



## The world is pumping out 57 million tons of plastic pollution a year



A man walks on a railway track littered with plastic and other waste materials on Earth Day in Mumbai, India, April 22, 2024.

Associated Press  
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By **SETH BORENSTEIN**  
AP Science Writer

The world creates 57 million tons of plastic pollution every year and spreads it from the deepest oceans to the highest mountaintop to the inside of people's bodies, according to a new study that also said more than two-thirds of it comes from the Global South.

It's enough pollution each year — about 52 million metric tons — to

fill New York City's Central Park with plastic waste as high as the Empire State Building, according to researchers at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom. They examined waste produced on the local level at more than 50,000 cities and towns across the world for a study in Wednesday's journal Nature.

The study examined plastic that goes into the open environment, not plastic that goes into landfills

or is properly burned. For 15% of the world's population, government fails to collect and dispose of waste, the study's authors said — a big reason Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa produce the most plastic waste. That includes 255 million people in India, the study said. Lagos, Nigeria, emitted the most plastic pollution of any city, according to study author Costas Velis, a Leeds environmental en-

gineering professor. The other biggest plastic polluting cities are New Delhi; Luanda, Angola; Karachi, Pakistan and Al Qahirah, Egypt. India leads the world in generating plastic pollution, producing 10.2 million tons a year (9.3 million metric tons), far more than double the next big-polluting nations, Nigeria and Indonesia.

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# The world is pumping out 57 million tons of plastic pollution a year

Continued from Front

China, often villainized for pollution, ranks fourth but is making tremendous strides in reducing waste, Velis said. Other top plastic polluters are Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia and Brazil. Those eight nations are responsible for more than half of the globe's plastic pollution, according to the study's data.

The United States ranks 90th in plastic pollution with more than 52,500 tons (47,600 metric tons) and the United Kingdom ranks 135th with nearly 5,100 tons (4,600 metric tons), according to the study.

In 2022, most of the world's nations agreed to make the first legally binding treaty on plastics pollution, including in the oceans. Final treaty negotiations take place in South Korea in November.

The study used artificial intelligence to concentrate on plastics that were improperly burned — about 57% of the pollution — or just dumped. In both cases incredibly tiny microplastics, or nanoplastics, are what turn the problem from a visual annoyance at beaches and a marine life problem to a human health threat, Velis said.

Several studies this year have looked at how prevalent microplastics are in our drinking water and in people's tissue, such as hearts, brains and testicles, with doctors and scientists



City workers remove garbage floating on the Negro River, which has a rising water level due to rain, in Manaus, Amazonas state, Brazil, June 6, 2022.

Associated Press

still not quite sure what it means in terms of human health threats.

"The big time bomb of microplastics are these microplastics released in the Global South mainly," Velis said. "We already have a huge dispersal problem. They are in the most remote places ... the peaks of Everest, in the Mariana Trench in the ocean, in what we breathe and what we eat and what we drink."

He called it "everybody's problem" and one that will haunt future generations.

"We shouldn't put the blame, any blame, on the Global South," Velis said. "And we shouldn't praise ourselves about what we do in the Global North in any way."

It's just a lack of resources and ability of government to provide the necessary services to citizens, Velis said.

Outside experts worried that the study's focus on pollution, rather than overall production, lets the plastics industry off the hook. Making plastics emits large amounts of greenhouse gas that contribute to climate change.

"These guys have defined plastic pollution in a much narrower way, as really just macroplastics that are emitted into the environment after the consumer, and it risks us losing our focus on the upstream and saying, hey now all we need to do is manage the waste better," said Neil Tan-

gri, senior director of science and policy at GAIA, a global network of advocacy organizations working on zero waste and environmental justice initiatives. "It's necessary but it's not the whole story."

Theresa Karlsson, science and technical advisor to International Pollutants Elimination Network, another coalition of advocacy groups on environment, health and waste issues, called the volume of pollution identified by the study "alarming" and said it shows the amount of plastics being produced today is "unmanageable."

But she said the study misses the significance of the global trade in plastic waste that has rich coun-

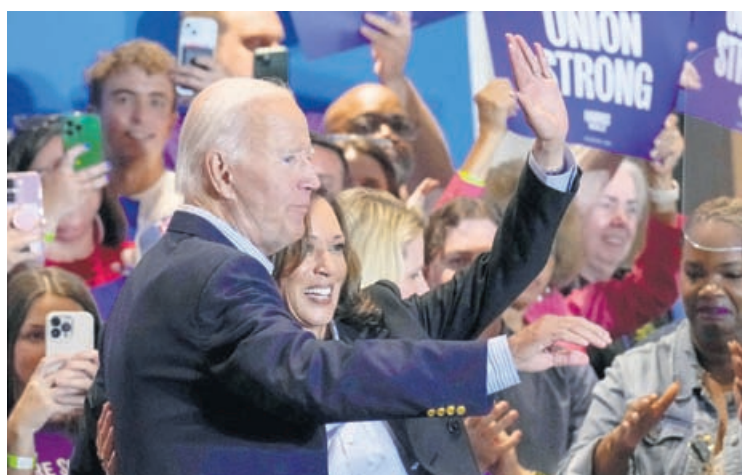
tries sending it to poor ones. The study said plastic waste trade is decreasing, with China banning waste imports. But Karlsson said overall waste trade is actually increasing and likely plastics with it. She cited EU waste exports going from 110,000 tons (100,000 metric tons) in 2004 to 1.4 million tons (1.3 million metric tons) in 2021.

Velis said the amount of plastic waste traded is small. Kara Lavender Law, an oceanography professor at the Sea Education Association who wasn't involved in the study, agreed, based on U.S. plastic waste trends. She said this was otherwise one of the more comprehensive studies on plastic waste.

Officials in the plastics industry praised the study.

"This study underscores that uncollected and unmanaged plastic waste is the largest contributor to plastic pollution and that prioritizing adequate waste management is critical to ending plastic pollution," Chris Jahn, council secretary of the International Council on Chemical Associations, said in a statement. In treaty negotiations, the industry opposes a cap on plastic production.

The United Nations projects that plastics production is likely to rise from about 440 million tons (400 million metric tons) a year to more than 1,200 million tons (1,100 million metric tons), saying "our planet is choking in plastic." □



Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris campaigns with President Joe Biden at the IBEW Local Union #5 union hall in Pittsburgh, on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2, 2024.

Associated Press

By JOSH BOAK and  
MARC LEVY

Associated Press  
WASHINGTON (AP) — The

## White House signaling it will likely stop Nippon Steel's plans to buy U.S. Steel

White House is signaling an openness to blocking the acquisition of U.S. Steel by Nippon Steel, as a government review of the proposed takeover by the Japanese company is on the cusp of ending.

