3; Thence S 37° 59' 21" E, 17.91 meters to Corner No. 4; Thence along the arc of a circle having a central angle of 36° 42' 00" and a radius of 13.71 meters, connecting to the left an arc distance of 8.78 meters, the chord of said arc having a bearing of South 56° 20' 21" E, 8.63 meters to Corner No. 5; Thence S 19° 18' 39" W, 26.32 meters to Corner No. 1, the point of beginning; and

Containing an area of 2,133 square meters, more or less; Being that same tract of parcel of real property which was conveyed to Margio L. Muna by a Deed of Gift dated January 4, 1988, Commonwealth Recorder's file no. 88-002.

3. To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
4. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time, before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and

Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:

1. Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
2. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:

a. To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.

- b. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time, before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
- c. To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

3. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Joaquin Q. Dela Cruz, Loan Manager, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 2149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7444, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

4. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

5. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

7. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

8. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

9. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

10. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

11. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

12. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

13. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

14. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

15. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

16. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

17. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

18. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

19. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Commonwealth Development Authority, Plaintiff, vs. Herman C. Santos, Maria C. Castro, Ricardo C. Castro and U.S. Small Business Administration, Defendants.

Civil Action No. 97-0004

NOTICE OF FIRST SALE

The United States, Marshall Service, hereinafter referred to as auctioneer, and the Development Corporation Division of the Commonwealth Development Authority, hereinafter referred to as CDA, hereby give notice that all of the right, title, and interest of the defendants - Herman C. Santos, Maria C. Castro, and Ricardo C. Castro - in the following described, improved, real property situated in San Roque, Saipan, will be sold at an auction sale.

Lot No. 007 B 31, containing an area of 879 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 118777.

The auction sale will be open to the general public and will be held at the United States Marshall Service Office, Garapan, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 28, 1998, subject to the following announced terms and conditions:

1. Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
2. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, auctioneer shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:

a. To withdraw the property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.

- b. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time, before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
- c. To reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

3. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Joaquin Q. Dela Cruz, Loan Manager, Commonwealth Development Authority, P.O. Box 2149, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7444, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

4. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

5. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

6. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

7. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any and all bids.

8. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256, or to F. Matthew Smith, Law Offices of Vincent T. Salas, P.O. Box 1309, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 234-7455, Fax: 234-7256.

9. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

10. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

11. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

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19. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

20. Deposit. Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten (10) days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will revert to CDA.

21. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and CDA reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.

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24. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for any property listed in this notice shall be total amount of principal, interest, attorney's fees and costs of sale due and owing CDA by the defendants or the appraised value of the property whichever is greater.

Papal protest scuttled

By EVAN PEREZ
IN THE FLORIDA STRAITS (AP) - A planned protest by four exiles against Pope John Paul II's historic visit to Cuba may be over before it starts: their fishing boat is in rough seas, has engine problems and there are reports of military patrols along the communist island's north coast.

Ramon Saul Sanchez, leader of the Miami-based exile group The Democracy Movement, said Saturday his journey to Cuba with three others was going much slower than he planned, and if things didn't change the attempt would have to be scuttled.

"We're extremely, extremely tired," said Sanchez, heading past the 24th hour of his effort to enter Cuban waters, ignoring warnings from the U.S. government. "We've been through a series of difficulties, among them, rough seas and a lack of steering fluid, that made us lose about 10 to 12

hours."

The pope is planning a Mass in Havana on Sunday, his last day in Cuba.

Sanchez said he planned to get some sleep, and still was hoping to make landfall in Cuba aboard the 35-foot (10.5-meter) trawler Human Rights sometime Sunday, although that was getting less likely by the hour, as the group was unable to steer in the choppy seas.

"We pray, we talk about Cuba, we talk about things," Sanchez told The Associated Press by cell phone. "And we repair things that are broken."

Sanchez says he has heard that Cuban boats were patrolling the coast. He also faces possible arrest by U.S. authorities, although the FBI has offered not to arrest Sanchez or seize his boat if he aborts his trip.

Sanchez, who had not slept for two days, said he and his crew

were eating only guava paste and Cuban crackers.

