



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

THE SUN rises over Ocotillo Wells at Anza-Borrego, at 650,000 acres the largest state park in California.

L.A. mayoral candidates court Latinos

Demographic makes up 37% of electorate, making it crucial for campaigns' prospects.

By MELISSA GOMEZ

It's a Friday night happy hour at Distrito Catorce bar in Boyle Heights, and the regulars note that the crowd listening to Spanish-language jams has a few more unfamiliar faces than usual.

The reason quickly becomes clear, as Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman arrives for a hora feliz con Nithya, sipping a Tajin-rimmed drink and making the rounds to pitch her campaign for mayor.

Albert Orozco, 24, said he appreciated her efforts to reach Latino voters, including an ad in which Raman speaks Spanish.

"We need a mayor who can communicate directly with the Spanish-speaking community," Orozco said. He said he voted for Karen Bass four years ago but is considering voting for Raman in the June 2 primary.

Latinos make up nearly 37% of the L.A. electorate, making their votes crucial

for anyone with mayoral ambitions. That has campaigns putting out ads and social media posts in Spanish, hitting the ground in Latino majority neighborhoods and rallying for key endorsements.

"Whoever wins the Latino vote will win the election," Loyola Marymount University political science professor Fernando Guerra said.

Right now that looks to be incumbent Bass, making it an uphill climb for Raman and other candidates.

A poll by the UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies, co-sponsored by The Times, found that Bass led with 29% Latino voter support; former TV reality star Spencer Pratt followed at 16%, community organizer Rae Huang at 14% and Raman at 9%. Tech entrepreneur Adam Miller received 3% support.

In April, a UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs poll also found Bass with a wide lead.

"I think she has an opportunity to solidify the Latino vote with a strong primary performance," said Matt Barreto, a professor of political science and Chicana/o

[See Latinos, A10]

ANALYSIS

At China summit, did Xi outplay Trump?

The administration argues trip was a success, but there were no major deals.

By MICHAEL WILNER

HONG KONG — As President Trump left Beijing on Friday, Chinese social media resurfaced a familiar nickname for the president — flattering at first glance — declaring that Chuan Jianguo, the "Nation Builder," had returned.

It was not meant as a compliment. The nation he is building, according to the Chinese, is not the United States but their own, through a series of inadvertent yet costly mistakes inflicted by Trump at home and abroad.

If the Chinese government was self-assured entering Trump's summit with Xi Jinping, then the results of the state visit, in which Beijing refused to offer Trump any meaningful deals or concessions, signal their unmistakable confidence in American decline.

Chinese government statements in local media stating as much made their way back to Trump as he was departing, aggravating the president, a U.S. official said. But the White House secured a clarification from

[See China, A6]

High-voltage opposition to power line in desert

But proponents say clean-energy needs justify project in state park

By Hayley Smith

The Golden Pacific Powerlink project



State of California, OpenStreetMap LORENA INIGUEZ ELEBEE Los Angeles Times

BORREGO SPRINGS, Calif. — A planned high-voltage power line in the San Diego County desert has sparked outrage over its proposed path through the heart of California's largest state park.

At nearly 650,000 acres, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is known for its sprawling solitude: miles of lunar rock faces and sandy washes frame spindly Ocotillo stands, wildflower superblooms and designated dark skies. But the proposed Golden Pacific Powerlink from San Diego Gas & Electric could soon change that, opponents say.

The 500-kilovolt transmission line would run some 140 miles from an important substation in southeastern Imperial County, near the Mexican border, to a new one on the border of Orange and San Diego counties near the Pacific Ocean — carving a steel-towered path through Anza-Borrego to get there.

[See Line, A10]

Feds ready plan on Colorado River. California likes it so far

By IAN JAMES

After months of pressing western states to come to their own agreement, the Trump administration told their leaders it's drawing up a 10-year plan for dealing with water shortages on the Colorado River.

The river is a major water

source for Southern California and much of the Southwest, but its largest reservoirs, Lake Mead and Lake Powell, are severely depleted, and their levels continue to drop.

News of the federal government's preliminary plan surfaced Wednesday during a meeting in Phoenix. Tom Buschatzke, director of the

Arizona Department of Water Resources, said federal officials informed state water managers they are developing a 10-year "framework" with specific rules requiring water reductions that would be reassessed every two years.