The Washington Post reported Wednesday that President Joe Biden plans to stop the deal from going forward. A White House official, insisting on anonymity to discuss the matter, did not deny the report and said Biden still needs

to receive the official recommendation from the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. That review could end as soon as this month.

Biden had already voiced his objections to the merger, backing his supporters in the United Steelworkers union who oppose the deal. The objection carries weight as U.S. Steel is headquartered in the swing state of Pennsylvania and is a symbol of Pittsburgh's industrial might in an election

year where Republicans and Democrats alike are promising more domestic manufacturing jobs.

Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, came out against the deal this week.

Former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee, already said he would block the merger if he was still in the White House.

Stock in U.S. Steel fell roughly 17% on the news that Biden would stop the merger. □



# U.S. accuses Russia of using state media to spread disinformation before the November election

By ERIC TUCKER, DAVID KLEPPER and MATTHEW LEE  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Biden administration announced wide-ranging actions Wednesday meant to call out Russian influence in the upcoming U.S. presidential election, unsealing criminal charges against two employees of a Russian state-run media company and seizing internet domains used by the Kremlin to spread disinformation. The measures represented a U.S. government effort at disrupting a persistent threat from Russia that American officials have long warned has the potential to sow discord and create confusion among voters. Washington has said that Russia remains the primary threat to elections even as the FBI investigates a hack by Iran of Donald Trump's campaign and an attempt breach of the Joe Biden-Kamala Harris campaign. One criminal case accuses two employees of RT, a Russian-state funded media organization that was forced by the Justice Department as a foreign agent, of covertly funding a Tennessee-based content creation



Attorney General Merrick Garland speaks during a meeting of the Justice Department's Election Threats Task Force, at the Department of Justice, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024, in Washington, with Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco, left, and FBI Director Christopher Wray, right.

Associated Press

company to publish nearly 2,000 videos containing Russian propaganda. The defendants, who remain at large, used fake identities and the company was unaware it was being used by Russia. In the other action, officials announced the seizure of 32 internet domains that were used by the Kremlin to spread Russian propaganda and weaken global support for Ukraine.

Attorney General Merrick Garland said the actions relate to Russia's use of state media to enlist unwitting American influencers to spread propaganda and disinformation. Intelligence agencies have previously charged that Russia was using disinformation to try to interfere in the election. The new steps show the depth of U.S. concerns and signal legal ac-

tions against those suspected of being involved. "Today's announcement highlights the lengths some foreign governments go to undermine American democratic institutions," the State Department said. "But these foreign governments should also know that we will not tolerate foreign malign actors intentionally interfering and undermining free and fair

elections."

In a speech last month, Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said Russia remained the biggest threat to election integrity, accusing Russian President Vladimir Putin and "his proxies are using increasingly sophisticated techniques in their interference operations. They're targeting specific voter demographics and swing-state voters to in an effort to manipulate presidential and congressional election outcomes. They're intent on co-opting unwitting Americans on social media to push narratives advancing Russian interests."

Much of the concern around Russia centers on cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns designed to influence the November vote. The tactics include using state media like RT to advance anti-U.S. messages and content, as well as networks of fake websites and social media accounts that amplify the claims and inject them into American's online conversations. Typically, these networks seize on polarizing political topics such as immigration, crime or the war in Gaza. □

## House Republicans subpoena Secretary Blinken for testimony on U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan

By FARNOUSH AMIRI  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — House Republicans have issued a subpoena demanding testimony from Secretary of State Antony Blinken as they wrap up a sprawling yearslong investigation into the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021. Rep. Michael McCaul, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, sent a subpoena letter late Tuesday ordering Blinken to appear before the committee by Sept. 19 or face a contempt of Congress charge. "You served as the final decision maker for the department on the with-

drawal and evacuation," McCaul wrote. He added that three years later, Blinken is "in a position to inform the Committee's consideration of potential legislation aimed at helping prevent the catastrophic mistakes of the withdrawal, including potential reforms to the Department's legislative authorization." Matthew Miller, a State Department spokesman, said Blinken is unable to testify on the dates proposed by the committee as he will be traveling for diplomatic work the majority of September. He claimed the committee denied "reasonable alternatives" to the subpoena date.

"The Secretary has testified before the Congress on Afghanistan more than 14 times more than any other Cabinet-level official," Miller said, adding that four of those times were directly before the Foreign Affairs committee at the request of McCaul. "It is disappointing that instead of continuing to engage with the Department in good faith, the Committee instead has issued yet another unnecessary subpoena." The subpoena for Blinken's testimony is the latest in a series of moves by McCaul and other House Republicans over the last 18 months to hold the Biden administration accountable for what

they have called a "stunning failure of leadership" after Taliban forces seized the Afghan capital of Ka-

bul, far more rapidly than U.S. intelligence had foreseen as American forces pulled out. □



A U.S. Chinook helicopter flies over the U.S. embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021, as the capital was captured by Taliban forces.

Associated Press



## Can the city of Savannah fine or jail people for leaving guns in unlocked cars? A judge weighs in

By RUSS BYNUM

Associated Press

**SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP)** — A Georgia gun owner's attorney asked a judge Wednesday to halt enforcement of a Savannah city ordinance that imposes fines and possibly jail time for people who leave guns inside unlocked cars.

The lawsuit by Clarence Belt could ultimately determine whether city officials successfully found a niche where they can legally regulate gun safety in a state where Republican lawmakers have widely abolished restrictions on owning and carrying firearms.

Savannah's mayor and city council voted unanimously in April to outlaw keeping firearms in unlocked vehicles, with maximum penalties of a \$1,000 fine and 30 days in jail. They said the law would make it harder for criminals to steal guns, and cited local police statistics showing more than 200 guns reported stolen last year from vehicles that weren't locked.

Belt filed suit in May. He lives in Jesup, Georgia, about 66 miles (106 kilometers) southwest of Savannah, but says he frequently visits the coast-



The J. Tom Coleman Courthouse is seen in Savannah, Ga., on Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024.

Associated Press

al city for shopping, eating and doctor appointments. His lawyer, John Monroe, says Belt carries a gun in his vehicle and fears being cited. "He's disabled and it's difficult for him to comply with the ordinance," said Monroe, who gave no further details about Belt's disability during a court hearing Wednesday. "He also doesn't want to comply with the ordinance." Chatham County Superior Court Judge Benjamin Karpf

didn't rule Wednesday on Belt's motion to halt enforcement of the Savannah ordinance while considering his underlying lawsuit that seeks to have it thrown out permanently. Monroe said Savannah's ordinance should be voided because it violates a state law prohibiting local governments from regulating "the possession, ownership, transport, (or) carrying" of firearms.