Exile groups have had violent run-ins with the Cuban military. In 1996, Cuban gunboats rammed the lead boat in a flotilla protest organized by the Democracy group, injuring several people.

Also that year, Cuban MiGs shot down two small planes carrying members of the group Brothers to the Rescue, which had videotaped its previous flights over Havana as members threw anti-Castro leaflets on to the Cuban capital. Four people died.

Sanchez acknowledged that the Cubans might try to board his boat if he makes it to Cuban waters, or confront him at shore.

"That's a possibility," he said. "We will not resist. We will surrender and have them apprehend us. If the Cuban government uses violence, we are totally unarmed, this is a peaceful claim of our rights."

HK official can't guarantee Chinese won't alter report

HONG KONG (AP) - A senior Hong Kong official was unable to guarantee that Beijing would not alter a human rights report on the territory before sending it to the United Nations, a newspaper reported Sunday.

"I would not seek a guarantee," from China that it would not amend the report, the South China Morning Post quoted Secretary for Home Affairs David Lan as saying.

Hong Kong people will be consulted on the draft report's outline, but will have no way to find out whether China has altered the territory's version of the report because it will be confidential, the paper said. Only the final report submitted to the United Nations will be made public.

Lan declined to say when the report will be sent.

China announced last Novem-

ber it will submit the report on two international covenants, on civil rights and on economic, social and cultural rights, on behalf of Hong Kong, although China itself is not the covenants' signatory.

The British government submitted the reports on behalf of Hong Kong before China regained the territory's sovereignty last July. The public was not consulted on the reports.

Man charged. . .

Continued from page 6

charged a man for assaulting another man with a pipe.

Williams charged George B. Mendiola with assault with a dangerous weapon and criminal mischief.

Williams said Mendiola damaged the victim's property and attacked the latter with the pipe on Rota last Jan. 5.

Mendiola was requested to appear in court on Feb. 9.

Meanwhile, Superior Court Associate Judge Edward Manibusan yesterday rescheduled to Jan. 27 the sentencing of a man convicted of drug charges in a 1992 case.

Summa. . .

Continued from page 10

to students who have an honor point average of 3.55 and are top 10 percent of their class.

Manibusan decided to postpone the sentencing of Francisco M. Cabrera following request of new prosecutor Assistant Atty. Gen. Marvin Williams.

Williams asked the court to reset the sentencing to allow him enough time to review voluminous documents related to the case.

Court records showed that on May 20, 1992 Cabrera was arrested for possession and delivery of "ice" and his pickup truck was seized.

Cabrera appealed the case to the Supreme Court.

The high tribunal last October issued a decision upholding the decision of the trial court dismissing Cabrera's petition for a writ of habeas corpus.

Rheta graduated from Mount Carmel High School as a salutatorian in 1993 and was awarded a four-year scholarship. She also attended Stanford University as a Junior Statesman of the America Close-Up Foundation.

community, the hotels included, have been against the notion that employees should be represented by Local 5.

Thus, allegations of intimidating moves have always been thrown by Local 5 against the concerned hotel officials everytime elections are being held.

Marianas Variety Classified Ads Section

Employment Wanted

01 WAITRESS (REST.)-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: THE SAMURAI CORPORATION dba Hyaku-Ban Rest., Southern Cross Trop. Rest. Tel. 234-3374/(1/23)F25173

82 OVERLOCK SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 PATTERN GRADER CUTTER-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 CARPENTER-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 MASON-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
118 SINGLE NEEDLE MACHINE OPERATOR-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 ELECTRICIAN-Salary:\$3.30-4.00 per hour

13 IRONING WORKER (MACHINE PRESSER)-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: UNITED INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION Tel. 235-6888/(2/2)M25232

04 SNACK BAR WAITRESS-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 BEAUTICIAN-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: YANG HONG DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LTD. dba Retail Gen. Merchandise/Real Estate/Snack Bar/Night Club/Beauty Parlor/Massage Tel. 235-3807/(2/9)M25311

