

THE  
INVESTOR

# DECODED X

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## THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT



The Moon Jae-in government hit a milestone today: its first 100 days in office.

Celebratory stamps sold out, and all over the web, Koreans were thanking the president for the past three months and a half. Moon seems to be one of the few Korean leaders with such blanket support, except, of course on certain issues, such as North Korea.

Speaking of the North, the press had a field day firing questions about peninsular stability at the president.

The president's message was, there can be no military action on the peninsula with South Korea knowledge (unless Pyongyang pulls another Korean War), and that Seoul and Washington are always, always on the same page.

Read on for this week's **DECODED X**.



## AND DOWN THEY GO...

Or so we thought. Real estate prices are on a declining trend, but the Aug.2 policy doesn't seem to have been enough.

Housing prices in Seoul rose 0.07% in the second week of August. In areas like Gangnam, one of the districts that remains on the no-speculation zone – meaning heavy taxes – prices have not been falling too much.

Old homes that are expected to undergo reconstruction, however, did slip a bit, for the first time in seven months.

On Aug.17, President Moon said the government is not considering additional taxes, such as property possession taxes. Yet. But he also said the government many more "tricks up its sleeve" to keep prices in check.

In the meantime, multiple home owners have until April next year to sell if they want to avoid hefty taxes on profit.

## EGGS OVER EASY



Eggs have become the latest no-no in the Korean diet.

Over 30 farms were found to have eggs contaminated with pesticide, and a nationwide scare has already set in.

Products are being pulled at stores, and restaurants are already advertising that they don't use eggs in their dishes.



For now, people can [check the serial numbers on the eggs to check if they're safe.](#)

Meanwhile, there's one sector that seems to be bearing the brunt of the so-called egg crisis: pharmaceutical companies.

Some vaccines are made from eggs, and this sent around [rumors that vaccines may have been manufactured with contaminated eggs](#), or there may be a shortage because they can't use contaminated eggs.

Turns out, the eggs used in vaccines are from a different type of hens bred specifically for the purpose of drug manufacturing.

## TOO MUCH GIRLTALK?

LG Electronics received some mixed reviews about its latest press conference for introducing household appliances.

The company brought in an actress who sat with the female host to chat about LG products. The discussion centered on how pretty LG appliances are, and how women find them so lovely.

First of all, LG seems to think appliances are still a woman's area of interest, despite that so many men have taken up cooking (and possibly cleaning) as a hobby.

Reporters also walked away a bit confused because the talk was placed smack in the middle of the press Q&A, and also because well, there wasn't exactly anything professional that was said about the functions or how the products have an edge.

## THIS MEANS WAR

A local media company, which shall remain nameless for now, is engaged in a full-out war with SK Group.

The company, which is a small operation with just a handful of reporters, have been writing left and right about vice chairman Chey Tae-won's affair that ended up with an out-of-wedlock child. The lady involved was furious, and Chey recently reportedly told his PR team to "take care of it."

The media firm claims all the reports are true, but SK has



made it clear it wants them all removed, regardless of their authenticity. No deal has been struck yet, and both sides are talking about “legal action.”

SK is also adamant about not “settling,” saying it has nothing to offer. Customarily, corporations offer a sort of olive branch in such situations, usually in the form of ads.

But lacking a strong corporate backing, this small media firm is quelling under the pressure it seems.

In the meantime, [Chey has filed divorce from his wife Roh So-young](#), who is the daughter of former president Noh Tae-woo. Roh, however, maintains she wants to keep the family together.

## WE “SEJONG” YOU

Sejong was once a place of doom and gloom where no civil servant in their right minds wanted to go to.

This was back when Seoul began moving key organs there after it was named Korea’s 17<sup>th</sup> autonomous city in 2012 to be turned into an administrative capital.

Lo and behold, the situation has changed drastically since then.

Not only are real estate prices skyrocketing in Sejong – it’s now an anti-speculation zone – but officials are now lining up to go.

All but a few ministries including the Science Technology Ministry have moved, but some still keep employees on in Seoul. These officials all know the real news is all happening at Sejong, and they want to be where the action is.

Back when the government first moved to Sejong, they even had matchmaking services for officials moving there to entice them Sejong is the place where they can get married and start a family.

## GETTING IT RIGHT

Local startups are finally catching on that human resources really are important in making things work and keeping the company afloat.



It's not uncommon for startup employees to jump ship, armed with confidential information about the company they worked for.

A source at a pretty well-known startup told The Investor that these employees usually make these drastic decisions because they feel used, or somehow their sacrifices weren't compensated for – lack of stock options perhaps.

Companies are getting it now, and they are trying to create an environment where employees feel appreciated. All kinds of incentives, including relaxed compliance, are being brainstormed to make sure employees feel happy and secure.

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