Georgia Attorney General

Chris Carr, a Republican, made the same argument in a May letter to Savannah officials stating that "no local ordinance can regulate firearms." City officials ignored Carr's warning that they could face civil liability for enforcing the ordinance. Savannah Mayor Van Johnson, a Democrat and a former police officer, has supported the city's ordinance as a way to make gun owners act responsibly without infringing

on their rights to own or carry firearms.

Bates Lovett, Savannah's city government attorney, noted in court Wednesday that the state law cited by Belt's lawyer and Carr doesn't expressly say local governments can't regulate gun storage.

Lovett also argued that Savannah's ordinance isn't primarily about guns.

"We're regulating the vehicle, not the firearm," Lovett told the judge, adding that it's perfectly legal in Savannah to store a gun in a car. "But once you leave the vehicle, you must lock that vehicle." Monroe said Georgia courts have struck down attempts by other local governments to "indirectly" regulate guns, and that any limitations on gun storage by cities should be considered illegal restrictions on possession and ownership. Savannah police had only issued three citations and one warning for guns left in unlocked cars as of Aug. 15, the Savannah Morning News reported. The police department did not immediately provide an updated total Wednesday to The Associated Press. □

## A Florida county's plan to turn a historic ship into the world's largest artificial reef hits a snag

By KATE PAYNE

Associated Press/Report for America

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP)** — A Florida county is in talks to acquire a storied but aging ocean liner in a proposed deal that could create the largest artificial reef in the world.

But the plan hit a snag Tuesday, after local officials in coastal Okaloosa County in the Florida panhandle postponed a vote on the plan to buy and purposefully sink the SS United States.

The largest passenger ship ever built in the U.S., the SS United States shattered a record for the fastest trans-Atlantic crossing by a passenger liner on its maiden

voyage in 1952, The Associated Press reported from aboard the ship.

Now the historic vessel is in a race against time to find a new resting place, after a

court set a Sept. 12 deadline for the ship to vacate its current home at a pier in Philadelphia, following a yearslong legal dispute over rent and dockage



S.S. United States is moored on the Delaware River in Philadelphia, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024.

Associated Press

fees. Options include scrapping the massive ocean liner which is more than 100 feet (30 meters) longer than the Titanic or purposefully sinking it to create an artificial reef. Officials in Florida's Okaloosa County hope to do just that: send the SS United States to the bottom of the Gulf to create the world's largest artificial reef a diving attraction that boosts hope will generate millions of dollars a year in local tourism spending for scuba shops, charter fishing boats and hotels. "Most divers are going to be very excited," said David Bailey, a member of the Emerald Coast Scubaholics dive club. "But any of the

reefing program is about more than just diving. ... Build the reefs, you get the fish."

County staff have been tracking the status of the boat since 2022, with advocates arguing the SS United States could be a barnacle-encrusted star in the county's constellation of more than 500 artificial reefs.

But at a meeting of Okaloosa's Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, staff asked that a vote on the proposal be postponed until the board's next meeting on Sept. 17.

"We've hit a wrinkle with the pier operators," County Administrator John Hofstad explained. □



## Rights group alleges Lebanon and Cyprus violated refugees' human rights and EU funds paid for it

By **ABBY SEWELL**  
**Associated Press**

**BEIRUT (AP)** — European aid sent to Lebanon in an attempt to regulate migration by sea is funding practices that violate human rights, according to a global watchdog report published Wednesday.

As part of a policy to contain migration, authorities in Cyprus have physically pushed Syrian refugees back to Lebanon, and Lebanese security agencies have deported them, the Human Rights Watch report said.

The report, based on interviews with 16 Syrians who tried to leave Lebanon via smuggler boats, found that 15 of them "suffered human rights violations at the hands of Lebanese and/or Cypriot authorities."

Rights groups have frequently criticized the tactics of authorities in both Lebanon and Cyprus in dealing with would-be migrants and asylum seekers. Officials from the two countries deny violating any laws but say they are overwhelmed by the migration they are facing.

Lebanon, which has been in the throes of a severe financial crisis since 2019, hosts around 775,000 regis-



**Migrants aboard a Cyprus marine police patrol boat as they're brought to a harbor after being rescued from their own vessel off the Mediterranean island nation's southeastern coast of Protaras, Cyprus, on Jan. 14, 2020.**

tered Syrian refugees and hundreds of thousands more unregistered, the world's highest refugee population per capita.

Lebanese political officials have pushed for western countries to resettle the refugees or assist in returning them to Syria voluntarily or not. At the same time, Lebanon has an agreement with Cyprus to halt the smuggling of migrants and has received substantial

funding from the European Union and European countries for border control.

In some cases, Syrian refugees who were caught by the Lebanese army attempting to leave to Cyprus by sea have been driven to the Lebanon-Syria border and dumped on the Syrian side, Human Rights Watch said. Allegedly, some of them were then detained by the Syrian army, while others were

extorted by smugglers for passage back to Lebanon. Cyprus, meanwhile, suspended processing of Syrian asylum applications in April.

Human Rights Watch accused Cypriot authorities of forcibly turning back boats carrying asylum seekers coming from Lebanon.

In some cases, Cypriot authorities forcibly prevented asylum seekers from landing, and in other cases they

made it to shore but "were not given the opportunity to claim asylum" and instead were detained and then returned to Lebanon, where some were then deported to Syria, the report said.

"Both Lebanese and Cypriot authorities used excessive force at the time of arrest and during detention," Human Rights Watch said.

The European Union and European countries gave Lebanon some 16.7 million euros (\$18.5 million) from 2020 to 2023 for border management "mainly in the form of capacity-building projects explicitly aimed at enhancing Lebanon's ability to prevent irregular migration," the report said.

In August, the European Union allocated another 32 million euros (\$35.3 million) to "continue implementing border management enhancement projects in Lebanon through 2025," it said.

Cyprus' Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection in a statement denied carrying out so-called pushbacks.

It noted that Cyprus is a "small frontline country" that has "received massive migrant flows over the last few years." □

**Associated Press**

## Indonesia arrests a fugitive former Filipino town mayor wanted for illegal online gaming scams

By **JIM GOMEZ and EDNA TARIGAN**  
**Associated Press**

**JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)** — A dismissed town mayor who fled the Philippines after being accused of helping establish an illegal online gaming and scam center catering mostly to clients in China has been arrested near Indonesia's capital, officials said Wednesday.

Indonesian authorities arrested Alice Guo at a house in Jakarta's satellite city of Tangerang just before midnight on Tuesday, according to Khrisna Murti, chief of the international division of the National Police.

Guo was in custody and awaiting deportation to the Philippines, Murti said, adding that her arrest was the result of "cooperation between Indonesian and Filipino's police."

