

HENG SINITH Associated Press

TOURISTS visit Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The temple complex, built in the 12th century, was the center of the Khmer empire.

COLUMN ONE

Stolen treasures find their way home

Thousands of antiquities disappeared from Cambodia during decades of strife. The country is taking on California museums to get them back.

By Stephanie Yang | REPORTING FROM SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA

he elderly woman was weaving baskets at home when a group of strangers arrived at her front gate, requesting her help on a national mission.

They spent the next two hours that January afternoon asking 74-year-old So Nin about growing up amid the ruins of the Angkor kingdom and her memories of the ancient monuments built by the Khmer empire before its collapse in the 15th century.

Four of the visitors returned a few weeks later, carrying books, binders and a laptop filled with photographs of artifacts from that era, many of which they believed to have been stolen and



Norton Simon Art Foundation

A SANDSTONE statue of Vishnu, circa 950, at Pasadena's Norton Simon Museum.

sold overseas.

They flipped through photographs—a Buddha, a stoic guardian, a three-eyed goddess—hoping So might recognize them. But she kept shaking her head no.

Then one gave her pause: a stone slab featuring the Hindu god Vishnu reclining against a giant snake, which today is on display in Pasadena as part of the Asian art collection at the Norton Simon Museum.

Her eyebrows furrowed as she leaned forward to contemplate the carving.

"Can you show us where you saw it?" asked one of the visitors.

[See Antiquities, A4]

Church accused in suit of trying to 'derail' rape trial

Scientology official calls harassment claim in Masterson case 'categorically false.'

By James Queally

Nearly six months after actor Danny Masterson was convicted of sexually assaulting two fellow members of the Church of Scientology, lawyers for his victims filed a document that contained a stunning new allegation against the faith.

Submitted in a downtown Los Angeles court as part of a years-old civil law-suit against Scientology, the document referenced a purported effort by the church to "derail" the criminal proceedings against Masterson.

"Defendants and their agents engaged in a campaign of harassment and intimidation directed at one of the prosecutors assigned to Defendant Masterson's trial," the declaration from civil attorney Simon Leen read. "That prosecutor's home and car windows were broken, the prosecutor's home electronics were tampered with, and Defendants' agents surveilled the prosecutor"

[See Scientology, A8]

Eclipse may make U.S. of

... awe

By Karen Kaplan

To hear Herodotus tell it, a total solar eclipse in 585 BC ended a five-year war between ancient kingdoms in present-day Turkey.

Could another total eclipse on Monday bring an end to the partisan wars in America?

America?
The idea may sound farfetched — until you talk with
Paul Piff. The UC Irvine professor of psychology and social behavior has spent the
better part of two decades
researching what triggers us
to set our personal needs
aside and shift our focus to
the greater good.

One of them, he and other scholars have found, is awe: the feeling you get when you contemplate something that is so vast and so mysterious that it forces you to reevaluate your understanding of the world.

[See **Awe**, A10]

'TO ME, IT WAS JUST A NORMAL BUSINESS'

Two Southland gamblers say they bet regularly with alleged ring linked to Shohei Ohtani

By David Wharton and Nathan Fenno

For all its complexities, all its twists and turns, the gambling scandal that has engulfed Dodgers star Shohei Ohtani raises a simple question.

In this era of DraftKings and FanDuel, when so many people across the nation can place wagers with a few taps on the phone, why would anyone use an illegal bookie?

Two Southern California men who told The Times they bet regularly with the alleged bookmaking ring linked to Ohtani and his former interpreter offer an answer.

Like many gamblers, they saw no alternative in California, one of only a dozen states that prohibit sports betting. Speaking on condition of anonymity because of state laws, they contradict the stereotype of a bookie standing on the corner, scribbling numbers on a notepad and keeping a wad of cash in his pocket. The operation they describe was efficient and businesslike.

Customers were given a password to access an offshore website where they could scan odds and enter bets, they said. One bettor said he received his winnings and paid for losses through third-party Venmo accounts. The other recalled exchanging cash in face-to-face meetings with an "agent" who allegedly reported back to the ring.

"The guy seemed to run a good shop," one said of the bookmaker, adding that he [See Gambling, A18] CECIL 'CHIP' MURRAY, 1929 - 2024

L.A. pastor fought racism

By Gayle Pollard-Terry

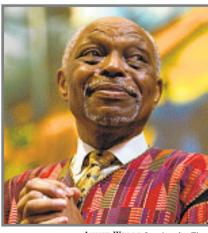
he Rev. Dr. Cecil L. "Chip" Murray, who made Los Angeles' First African Methodist Episcopal Church home to the most prestigious Black pulpit in the city, attracting presidents, governors and mayors to hear his dynamic sermons, has died.

Murray died of natural causes Friday evening at his home in the View Park-Windsor Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles County, his son Drew David Murray said.

"He was a man who gave God his all," he said. "He was a devoted husband, and a loving and caring father."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass issued a statement honoring Murray's legacy.

[See Murray, A7]



Annie Wells Los Angeles Ti

CIVIL RIGHTS ICON
Murray helped First AME become a
powerful force for Black Angelenos.

Israel recovers hostage's body

Negotiators prepare to begin new round of talks Sunday on a cease-fire and release of remaining hostages. world, A3

Billionaires back in Trump's camp

Richest people say taxes could climb by millions if President Biden wins reelection and enacts his next agenda. NATION, A6

Gift pays tribute to Black couple

Sons of Asian family give back decades after pair defied racism by renting parents a home in Coronado. CALIFORNIA, BI Weather

Partly sunny, cool. L.A. Basin: 67/47. **B9**

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