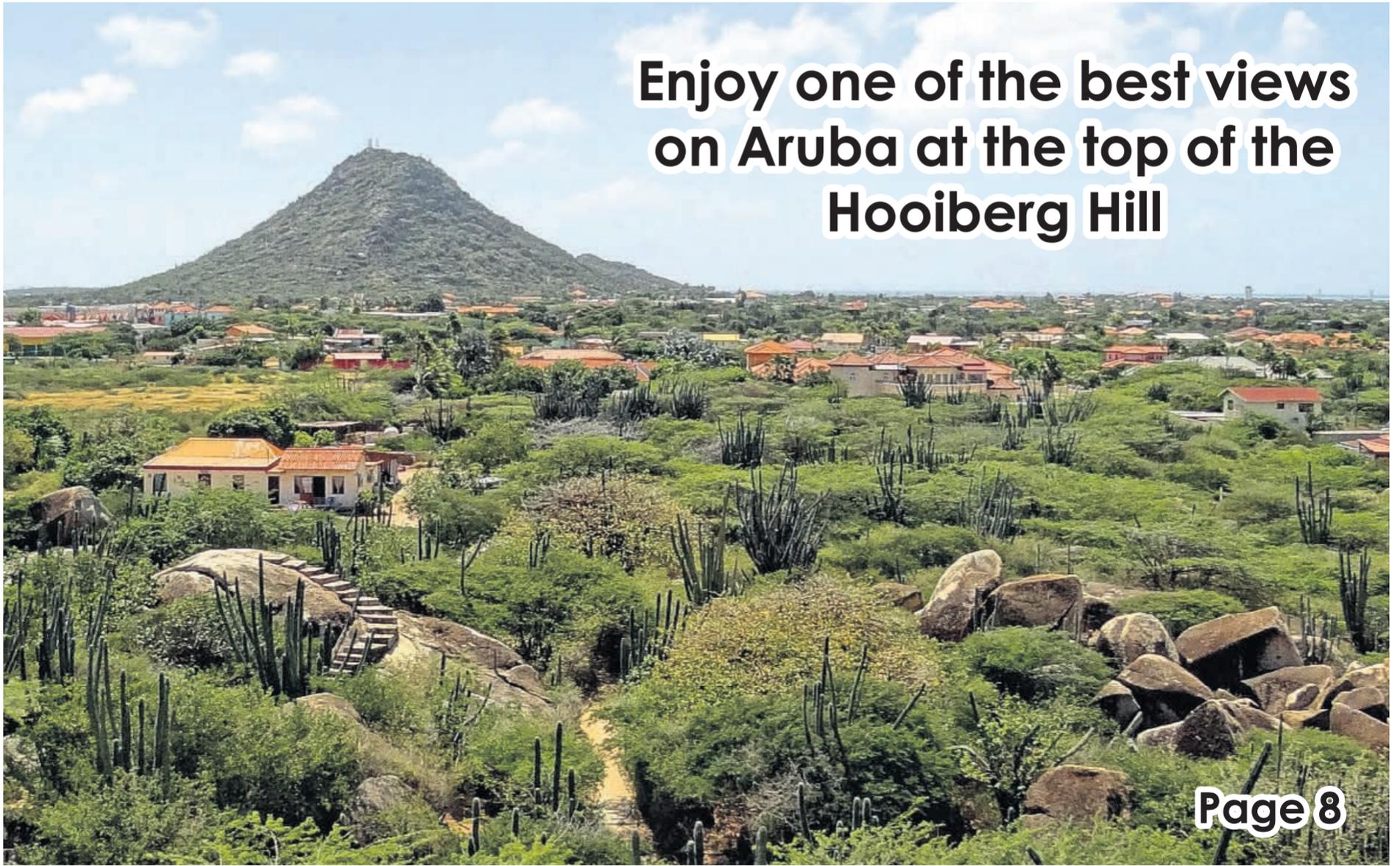


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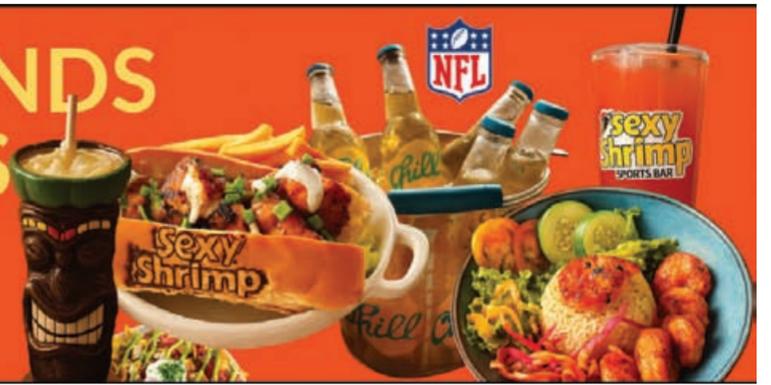
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The winning strategy for zero waste at Super Bowl LX

In a significant victory for the environment, the NFL and its partners successfully transformed Super Bowl LX (2026) into one of the most sustainable sporting events in history. Hosted at the LEED Gold-certified Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, the league's "NFL Green" initiative targeted a "zero-waste" diversion rate of 90% or more, effectively turning nearly 60 tons of potential trash into reusable resources.

A New Game Plan for Waste Reduction

The 2026 championship served as a massive testing ground for cutting-edge sustainability technologies aimed at reducing single-use plastics and contamination:

AI-Powered Sorting: Interactive "Oscar Sort" units used artificial intelligence to help fans properly dispose of items. By holding an item up to a camera, fans received instant guidance on whether it belonged in recycling, compost, or landfill bins, significantly reducing the contamination

that often ruins recycling efforts.

Mass Reusable Cup Program: Building on a season-long pilot that prevented over 32,000 plastic cups from entering landfills, the NFL expanded its reusable cup initiative to cover more than 4,000 seats. These durable cups were collected, sanitized, and returned to the system for future use.

Compostable Stadium Ware: In collaboration with partners like Aramark, nearly all single-use food service items—including nacho trays, beer cups, and straws—were converted to compostable materials.

Leaving a "Green Legacy" in the Bay Area