Filipino President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. thanked the Indonesian authorities.

"Let this serve as a warning to those who attempt to evade justice," Marcos said and added that arrangements were being made to bring Guo back to the Philippines where she faces a slew of criminal charges. After Guo fled the Philippines in July, she was tracked in Malaysia and Singapore before turning

up in Indonesia.

Two companions, who reportedly slipped out of the Philippines with her without going through normal immigration and clearing procedures, were recently arrested in Indonesia.

Guo ran as a Filipino candidate in 2022 elections and won as mayor of the rural town of Bamban in Tarlac province north of Manila. She was accused of helping establish a massive complex with several buildings near the town hall as a hub for an illegal online gambling and scam outfit that catered mostly to clients in China, where gambling is forbidden. □



**In this handout photo provided by the Philippine Senate Social Media Unit, then Bamban Mayor, Alice Guo, speaks during the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality inquiry on the alleged human trafficking and cyber fraud operation in Angeles, Pampanga province held at the Philippine Senate in Pasay City, Philippines on May 22, 2024.**

**Associated Press**



## Human rights group implicates Venezuelan security forces in killings during post-election protests

By REGINA GARCIA CANO  
Associated Press

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — A global human rights watchdog on Wednesday implicated Venezuelan security forces and pro-government armed groups in killings that occurred during the protests that followed the country's disputed July presidential election.

Human Rights Watch, in a report detailing repressive measures the government unleashed after the vote, asserted that credible evidence gathered and analyzed by researchers, forensic pathologists and arms experts ties Venezuela's national guard and national police to some of the 24 killings that took place as people protested the outcome of the election. The organization also concluded that violent gangs aligned with the ruling party also "appear to be responsible" in some of the deaths.

Twenty-three of those killed were protesters or bystanders and one was a member of the Bolivarian National Guard.

"The repression we are see-



Protesters clash with police during demonstrations against the official election results declaring President Nicolas Maduro's reelection, the day after the vote in Caracas, Venezuela, July 29, 2024. Associated Press

ing in Venezuela is shockingly brutal," Juanita Goebertus, the organization's director for the Americas, said in a statement. "Concerned governments need to take urgent steps to ensure that people are able to peacefully protest and that their vote is respected."

The organization said it reached its conclusions regarding the killings based on interviews with witnesses, journalists and other sources; reviews of death certificates, videos, photographs; and analyses by forensic pathologists and arms experts.

Thousands of people, in-

cluding minors, took to the streets across Venezuela hours after ruling party-loyal electoral authorities declared President Nicolás Maduro the winner of the election.

The protests were largely peaceful, but demonstrators also toppled statues of Maduro's predecessor,

the late fiery leader Hugo Chávez, threw rocks at law enforcement officers and buildings, and burned police motorcycles and government propaganda.

Maduro and his ruling party allies, who controlled all aspects of government in the South American government, responded to the demonstrations with full force, carrying out arbitrary detentions, prosecutions as well as a campaign that encourages people to report relatives, neighbors and other acquaintances who participated in the protests or cast doubt on the results.

Among the killings detailed in the Human Rights Watch report is that of civil engineer and food truck worker Rancés Daniel Yzarra Bolívar. The organization said Yzarra Bolívar, 30, participated in the July 29 protests in the northern Venezuela city of Maracay.

A journalist told researchers the demonstration was initially peaceful, and a different witness reported protesters called for soldiers at a military compound to join them. □

## Nicaraguan congress gives legal footing to practice of prosecuting exiles and seizing their property

By GABRIELA SELSER  
Associated Press

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — Nicaragua's Sandinista-controlled National Assembly

approved criminal code changes Tuesday that allow the government to try opponents in absentia and seize the assets of the

condemned. It's a practice that's already carried out but will now have legal foundation. The proposal from President Daniel Ortega was approved unanimously in the state party controlled legislature.

Opponents and organizations that have fled or been forced into exile in Ortega's years-long campaign to silence critical voices could be fined, sentenced to lengthy prison terms and see their property seized by the government under the approved changes.

Nicaraguan lawyer Uriel Pineda said that with these changes Ortega's administration is looking to "legalize the arbitrary (actions) that it has been committing, like the confiscation of proper-

ty," while at the same time "reinforcing the structure of repression, giving it a legal framework." Pineda was exiled and stripped of his nationality last year.

Sandinista party lawmaker María Auxiliadora Martínez defended the reform, saying that "it is guaranteeing a system of coherent norms" through "new kinds of crimes that will allow the strengthening of the country's legal system."

Fellow party lawmaker Edwin Castro said it authorizes the seizures from Nicaraguans or foreigners "to compensate society for the crime committed."

Last year, the government exiled more than 300 opposition figures, stripping them of their nationality. Far

more Nicaraguans have fled into exile themselves to escape the repression that followed massive 2018 protests that Ortega dubbed a failed coup with international backing.

The changes also add new criminal statutes, including one that sanctions anyone who promotes, requests or facilitates economic, commercial or financial sanctions against the government.

Also on Tuesday, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Office said in a report that the government is "persecuting not only those who express dissident opinions, but also any person or organization that acts independently or is not directly under its control." □



Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega poses for a photo during the ALBA Summit at the Palace of the Revolution in Havana, Cuba, Dec. 14, 2021.

Associated Press



## Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

**ST. CRUZ** — The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)



keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for

the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

### Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali

or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable

to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The aforementioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □

## Forgotten gems Open air movie theaters

**(Oranjestad)**—During the span of over 100 years, Aruba only saw five open air movie theatres. Now practically obsolete on the island, these theaters were once frequently visited by locals and migrants in the 20th century.

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commis-

sioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies" were first streamed, movies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's



Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay

called the "car crash".

This theater closed around 2012, but was re-opened during the pandemic in July 2020, where movies were streamed on a gigantic screen set up in front of stacked containers. However, this nostalgic form of entertainment did not last very long as it was closed again only a year or two later. Nowadays you can still see the stacked containers when you drive near the bridge in Balashi. □

**Source: "De kolibrie op de rots en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba" by Evert Bongers.**







## Papillon: Where Culinary Tradition Sparks with Timeless Elegance



**Tucked away in the vibrant heart of the Village for over a decade and a half, Papillon isn't just a restaurant; it's a culinary adventure waiting to unfold. Picture this: a sanctuary where the flavors of the French Caribbean have danced harmoniously with classic French fare for the past 15 years, all set against the backdrop of a movie-inspired ambiance that's as enchanting as it is welcoming.**

Located in the heart of Palm Beach and within walking distance from hotels and local markets in the area, Papillon takes the famous story of a French man experiencing the flavors and culture of the Caribbean and incorporates these aspects of the Caribbean touch into their French culinary repertoire. Step through the doors of the newly-expanded Papillon, and you're not just stepping into a dining establishment; you're stepping into a world where sophistication embraces you like an old friend. The decor, a homage to the allure of the iconic film, casts a spell of intimacy and comfort, urging you to settle in and relish every moment. Here, dining isn't just about sustenance; it's about indulging in an experience meticulously crafted to ignite your senses.

