



IN DANA POINT, part of a cliff washed away in recent rains, but the homes there haven't been evacuated or deemed unsafe to occupy.

## Was he a victim of Korean war on drugs?

Authorities seemed determined to make an example of movie star Lee Sun-kyun.

By Max Kim

SEOUL — South Korean actor Lee Sun-kyun learned he was being investigated for illegal drug use after reading about it in the news.


The story that leaked to the South Korean news media was that detectives from the city of Incheon were acting on a tip that Lee had taken ketamine and marijuana.

Best known for his role as a haughty tech executive in the Oscar-winning 2019 dark comedy "Parasite," Lee was one of the country's biggest movie stars. He had lead roles in two of the seven Korean films screened in May at the Cannes Film Festival.

South Korea has some of the harshest drug laws in the world, and recreational use has long been dealt with as a criminal matter rather than a public health issue. The police investigation was opened in October amid a renewed crackdown, and authorities seemed determined to make an example out of Lee.

He was paraded in front of reporters, drug-tested four times and once interrogated for 19 hours straight. Salacious personal details, leaked to the media, formed a pulpy narrative of a beloved star whose deviant private life was finally being unmasked.

[See South Korea, A4]



Imazins via Getty Images

**SOUTH KOREAN** actor Lee Sun-kyun, who was found dead in December, denied he used drugs.

## More risk of mudslides and floods as new storms move in

Fresh precipitation this weekend will threaten already saturated areas

By Rong-Gong Lin II, Hannah Fry and Salvador Hernandez

Already inundated by record rainfall, Southern California is facing another major storm Presidents Day weekend that could bring new risks for mudslides and flooding in vulnerable areas saturated with water.

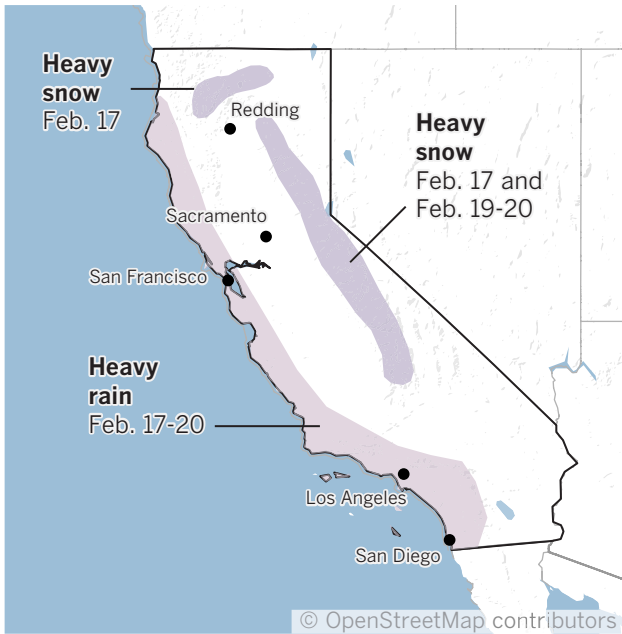
The region saw 2 to 15 inches of rain last week — precipitation that weakened hillsides, closed roads and damaged homes. And while the strength of this new storm is still far from clear, experts say it underscores the dangers for slide-prone areas in the weeks and months ahead.

The National Weather Service office in Oxnard said it is still assessing the weekend forecast but said there is the possibility of "significant flooding and mudslides," with a "potential for coastal flooding and damaging waves" and a moderate risk of falling trees and power outages.

Vulnerable areas include

### Heavy rain and snow possible

The National Weather Service has issued a hazard outlook that calls for the possibility of heavy precipitation in California Saturday through Tuesday.



PAUL DUGINSKI Los Angeles Times

Malibu, where Pacific Coast Highway was damaged, the Hollywood Hills neighborhoods and parts of coastal south Orange County, where landslides have endangered homes and blocked key railroad tracks. Other areas hit hard by sliding mud included Baldwin Hills and Hacienda Heights.

Sunday night through Monday is expected to be the most concerning, with risks lasting perhaps into Tuesday.

With the ground already saturated from recent storms, some locations could be at risk for further landslides and swift-moving flows of mud if rain this weekend falls at high rates of intensity — perhaps as much as 1 inch of rain per hour.

The most likely scenario as of Wednesday is that the weekend storm will move relatively slowly, dumping rain for one to two days, said meteorologist Ryan Kittell of the National Weather Service's Oxnard office.

But it also could move faster, limiting rain over 12 to

[See Rain, A10]

## ERs treating more dog bite patients

Record rates blamed in part on more pups with less socialization following lockdowns.

By Phillip Reese

Those pandemic puppies are growing up to be a public health concern.

The latest California data show increased rates of emergency room visits, hospitalizations and deaths from dog bites, setting records after the COVID-19 lockdowns that began in 2020.

In 2022, 48,596 ER visits for dog bites were reported in California, or 125 visits per 100,000 residents, a 70% increase from the rate of visits in 2005, according to the state Department of Health Care Access and Information. The rate of hospitalizations that resulted from dog bites

roughly doubled from 2006 through 2022.

And although dog bite deaths are rare, the rate of deaths from bites rose about 70% in California during roughly the same period, with 28 deaths in the state from 2018 through 2022.

Nationally, dog bites were the underlying cause of 96 deaths in 2022 alone, and the death rate from bites more than doubled from 2005 to 2022, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Even before the pandemic, more Americans were welcoming dogs into their homes. The American Veterinary Medical Assn. estimates that households nationwide had about 86 million dogs in 2020, up from about 62 million in 2001.

The pandemic accelerated that trend as millions more people adopted pets to provide companionship during a period of isolation.

[See Dog bites, A7]



REED HOFFMANN Associated Press

### CELEBRATION TURNS DEADLY

A victim is evacuated after gunfire kills one person and wounds numerous others at a parade celebrating the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl win. **A10**

### Gig drivers stage one-day strike

Walkout calls attention to wage complaints at DoorDash, Uber and Lyft. **BUSINESS, A6**

### Dodgers still feel sting of last year

Playoff collapse is still fresh in players' minds as spring training starts. **SPORTS, B10**

**Weather**  
Partly sunny.  
L.A. Basin: 67/49. **B6**



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