01 SALES CLERK-Salary:\$4.00 per hour
Contact: MICHAEL OMER dba Takakunai Tel. 233-9191/(2/9)M25310

05 WAREHOUSEMAN-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
50 SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 MERCHANDISER SUPERVISOR-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 PACKER, HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 PRESSER HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 IMPORT & EXPORT AGENT-Salary:\$3.70 per hour
05 CUTTER, HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: MIRAGE (SAIPAN) CO., LTD. Tel. 234-3481/(2/9)M25308

01 IMPORT & EXPORT AGENT-Salary:\$3.70 per hour
05 PRESSER HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 CUTTER, HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 PACKER, HAND-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
05 SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
01 COMMONWEALTH GARMENT INC. Tel. 234-7550/(2/9)M25307

01 CARPET INSTALLER-Salary:\$3.50 per hour
Contact: PREMIER INTERNATIONAL INC. dba Carpet Master Tel. 235-5547/(2/9)M70400

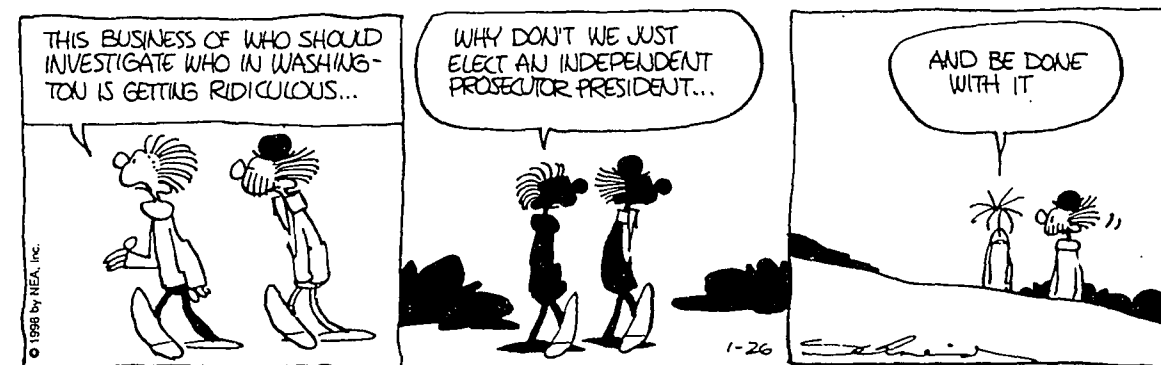
06 BANK (TELLERS)-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: CITY TRUST BANK Tel. 235-7701/(2/9)M25306

01 COMMERCIAL CLEANER-Salary:\$3.05 per hour
Contact: S.Y. KIM'S DEVELOPMENT CORP. dba Motel Garden Tel. 234-0321/(2/9)M25313

01 MOTORBOAT MECHANIC-Salary:\$1,000.00-1,500.00 per month
Contact: KNT OCEAN CRUISE, INC. Tel. 234-3533/(2/9)M70411

01 TANDEM MASTER-Salary:\$1,000.00 per month
Contact: TANDEM SKYDIVE SAIPAN, INC. Tel. 288-5857/(2/9)M70410

EEK & MEEK® by Howie Schneider



Garfield® by Jim Davis



PEANUTS® by Charles M. Schulz



STELLA WILDER

YOUR BIRTHDAY

By Stella Wilder

Born today, you are a creative and highly intelligent individual, but there are times when you may be just a little too impulsive for your own good. It is essential that you know when you can indulge a whim, and when you must buckle down, follow the rules and fulfill the expectations others have of you. You are fiercely independent, so this may prove difficult at times — but with age will come the realization that it occasionally is better to do what you are told! Once you learn to combine inspiration with discipline, you should be on top of the world personally and professionally.

You are likely to be the focus of great attention and fascination throughout your lifetime; you have what it takes to win the praise and approval of those around you. Indeed, many of your friends and admirers would like to be you!

Also born on this date are: Jules Feiffer, writer and cartoonist; Paul Newman and Scott Glenn, actors; Gene Siskel, film critic; Wayne Gretzky, hockey player.

To see what is in store for you tomorrow, find your birthday and read the corresponding paragraph. Let your birthday star be your daily guide.