At the heart of Papillon's magic lies its menu – a symphony of flavors orchestrated by culinary artisans. Imagine savoring the decadent richness of foie gras or the sublime delicacy of frog legs, each dish a love letter to tradition infused with a dash of innovation. And oh, the spectacle of the Dover sole being expertly prepared table-side! It's culinary theater at its finest, leaving you spellbound with every bite. All this served with a backdrop of the Caribbean ambience, complete with live musical performances and an inviting and colorful twist to your dinner experience!

But wait, there's more! Enter the realm of the Chef's Table, a weekly extravaganza led by the maestro himself, Executive Chef Juan Ludeña. Prepare to be whisked away on a six-course odyssey, each dish meticulously paired with wines handpicked from the largest French wine selection on the island by the esteemed Maitre d' Michael Otten. It's a soirée reserved for those who truly appreciate the artistry of gastronomy – an exquisite symphony for the palate.



In essence, Papillon isn't just a restaurant; it's an oasis for epicurean explorers. It's where passion meets refinement, where every dish is a masterpiece waiting to be savored, and every moment is a celebration of the finer things in life. So if you're craving the warmth of French Caribbean delights, Papillon invites you to join them on an unforgettable journey for the senses. Bon appétit!

Papillon is located in Palm Beach in front of the Hilton Resort, and open from 5pm to 10pm. Early Bird takes places from 5pm to 7pm. For reservations or more information please contact the restaurant at +297 699 5400, e-mail them at [info@papillonaruba.com](mailto:info@papillonaruba.com) or visit their website at [papillonaruba.com](http://papillonaruba.com)





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## Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare Aruba – Your own piece of Aruba, a hidden gem

### History

If you are a regular visitor to Aruba since the 70's, you probably can recall the Sun Development group, who at that time were way ahead of the times in introducing timeshare to Aruba and by using the latest in construction techniques all around the island.

Being pioneers, Sun Development opened the doors of Casa del Mar Beach Resort Phase I, in October 1986. Two-bedroom Presidential suites were presented and well received. Aruba's tourism was taking off and Sun Development was at the helm, with Phase I sold out and demand for more inventory increasing almost daily. July 1987, the second phase of Casa del Mar Beach Resort was announced, and opened in January of 1989, with many existing members buying or upgrading suites in Phase II. With a separate building constructed in 1989, 40 additional one-bedroom suites across the street named the Ambassador Building, were added to Casa del Mar Beach Resort Aruba, which now consists of 147 well-appointed suites in total.

### The resort

Where to begin? Casa del Mar Beach Resort in Aruba, where a world famous white sandy beach meets clear blue-green Caribbean water. Whether you are looking for a romantic get-away or family time in the Caribbean filled with fun, water sports and activities, Casa del Mar Beach Resort Aruba has it all and is located on Aruba's top 10 of the world, beautiful Eagle Beach. Casa del Mar offers you "Your own piece of Aruba". With over 37 years of existence, Casa del Mar is one of the most overlooked hidden gems in the low-rise hotel area. Although it can be referred to as a "smaller resort",



the accommodations are anything but small.

With different concessionaires and amenities on property such as Matthews Beach Side Restaurant, Santos Coffee with Soul, Clinical Massage Spa, Thrifty Car rental, a recently renovated pickleball and tennis court, two pool areas, Mini Market, Pelican Adventures with in-house concierge services, along with many activities for all ages, the list goes on. In addition, the Alhambra Mall across the street, offers dining and shopping options as well as one of the largest casinos on the island. The resort is surrounded by multiple fine dining restaurants, all within walking distance. The suites themselves are large and luxurious enough to comfortably sleep families of four to six people, depending on suite type. These suites are available to both transient guests and through life-long ownership by timeshare purchase.

### Renovations and Re-branding

2022 has been a celebratory year for Casa del Mar Beach Resort, with all 40 Ambassador suites bathrooms being renovated, Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare is moving their renovations to the 107 two-bedroom Presidential suite bathrooms next. Combining this with a rebranding strategy, redesigning their logo after 37 years, a new website and different branding and marketing strategies they have decided to head for a noticeable change of direction. Looking towards the future of the resort, the next years look extremely bright for Casa del Mar Beach Resort, through their commitment to upgrading and elevating their services, the goal is continuing the prosperity of the past 37 years, well into the future.

### What to expect

Experience all that Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare Aruba has to offer, by booking your next stay with them. You'll experience a warm and welcoming Caribbean

ambience with a management team and staff who is always willing to assist with anything you need. Schedule a brief tour without any further obligation with their Sales Agent during your current vacation and receive a free day pass in return with a welcome drink from Matthews Beach Side Restaurant while overlooking the beach. The existing owners who bought their lifetime ownerships in the 80's will greet you with a smile and share stories with you of being part of the "Casa del Mar Family" as the resort and owners always refer to. Many still come to the island with their families or have handed their timeshare down to the next generations, who grew up loving Aruba and continue to bring their kids here to experience the resort and people of this beautiful island.

### Buying "Your own piece of Aruba"

Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare Aruba offers a wide variety of inventory available from ocean fronts, garden side and pool views at starting prices as low as US\$ 1500 for a one bedroom renovated suite. With the upcoming renovations of the two-bedroom Presidential suites, we recommend buying in at current listing prices, as the property value is set to increase further after the renovations are complete. By purchasing your preferred week and suite type, you will receive a deed guaranteeing you a lifelong ownership with Casa del Mar Beach Resort & Timeshare Aruba, who currently also offers one of the lowest maintenance fees on the entire island. For more information - visit their recently relaunched website [www.casadelmararuba.com](http://www.casadelmararuba.com) where you will be able to find all information needed to explore "Your own piece of Aruba". □



# National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation



**The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.**

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

## Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was of-

ficially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

## The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also

known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

## Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found



ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

## Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding

area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas.□





## In celebrating 200 years of Oranjestad... Learn about the history of the famous town hall!

(Oranjestad)—If you've ever taken a stroll through main street Oranjestad, you may have stumbled upon a big green house with beautiful colonial design. This legendary house, now used as a town hall for civil marriages, was once owned by a wealthy doctor and formed part of the elite neighborhood in Oranjestad.

Jacobo Eloy Arends was an Aruban physician, and in lived in Oranjestad during the 1920s. In 1922, he married Maria Monica Lacle, the daughter of well-known business man at the time, Adriaan Lacle. The two lived a posh life in the city center, and their mansion—once the center for neighborhood parties—now serves as a public town hall for civil marriages and is a cultural monument on the island.