The impact of Super Bowl LX extends far beyond the final whistle of the Seattle Seahawks' 29-13 victory over the New England Patriots. The league's "Green Legacy" program ensures materials used for the one-day event find permanent homes in the community:

Food and Material Donations: The NFL partnered with over 30 local organizations, including schools

and food banks, to repurpose items used during the game. Donations of surplus food and building materials were expected to match or exceed the \$800,000 value seen in 2025.

Infrastructure Repurposing: Temporary infrastructure such as fencing, banners, and carpeting was collected by the NFL Green team for donation. For instance, the Santa Clara Unified School District planned to repurpose these materials for park maintenance and arts projects.

Coastal and Urban Greening: Following the 2025 model in New Orleans—where 50 tons of oyster shells were used for artificial reefs and glass was processed into sand for coastal restoration—the 2026 event prioritized urban reforestation and native tree planting across the Bay Area.

Super Bowl Waste Diversion Milestones

The NFL has been refining its sustainability playbook for over 30 years, consistently breaking records for resource recovery.

Event	Diversion Rate	Key Sustainability Achievement
Super Bowl LIII (2018)	91%	First Super Bowl to reach the 90% zero-waste threshold.
Super Bowl LVII (2023)	92.6%	Record-setting diversion rate for a championship game.
Super Bowl LVIII (2024)	90%+	12,000 lbs of food waste donated to local livestock farms.
Super Bowl LIX (2025)	90%+	Recovered 250 tons of material; delivered a Net Zero Energy event.
Super Bowl LX (2026)	90%+ (Projected)	Full-scale implementation of AI sorting and reusable packaging.