TUESDAY, JAN. 27
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb.

18) — It is important that you take things one step at a time today. Attempt to do too much at once and you'll risk failure in many areas.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) — You won't be able to keep things simple today, but you must do everything possible to keep them from becoming overly complex and unmanageable.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Your talents must be on display today if you expect to take full advantage of a professional opportunity around the corner.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — You have what it takes to take things to the limit today, but you must be sure that you're not going to offend someone by inappropriate behavior.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Someone very close to you may not understand just how much you're trying to accomplish — and just how impossible it is to take on anything else.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — You may find that you have to explain yourself to an authority figure. Take care that you say the right thing at the right time.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — It may be impossible for you to rehearse for something you know is approaching fast. You must trust that your experi-

ence and instincts will suffice.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Time spent organizing home or office will enable you to get more in touch with certain aspects of your psyche that have been ignored recently.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — You may be working on an arrangement that is considered shady by some, but you know that everything is on the up-and-up. Stay confident.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Someone may be waiting for you to make the first move today. Once you do, you can't be sure that what follows will be according to the rules.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — You may have more on your plate today than you can cope with in a routine fashion. You are going to have to engage some help.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — You will be moving on to the next thing on the list today before you even finish with the previous, so take care you don't spin out of control.

Our neighbor grumbles that his wife is always saying farewell. Every time they shop, she waves "buy-bye" at him. No one will ever convince us that today's pre-owned autos run better than yesterday's used cars.

Our drinking buddy is excellent in arithmetic. He counts everything in fifts.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Precious metal in Spain
4 Baginoid, et al.
9 Horse's mouthpiece
12 1963 film for Paul Newman
13 Adored
14 Corrida cry
15 Gold, silver and bronze at the Olympics
17 Billfold
19 Beer mug
21 The whole and caboodle
22 "Believe — not"
24 Participated in a marathon
26 Knock for a —
29 Dressed to the —
31 Craggy hill
33 Subordinate officer (abbr.)

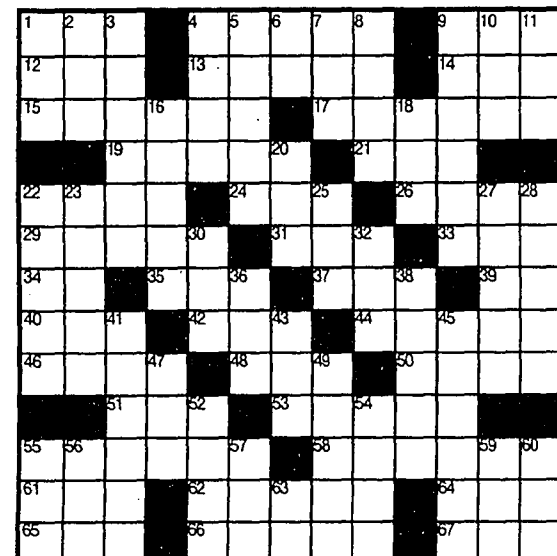
DOWN

- 34 Lancaster ID
35 Slender finial
37 Ms. Farrow
39 Mr. Pacino
40 Anglo-Saxon letter
42 Sweet potato
44 Bagel kin
46 Precious
48 Capture
50 Ginger —
51 Also
53 A Stooze
55 Stone
58 Allowable margin of freedom
61 Year (Sp.)
62 Distributed playing cards
64 In addition
65 Cowboy's nickname
66 Delete
67 Affirmative