The house was designed by architect Chibi Wever, and constructed under the leadership of famous master carpenter, Dada Picus, who was famous at the time for his construction of beautiful buildings.

The construction of the house started once Jacobo and Maria got engaged. It is said that during the time of construction, Maria was not allowed to see the building nor be anywhere

near the construction site. It wasn't until after her honeymoon that she saw the completed mansion for the first time, furnished entirely by her sisters-in-law.

The mansion also contained the doctor's office, as well as a pharmacy. After the death of Jacobo, the house was inherited by his son, an Aruban dentist, who converted Jacobo's office into his own dental practice. Over the years, the house was rented and used by third parties, but eventually fell into disrepair, as the maintenance cost became too high to cover.

The land was sold to Land Aruba in 1986, but it did not see a renovation until 1997. Nowadays, it serves to host weddings, and is attached



to a modern building situated behind—the Aruban census office.

Jacobo and Maria's mansion was situated in front of another famous mansion, owned by Jacobo's brother Frederico Maximiliaan (Machi) Arends. Frederico was married to Veneranda (whom the mansion was named after). Their house was also constructed by Dada Picus, utilizing Veneranda's design vision that was inspired by

a house she saw in Cartagena, Colombia.

Nowadays, this mansion lies in ruins. However, the Aruban government recently announced its official restoration, with plans to convert this monument into a governmental office and public space for visitors of Oranjestad.

**Source and pictures credited to: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers.**



## Aruba to me

**ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.**

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □





## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

### ACROSS

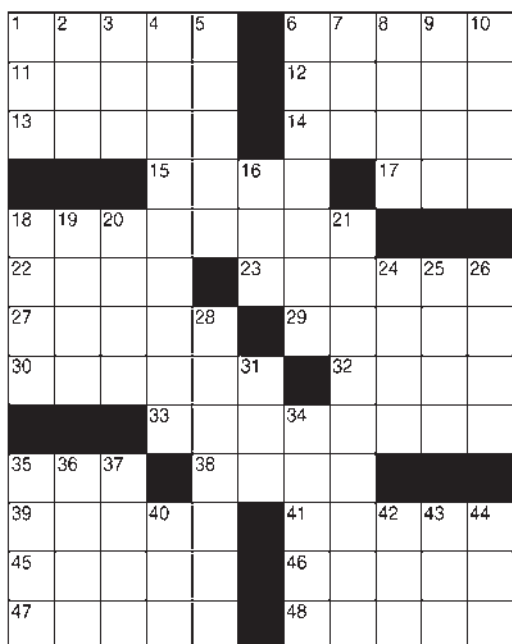
- 1 Couches
- 6 Shocked sounds
- 11 Visitor from afar
- 12 Push out
- 13 — cotta
- 14 "Keen!"
- 15 Fairy tale monster
- 17 Original
- 18 Prejudice based on social status
- 22 Damage
- 23 Truck fuel
- 27 Wiped out, in skiing slang
- 29 Burner setting
- 30 Common events in whodunits
- 32 Church reply
- 33 Unmindful
- 35 Tree fluid
- 38 Poet Sandburg
- 39 City square
- 41 Usher's place
- 45 Say
- 46 Less cordial
- 47 Rx amounts
- 48 Con-sumerist Ralph

### DOWN

- 1 Plopped down
- 2 Bullring cheer
- 3 Fragrant tree
- 4 "Dream On" band
- 5 Un-foreseen problems
- 6 "Invisible Touch" band
- 7 Log chopper
- 8 Reach across
- 9 Comedian Davidson
- 10 Poky
- 16 Relieve (of)
- 18 Libya neighbor
- 19 Tardy
- 20 Open space
- 21 "Enter Sandman" band
- 24 One or more
- 25 Preceding nights
- 26 Eye part
- 28 "Drive" band
- 31 Mariner's place
- 34 Shower feature
- 35 Tater
- 36 Choir voice
- 37 Touches lightly
- 40 Last letter
- 42 Comic Caesar
- 43 Director Spike
- 44 Go astray



Saturday's answer



2-5

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-5 CRYPTOQUOTE

WSN FBXVLSWM ZS EVOKA

ZF NYS LNVBAQSV GXWW BM

NYON KYRJY FBX NVXWF

WBDS. — VXIR

Saturday's Cryptoquote: THERE ARE ONLY TWO SEASONS — WINTER AND BASEBALL. — BILL VEECK

## Cruise ship Schedule: September 03 - 24 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	03	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00 09.00	20.00 22.00	B C	1 1
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	10	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL CELEBRATION CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00 08.00 13.00	21.00 22.00 23.00	B C I	1 1 1
TUE	17	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	24	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00 09.00	21.00 22.00	B C	1 1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

### Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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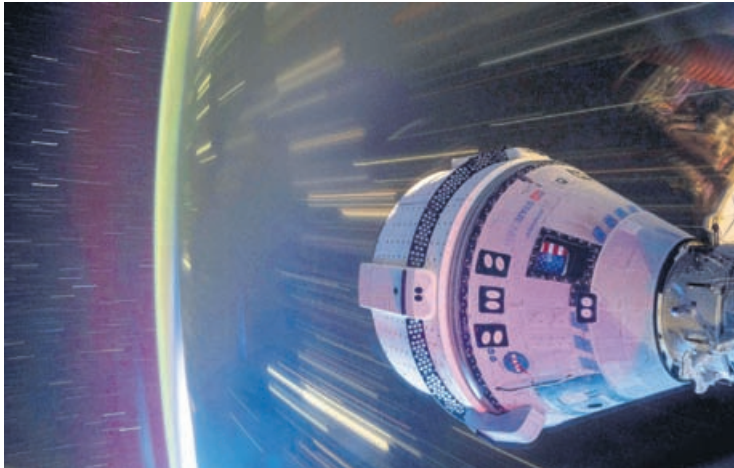
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# Boeing will fly its empty capsule back to Earth soon. Two NASA astronauts will stay behind



In this long-exposure photo provided by NASA, Boeing's Starliner spacecraft is docked to the Harmony module of the International Space Station on July 3, 2024.