So far, negotiators for California, Arizona and Ne-

[See Water plan, A9]

Production crisis takes center stage

For the first time, the state of Hollywood is a key political issue in L.A.'s mayoral contest.

By STACY PERMAN AND SAMANTHA MASUNAGA

Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman, who serves the 4th District, makes her way across an empty, unnamed backlot, presenting her case to be the city's next mayor.

"Studio lots like this one used to be filled with people, costumers, electricians, set medics, caterers, thousands of Angelenos making a living," she says in the video posted on social media. "Now these lots are quiet. Since 2018, shooting days in the city have fallen by half."

After telling voters this issue is "personal" (her husband is a TV writer and producer), criticizing Mayor Karen Bass' leadership on the matter and outlining her own plans, Raman proclaims, "I'm running for mayor to make sure Los Angeles stays the film and TV capital of the world."

Placing the concerns of

the entertainment industry at the center of the city's mayoral race would have been unthinkable even in the last election cycle. But the production crisis, which has rocked Hollywood and pummeled its workforce, has reached a critical juncture.

The state of L.A.'s signature industry is now a political flash point alongside affordability, crime and homelessness in the upcoming election.

In campaign ads, interviews and the recent televised debate, the top three contenders: incumbent Bass, former reality TV villain Spencer Pratt and Raman, have made the ongoing production slump a pivotal topic, highlighting their plans to revitalize the industry while deploying the issue to undercut one another.

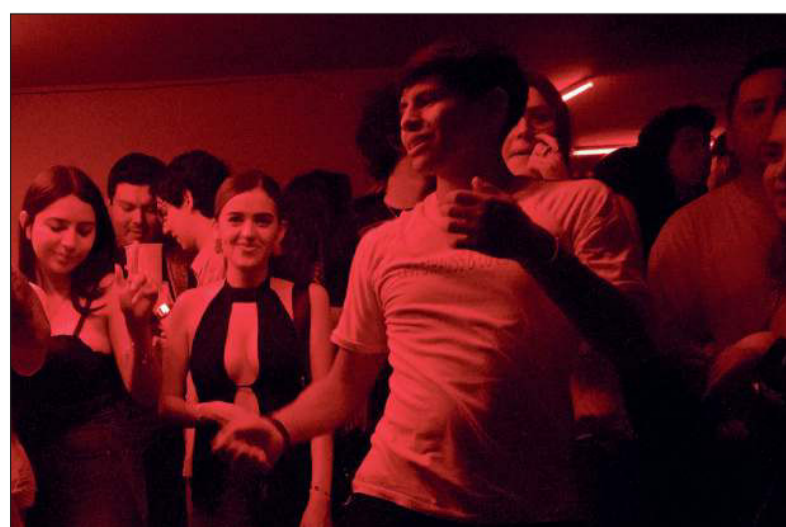
For decades, elected officials have not had to focus on the film and TV business, let alone turn it into a campaign issue. It was simply a given that local production would continue to play a dominant role in the city's economy as it has for more than a century.

But the cumulative [See Production, A14]

For bar patrons del norte, that'll be \$300

Fed up with the U.S., Mexico City nightclub owner tacks on a hefty 'gringo' cover charge

By KATE LINTHICUM



MAYOLO LÓPEZ GUTIÉRREZ For The Times

PATRONS dance at the Japan Bar in Mexico City, whose higher cover charge for Americans has generated both anger and praise.

MEXICO CITY — Federico Crespo was tired of President Trump's bullying. Of his punishing tariffs, his threat to bomb cartels in Mexico and his ruthless campaign against immigrants in the United States.

Crespo was also tired of the American tourists and remote workers who had flooded his native Mexico City, driving up rents, displacing locals and altering everything from the city's nightlife to its culinary scene.

The owner of a popular dance club, Crespo, 39, wanted to call attention to what he saw as a multitude of U.S.-related woes.

So he started charging Americans nearly \$300 to enter his bar.

Mexicans and other Latin Americans pay \$14. Customers from Canada, China and anywhere else pay \$20.

The door policy at Japan nightclub has gone viral, triggering anger and even death threats, while also earning Crespo widespread praise.

The controversy spotlights mounting geopolitical tensions between the U.S. and Mexico as well as growing backlash against what some see as an invasion of Americans and other for-

[See Fee, A4]

Advertisement for '100 years of Route 66' special section, including 'Get your kicks with road guide', 'Napoleon Solo wins Preakness', and 'Immigrant centers criticized'.

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