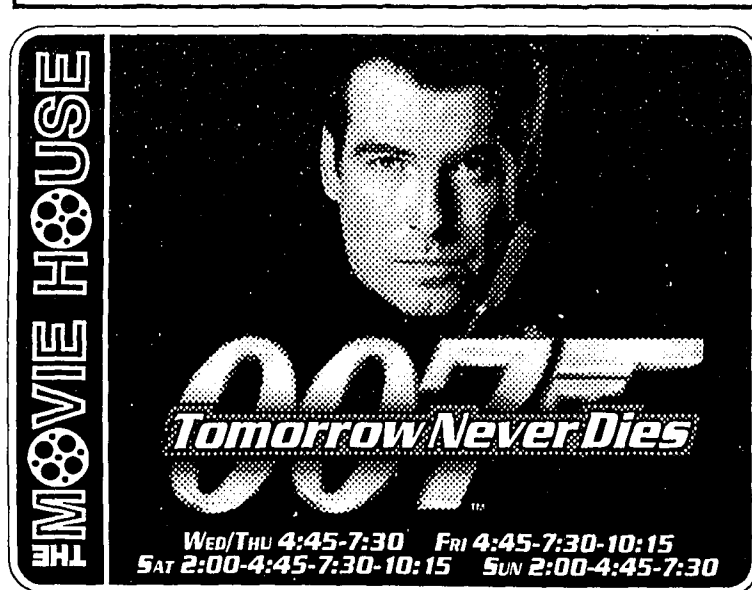
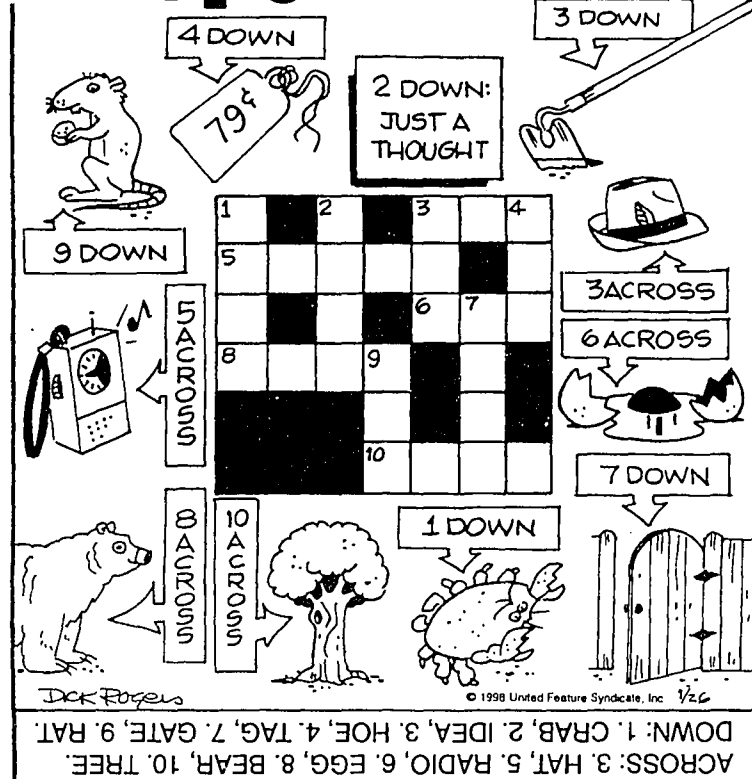
Answer to Previous Puzzle

DIG FEES CLAP
ETE ROME NILE
FORCES VON ER
ARE AES ACE
ONLY ERN TS
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EDIT ENID IRE
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1-26 © 1998 United Feature Syndicate



KidSpot™ by Dick Rogers



At the Australian Open

Korda reaches quarterfinals

By TONY HARPER
MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Petr Korda kept world No. 1 Pete Sampras in his sights by becoming the first player through to the Australian Open quarterfinals with a four-set victory over Cedric Pioline on Sunday. Korda, the No. 6 seed from the Czech Republic, beat the Frenchman 6-4, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 on center court.

Korda missed two match points in the eighth game of the fourth set, after coming back from 2-0 down, but wrapped it up by holding serve in the ninth.

Korda, 30, matched his previous best performance at an

Australian Open — a quarterfinal in 1993 — and will play the winner of the match between Jonas Bjorkman, seeded fourth, and Byron Black.

If Korda survives the quarterfinal he would be expected to meet Sampras in a semifinal. Korda beat the American at the U.S. Open in September, winning their round of 16 match in five sets, and believes he is capable of another upset should they meet again.

"Why not? At the U.S. Open I was ranked 25 or whatever, I beat the No. 1 guy," Korda said.