Associated Press

**By MARCIA DUNN**  
**AP Aerospace Writer**  
**CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)** — Boeing will attempt to return its problem-plagued capsule from the International Space Station later this week with empty seats. NASA said Wednesday that everything is on track for the Starliner capsule to undock from the space station Friday evening. The fully automated capsule will aim for a touchdown in New Mexico's White Sands Missile Range six hours later. NASA's two stuck astronauts who flew up on Starliner will remain behind at the orbiting lab. They'll ride home with SpaceX in February, eight months after launching on what should have been a weeklong test flight. Thruster trouble and helium leaks kept

delaying their return until NASA decided that it was too risky for them to accompany Starliner back as originally planned. "It's been a journey to get here and we're excited to have Starliner return," said NASA's commercial crew program manager Steve Stich. NASA's Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams will close the hatches between Starliner and the space station on Thursday. They are now considered full-time station crew members along with the seven others on board, helping with experiments and maintenance, and ramping up their exercise to keep their bones and muscles strong during their prolonged exposure to weightlessness. To make room for them on SpaceX's next taxi flight,

the Dragon capsule will launch with two astronauts instead of the usual four. Two were cut late last week from the six-month expedition, which is due to blast off in late September. Boeing has to free up the parking place for SpaceX's arrival. Boeing encountered serious flaws with Starliner long before its June 5 liftoff on the long-delayed astronaut demo. Starliner's first test flight went so poorly in 2019 the capsule never reached the space station because of software errors that the mission was repeated three years later. More problems surfaced, resulting in even more delays and more than \$1 billion in repairs. The capsule had suffered multiple thruster failures and propulsion-system helium leaks by the time it pulled up at the space station after launch. Boeing conducted extensive

thruster tests in space and on the ground, and contended the capsule could safely bring the astronauts back. But NASA disagreed, setting the complex ride swap in motion. Starliner will make a faster, simpler getaway than planned, using springs to push away from the space station and then short thruster firings to gradually increase the distance. □

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# Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson discusses new memoir, 'Lovely One,' at Apollo Theater

By HILLEL ITALIE  
AP National Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — In one of her first public appearances on behalf of her newly published memoir, "Lovely One," Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson didn't make a lot of news, but she did make a little history: She can add her name to James Brown, Stevie Wonder and Smokey Robinson among others as someone who has sung at the Apollo Theater. Reminiscing Tuesday night with interviewer Gayle King about her love for musical theater, Jackson ably crooned a few lines from "The Wiz" "When I think of home, I think of a place/Where there's love overflowing" and threw in a favorite chant from "Schoolhouse Rock" "I'm just a bill, yes I'm only a bill. And I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill." The capacity audience at the famed Harlem performance center cheered and sang along.

King had promised and kept her promise to focus on Jackson's personal story and not on the law. Jackson discussed her childhood in Miami, the origins of her name (It means "lovely one," the book's title), her undergraduate years at Harvard Uni-



Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson is seen after her formal investiture ceremony at the Supreme Court, in Washington, Sept. 30, 2022.

Associated Press

versity, her interracial marriage to Dr. Patrick Jackson who was in the audience Tuesday night and her rise through the court system, culminating in 2022 when she became the first Black woman on the Supreme Court. "A roaring ocean" in her ears is how she remembered the call from President Joe Biden, asking her if she would agree to fill the vacancy left by retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, for whom

she had once clerked.

Jackson explained Tuesday that she had been interested since she was a girl, when she and her father, Johnny Brown, would sit together at the dining room table, she with coloring books and he with law books he was studying at the time.

Her ambition grew in middle school after she learned about Constance Baker Motley, the first Black woman to serve on the federal

judiciary.

"I remember this kinship with this fantastic woman," Jackson told King. "I thought, 'Why stop at law? I could be a federal judge.'"

Jackson's book, 405 pages, combines family history, legal history and personal history as she narrates her own improbable journey a Black woman rising to the highest court in a country where segregation was legal well into the 20th centu-

ry. "Lovely One" often reads as a kind of lesson, or roadmap, what Jackson calls in the preface "a testament for young women, people of color, and strivers everywhere, especially those who nourished outsized ambitions and believe with stubborn faith in the possibility of achieving them."

She endured aggressive questions from Republican senators during her confirmation hearings and she currently serves on one of the most conservative and divisive courts in U.S. history, casting dissenting votes on such landmark rulings as the granting of partial legal immunity for former presidents. But Jackson avoided naming names beyond noting that Sen. Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican, attended law school with her or pointing fingers in her book, and resisted Tuesday night when King pressed her to cite even one justice she had clashed with.

When King asked if justices socialized, Jackson responded, "There are opportunities to have lunch."

Jackson spoke of remaining calm during the confirmation hearings, thanks to her resolve, her preparation and to political realities. □

## A prosecutor asks for charges to be reinstated against Alec Baldwin in the 'Rust' case

**SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)** — A prosecutor has asked a New Mexico judge to reconsider the decision to

dismiss an involuntary manslaughter charge against Alec Baldwin in the fatal shooting of a cinematogra-

pher on the set of a Western movie, according to a court filing made public Wednesday.

Special prosecutor Kari Morrissey said there were insufficient facts to support the ruling in state district court and no violation of Baldwin's due process rights.

Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer dismissed the case against Baldwin in July halfway through a trial based on the withholding of evidence by police and prosecutors from the defense in the 2021 shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of the film "Rust."

The charge against Baldwin was dismissed with prej-

udice, meaning it can't be revived once appeals of the decision are exhausted.

Baldwin, the lead actor and co-producer on "Rust," was pointing a gun at cinematographer Halyna Hutchins during a rehearsal when it went off, killing her and wounding director Joel Souza. Baldwin has said he pulled back the hammer but not the trigger and the revolver fired.

The case-ending evidence was ammunition that was brought into the sheriff's office in March by a man who said it could be related to Hutchins' killing. Prosecutors said they deemed the ammo unrelated and unimportant, while Bald-

win's lawyers alleged that they "buried" it and filed a motion to dismiss the case. Movie armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed is serving an 18-month sentence on a conviction for involuntary manslaughter. She was accused of flouting standard safety protocols and missing multiple opportunities to detect forbidden live ammunition on set. Assistant director and safety coordinator David Halls pleaded no contest to negligent use of a deadly weapon. It has never been officially determined who brought the live rounds that killed Hutchins to the set, though prosecutors allege that Gutierrez-Reed was responsible. □



Actor Alec Baldwin, right, hugs his defense attorney Alex Spiro after District Court Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer threw out the involuntary manslaughter case, July 12, 2024, in Santa Fe, N.M., for the 2021 fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins during filming of the Western movie "Rust."

Associated Press



# Braves' Merrifield rants about out-of-control pitchers after getting plunked in the head

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Whit Merrifield got lucky. He wasn't seriously injured when a 95-mph fastball struck him on the head.

Still, the Atlanta Braves second baseman is livid about the state of pitching in the big leagues, saying it's only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured or even killed.

"The way pitchers are throwing now, there's no remorse or regard for throwing up and in," Merrifield said after Tuesday's game against the Colorado Rockies. "Guys are throwing as hard as they can and they don't care where the ball goes."