Korda followed his win over Sampras at the U.S. Open by retiring against Bjorkman in

the quarterfinals because of illness associated with sinus problems.

The problems remain but Korda said he felt capable of going the whole way through this tournament.

"So far so good," Korda said. He put some of the blame for his U.S. Open default loss down to spending too much time in a cold television studio after beating Sampras.

"It was like visiting a fridge at that time," Korda said. "If you look at my body it is not covered in fat, I can get frozen quite quickly."

Korda said he was playing better now than when he beat Sampras.



Petr Korda of Czech in action during a match against Cedric Pioline of France at the Australian Open Tennis Championships in Melbourne Sunday.. AP

Germany to send more athletes

By NESHA STARCEVIC
FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Germany is sending more athletes to Nagano than ever before to a Winter Olympics. Can they come back with a bigger medal haul than ever before? There is ground to be optimistic.

"It will be good if we can achieve similar results as we did in Albertville and Lillehammer," said National Olympic Committee chief Walther Troeger.

Germany sent 110 athletes to Albertville, France in 1992 and it was the most successful nation with 26 medals and 10 golds. In Lillehammer in 1994, 117 Germans won 24 medals, two fewer than host Norway.

Russiatopped the gold medal count with 11. Norway had 10 and the Germans nine.

In Nagano, Germany will have at least 135 athletes, with the final cut to be made shortly before the Games. One reason for more athletes is that there are two new sports, snowboarding and curling.

But the Germans not only have the numbers, they also have quality.

They are traditionally strong in biathlon, speedskating, bobsled and luge, and this time the Germans will be among the medal contenders again in those events.

But it is their Alpine ski team that could and should come back with a bunch of medals. While German men are outsiders, the women have been dominating the World Cup circuit this season.

In Lillehammer, German women won only two medals, Katja Seizinger's gold in the downhill and Martina Ertl's silver in the giant slalom.

This time, the Germans should medal in every event, possibly more than once.

Seizinger will be the favorite to retain the downhill title. Ertl has recovered from a string of injuries and Hilde Gerg has become a threat between the gates.

By mid-January, German women had won nine of 19 World Cup races, including Seizinger's record-tying run of six consecutive victories, all in downhill and super-giantslalom races.

Seizinger has a commanding lead in overall World Cup standings, with Gerg second and Ertl third as of Jan. 24.

"We are a very consistent team, very motivated, which can win in all disciplines this season," said Seizinger, who's shooting for her second World Cup title in three years.

"As a team we are very powerful and in a winning form," Gerg said.

"We can shoot for medals in all disciplines at the Nagano Olympics. I hope to get at least one in Japan, no matter in which discipline," she said.

While strong in Alpine skiing, no Germans are expected to medal in the cross-country or Nordic combined, events in which they have not had much success on the World Cup circuit.

But their ski jumping team could provide the biggest challenge to the sensational Japanese, even though Jens Weissflog has retired. The Germans won the team competition in Lillehammer.

Sven Hannawald, 23, won the last stop on the prestigious Four-Hill tour, preventing Japan's Kazuyoshi Funaki from sweeping the series.

Sonics...

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Marbury had 18 points and nine assists, and Cherokee Parks added 15 points and 12 rebounds.

Indiana Pacers 95, Boston Celtics 88

At Indianapolis, Reggie Miller scored 23 of his 32 points in the second half as Indiana overcame a 17-point deficit to defeat Boston.

It was the second consecutive night Indiana won after overcoming a double-digit deficit in the second half.

Boston, which led by 17 in the second quarter and 10 early in the third, lost the lead for good when it went more than four minutes without a basket in the final period.

Rik Smits finished with 15 points and a season-high 15 rebounds and Chris Mullin contributed 17 points to the victory.

Antoine Walker led Boston with 22 points and 16 rebounds.

1997 Rocball Tournament:

Brotherhood defeats Hamma

By Priscilla T. Castro

Variety News Staff

LAST WEEK, Brotherhood defeated Hamma and secured themselves in the playoff spot. The Brotherhood defeated Hamma, juice 48 to 18 in a two day game.

Alfom Bristo, last year's defending champions, who were then called the Macaroni, juiced the Islanders in four sets 66 to 22.

Alfom Bristos hope for a repeat and a back-to-back title as the world's best rocball players starts this coming Wednesday when they will be playing against Hamma.

This is the first time these two teams meet, neither team had what it took to finish the game in four sets.

The game was forced into O-Kon where a team can win the 8 point set either by out playing one another to 8 points or scoring a goal; which ever happens first. Hamma won the O-Kon 9 to 5 and gave Alfom Bristo their first loss.

Both Hamma and the Alfom Bristo have one loss each. This week's game will give Alfom Bristo a chance to redeem themselves with the Hamma and go on to meet the Brotherhood in Rocball's World Series, or it will give the Hamma a chance to play in the series with the only team that defeated them in regular season play.

Last week's game between Alfom Bristo and the Islanders, Brian Karasek was not only the games "heavy hitter" with 1 jam, 5 aces, 1 xunk, 4 kees and a goal, Brian's performance also earned him Rocball's "Master Blaster" title for being able to score points in all of Rocball's scoring techniques. The only other Master Blaster in Rocball this yea is Roy Kaipat who is on the Brotherhood team.

Cleveland Cavaliers 111, Philadelphia 76ers 92

At Cleveland, Brevin Knight tied the NBA season-high with eight steals and shut down Allen Iverson as the Cavaliers beat Philadelphia.

Iverson, who scored 50 in a game at Gund Arena late last year, was held to eight points on 2-of-9 shooting with nine assists — delighting the second sellout crowd of the season at Gund Arena.

Cleveland shot 54 percent and had seven double-figure scorers. Wesley Person had 17, while Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Cedric Henderson each had 16.

Theo Ratliff led Philadelphia with 21 points and Derrick Coleman had seven points and 13 rebounds.

Portland Trail Blazers 92, Atlanta Hawks 77

At Atlanta, Isaiah Rider scored 28 points and Portland defeated Atlanta for the first time in more than three years.

Portland, ending its current road trip 3-1, had lost six in a row to the Hawks since Jan. 3, 1995. The Blazers have won five of their last six games, while Atlanta has lost three in a row.

Gary Trent added 21 points and 11 rebounds and Rasheed Wallace had 18 points and eight rebounds for Portland, which was playing its fourth game in five nights.

Christian Laettner led Atlanta with 16 points. Atlanta shot just 32.9 percent overall and was 1-for-12 from 3-point range.

Washington Wizards 104, New Jersey Nets 87

At Washington, Chris Webber scored 22 points and Washington took control with a 22-1 run in the first quarter.

After starting 1-for-6, Webber scored 10 points in the first quarter and finished with 20 or more points for the 14th consecutive game.

SPORTS

Pangelinan, Camacho top athletes

By Priscilla T. Castro

Variety News Staff

THE NORTHERN Marianas Amateur Sports Association has awarded swimmer Xenavee Pangelinan and Arafura Softball Games MVP Greg F. Camacho as Female and Male Athlete of the Year.

Greg led his NMI team in the Arafura Games, he was also awarded Most Valuable Player. Camacho posted a batting average of .444 and fielding average of 1.000 to earn the Most Valuable Player Award at the Arafura

Games Softball event.

In the Female Awardee goes to Xenavee Pangelinan in which she broke one of Guam's and two NMI records. Pangelinan also competed in the second Oceania Swimming Championship in Brisbane, Australia, against the best swimmers in the region.

Student Male Athlete of the year award went out to Dane Lizama who was chosen Student Athlete of the Month for the month of June 1997, in which he plays for the Dandan Jets. He was the third

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(L-R) Greg F. Camacho, Xenavee Pangelinan, Dane Lizama, SAVA President Tonie R. Taitano, Saipan Mayor Jose C. Sablan, (standing at the back) Acting Director for Sports and Recreation Bill Sakovich, NMASA V-President Louie Wabol and Judge Edward Manibusan pose for the media during the awarding of the Athletes at the Pacific Gardenia Sunset Bar & Grill.