Merrifield was struck behind the right ear with a pitch from Jeff Criswell in the seventh inning of Atlanta's 3-0 victory.

Fortunately, the ball appeared to catch a bit of Merrifield's helmet, though he was still forced to leave the game. He wasn't in the lineup Wednesday but expects to return in a day or two after passing the concussion protocol and getting a clean bill of health from a precautionary CT scan.

"I just took 95 right off the head," he said. "I'm very lucky that it got me in a



Philadelphia Phillies first base Bryce Harper holds his arm after betting hit by a pitch in the first inning of a baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays in Toronto, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024.

Associated Press

good spot."

Elsewhere, Philadelphia Phillies star Bryce Harper had to leave a game at Toronto after he was hit on the left elbow by a pitch. Harper winced in pain and grabbed his elbow after he was struck by a 92 mph fastball from right-hander Bowden Francis in the first inning Wednesday.

Merrifield, who serves on MLB's competition commit-

tee, said pitchers must face some ramifications for hitting batters. He planned to discuss the issue on a conference call.

"Without being over dramatic, that was my life on the line out there," Merrifield said. "I'm sick of it. It's happening way too much."

The Braves have already had two players go down this season after being hit by pitches, and several others

who had close calls.

Second baseman Ozzie Albies went on 10-day injured list in April with a broken right big toe after being hit by a curveball. Third baseman Austin Riley is expected to miss the rest of the regular season with a fractured right hand, the result of being plunked with a 97-mph fastball last month.

"Team are bringing pitchers up and they don't know

where the hell it's going," Merrifield said. "They throw 100 miles an hour so they say, 'All right, we'll see if he can get guys out. Just set up down the middle and throw it as hard as you can.' It's driving me nuts. I hate where the game's at right now."

In a different era, a team could expect payback when one of their batters was hit by a pitch. But MLB has cracked down on that sort of retaliation, and there's no way to go after the pitcher himself since baseball now has the designated hitter in both leagues. "You can't hit a guy back anymore, so there's no fear that, 'Oh, if I hit this guy, our guy is gonna get hit,'" Merrifield said. "And pitchers don't have to hit anymore, so they don't have to stand in the box."

He noted that he had to leave the game after getting hit, while Criswell stayed in.

"It's just ridiculous and it has to be fixed or, god forbid, something terrible is gonna happen," Merrifield said. "It's frankly pathetic that some of the pitchers that are out there, they don't know where the ball is going the majority of the time." □

## Larson and Hendrick Motorsports in discussion on a 2025 return to Indianapolis 500

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) —

Make no mistake: Kyle Larson wants to run the Indianapolis 500 again next year. The deal he and Hendrick Motorsports signed with Arrow McLaren Racing was always a two-year deal, but 2025 was an option year that Larson said Wednesday is still being ironed out.

If he had his way, a decision would be made sooner rather than later.

"I would love to. We're still working on it," Larson said. "It's progressing. So I like that, but obviously things can always change."

Larson was a star at India-

napolis Motor Speedway in May, where he qualified fifth but a late-race speeding penalty took him out of contention and he finished 18th. Plus, there was an hours-long rain delay in Indianapolis and the Hendrick camp, after pouring millions of dollars into the effort, decided to leave him at the 500 and deal with the Coca-Cola 600 in Concord, North Carolina, later.

As soon as the Indy 500 ended, Larson jetted off to North Carolina — where he was met by more rain. He ran to his car just as the race was paused for weather, and because it never resumed, he never got the chance to

run the 600.

That created a commotion in NASCAR, with many members of senior leadership taking the position that Larson and Hendrick had prioritized the Indianapolis 500 over the 600 and therefore wasn't owed an automatic waiver to participate in the playoffs. The situation dragged on for well over a week as the frustrated Hendrick camp was incensed the situation was being hyper-scrutinized when other drivers have received waivers for non-racing incidents. For example, Matt Kenseth missed half the 2018 season, all of the 2019 season and the first four races of 2020, but was granted



Kyle Larson steers through Turn 4 during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Darlington Raceway, Sunday, Sept. 1, 2024, in Darlington, S.C.

Associated Press

a playoff waiver when he was hired as a replacement driver for the suspended Larson.

Kurt Busch received a waiver when he was suspended while under investigation for a domestic assault allegation, and Tony Stewart received a waiver after tak-

ing a mental health break. NASCAR eventually gave Larson the waiver — and he opens the playoffs Sunday at Atlanta Motor Speedway as the points leader — but it is unlikely Rick Hendrick will sign off on another Indy 500 run without a guarantee from NASCAR. □



# Karolina Muchova returns to U.S. Open semifinals for second straight year by beating Haddad Maia

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**  
AP Sports Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Karolina Muchova is back in the U.S. Open semifinals for the second straight year, punctuating her return from wrist surgery by beating No. 22 Beatriz Haddad Maia 6-1, 6-4 on Wednesday. Muchova lost to eventual champion Coco Gauff in the 2023 semis in Flushing Meadows, then missed nearly 10 months because of a wrist injury she suffered during the tournament. The Czech returned to action in June just before Wimbledon, and a little more than two months later she is into her fourth career Grand Slam semifinal.



Karolina Muchova, of the Czech Republic, reacts after defeating Beatriz Haddad Maia, of Brazil, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

Muchova will face top-seeded Iga Swiatek or No. 6 Jessica Pegula on Thursday in the semifinals. Muchova dominated the first set, racing to a 5-0 lead and finishing it off in 35 minutes. Then it became a test in the second, with both players struggling physically on a sunny afternoon. Muchova left the court at one point for what she said was a needed trip to the bathroom, while Haddad Maia appeared to be pointing to her chest and trying to breathe deeply midway through the set before burying her head in a towel as trainers attended to her.

Muchova has had to get used to dealing with pain. She had just made her second major semifinal of 2023, having lost to Swiatek in the French Open final, when she had to stop playing following the U.S. Open. When she finally got back to the tour this year, it left time for only 11 matches before returning to Flushing Meadows. That was enough time for Muchova to rediscover her game. She hasn't dropped a set in her five matches and finished off this one with an ace down the middle.

Many fans hadn't even taken their seats at Arthur Ashe Stadium when Muchova broke Haddad Maia in a 14-point game to take a 2-0 lead.

The Brazilian faced that same deficit in her third-round match against Anna Kalinskaya but won the next game to start a turnaround, helped in part by a video review that gave her a point. The U.S. Tennis Association acknowledged the next day that Haddad Maia's shot was illegal, but the chair umpire wasn't given the relevant replay that would have shown that.

Muchova wouldn't allow a turnaround this time, denying Haddad Maia what would have been the second major semifinal of her career. □



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