Photo by Priscilla T. Castro



Winners of the FK9 Category at yesterday's Kart Championship celebrate with a splash. (From left) John-Philip Aldan (2nd Place), Rick Elieisar (1st), and Toshiharu Hitomi (3rd). Photo courtesy of Frank M. Elipico



Seattle SuperSonics' Gary Payton (20) puts up a shot over Los Angeles Lakers' Shaquille O'Neal during the first period of their Saturday game in Seattle. AP

Ueda is '98 kart champion

By Priscilla T. Castro

Variety News Staff

KART RACER Shiro Ueda did it again.

Ueda raced hard to defend his title in the SSD Category and he emerged once again as champion of the 1998 3rd Annual Marlboro Kart Championship held Sunday at the Marianas Resort and Seaside Circuit.

Ueda crossed the finish line in a tight race with second place winner Iwai Akari who came in only milli-seconds behind. Shiro finished the 10 laps in 8 minutes, 42 seconds and 198 milli-seconds, while Akari came in 8 minutes, 42 seconds and 292 milli-seconds. Third place goes to Okachi Tomonari who also finished close with 8 minutes, 43 seconds and 972 milli-seconds.

Ueda's son, Yuki, who is a first timer in Saipan's Kart Race came in strong and placed 5th with a time of 8 minutes, 49 seconds and 921



Shiro Ueda

milli-seconds.

In the FPS Category, first place goes to racer Saka Naozumi and partner Gregory Hurt in which they finished 61 laps in just 51 minutes, 25 seconds and 154 milli-seconds. Second place goes to partners, Iwai Akari and Siobuchi Seiji, with a time of 51 minutes, 39 seconds and 748 milli-seconds. Third place goes to Eda Mamoru and Sakajiri Hideki with a time of 51 minutes, 51

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Sports Bits

THE Marianas Visitors Bureau will conduct an orientation on the Buffaloes Fun Run at the MVB Office located former Professional Building in San Jose.

The orientation will be on Friday, January 30 from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. All Japanese speaking participants are asked to attend the 5:00 p.m. orientation and all others at 5:30 p.m.

Important matters will be discussed during the orientation so we ask that all participants be present. We will be accepting applicants on this day, if you have not registered please do so on this day.

For more information, please call MVB for Ed Diaz or Jack Diaz at 664-3214 or 664-3210.

All interested person urged to attend their first meeting on Wednesday, January 28th, 7:30 p.m. at the Corner Pocket in Garapan.

For more information please contact Fred or Ki at 233-POOL. (P.T. Castro)

Supersonics 101, L.A. Lakers 95

SEATTLE (AP) - The Seattle SuperSonics and the Los Angeles Lakers may be closer than their records show.

The Pacific Division rivals with the National Basketball Association's two best records met for the first time Saturday and the difference was the Sonics' maturity and poise down the stretch of the 101-95 win.

Shaquille O'Neal had 30 points, 12 rebounds and five blocked shots and Eddie Jones poured in 23 points on 9-for-19 shooting, but the Sonics got two free throws each from veterans Hersey Hawkins and Detlef Schrempf in the final 17.1

seconds.

Vin Baker had 23 points, Gary Payton 20 and Schrempf 19 for Seattle. Dale Ellis scored 17 points off the bench for the Sonics.

New York Knicks 99, Detroit Pistons 92

In the Detroit suburb of Auburn Hills, Charles Oakley scored seven of his 17 points in the fourth quarter to lead New York.

Oakley led six Knicks in double figures, helping New York overcome 35 points from Jerry Stackhouse.

Larry Johnson and John Starks had 16 each and Chris Childs had 15 for New York. Hill had 20 points,

eight rebounds and seven assists.

Toronto Raptors 113, Minnesota Timberwolves 107, Overtime

At Toronto, Doug Christie scored 31 points and Damon Stoudamire added 21 points and 10 assists, leading as Toronto ended Minnesota's seven-game winning streak.

Christie was 7-for-7 from the start of the fourth quarter, helping Toronto overcome an early 19-point deficit. Oliver Miller added 18 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists.

Tom Gugliotta led the Timberwolves with 25 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists. Stephon

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