By integrating sustainability into every aspect of the game—from the food fans eat to the bins they use—the NFL is proving that America's most-watched sporting event can be a powerful catalyst for a cleaner future. □

New Pokemon titles on horizon as 30th anniversary approaches



Attendees wearing Pikachu hats play Pokemon GO on their smartphones during the in-person Pokemon GO Tour: Kalos Los Angeles 2026 at the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, California, on February 20, 2026.

Pikachu and friends are set to return to consoles in two new games next year, the Pokemon Company said Friday, as it celebrated 30 years of the monster-collecting franchise.

Set for release on Nintendo's latest Switch 2 console, "Pokemon Winds" and "Pokemon Waves" will see the fan-favourite critters return and new beasts emerge as players explore a colourful, tropical world stretching down to the ocean floor.

The Pokemon Company -- jointly owned by Nintendo, Japanese studio Game Freak and the Creatures

company -- controls the brand for the franchise with more than 1,000 "pocket monsters" to date.

Longtime followers of the series will also be able to play the original games released for the portable Game Boy in 1996 on Switch, Nintendo said.

The next volley of Pokemon games was revealed just before the release of a new spinoff, "Pokopia", for Switch 2 on March 5.

Pokemon rapidly grew into a global phenomenon following the first titles' release on Game Boy. □

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The Hospital Bed of the Future is in Your Bedroom: Celebrating the 5-Year extension of the "hospital-at-Home" Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a moment of rare bipartisan consensus, the United States has taken a definitive step toward a more compassionate and efficient health-care future. With the formal passage and signing of the Acute Hospital Care at Home Extension Act, millions of Americans have gained the right to recover where they feel safest: in their own homes.

This landmark legislation extends the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) waiver for an additional five years, securing the program through December 31, 2029. For patients, families, and healthcare providers, this is more than just a policy update; it is a victory for the human side of medicine.

Restoring Dignity to Recovery

The "Hospital-at-Home" model represents a paradigm shift. For decades, an acute illness—be it a severe bout of pneumonia, a flare-up of congestive heart failure, or a complex skin infection—meant an automatic, often stressful admission to a traditional hospital ward.

Under the newly extended waiver, eligible patients can now "admit" themselves to their own spare bedrooms. The American Medical Association (AMA) reports that the benefits are immediate and profound. Patients sleep in their own beds, eat food they enjoy, and remain sur-



House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) and fellow Democratic leaders hold a rally to demand the House vote to extend Obamacare subsidies on the East Front Steps of U.S. Capitol on December 18, 2025 in Washington, DC.

rounded by the healing presence of family and pets. This isn't just about comfort; it's about clinical outcomes. Data consistently shows that home-based patients are less likely to suffer from hospital-induced delirium, a common and dangerous complication for seniors in unfamiliar, noisy clinical environments.

The "Safety First" Success Story

Skeptics originally questioned whether a living room could truly match the safety of a high-tech hospital wing. Half a decade of data has provided a resounding "yes." Through the use of

advanced remote patient monitoring (RPM), patients are under the "digital eye" of medical professionals 24/7. Smart sensors track vitals like heart rate, oxygen levels, and blood pressure in real-time, instantly alerting a central command center if a patient's condition deviates. Coupled with at least two in-person visits per day from nurses or paramedics, the safety profile of home care has proven to be equal to, and in some cases better than, traditional inpatient care. Specifically, home-based patients see a dramatic reduction in hospital-acquired infections (HAIs)—deadly "superbugs"

that often thrive in traditional facilities but are absent in the home.

A Lifeline for the Healthcare System

The benefits of the Act extend far beyond the individual patient. Our nation's hospitals have long been under immense strain, facing chronic bed shortages and exhausted staff. By moving stable, acute patients into a home setting, the Hospital-at-Home program functions as a "virtual expansion," freeing up brick-and-mortar beds for the most critical cases, such as trauma victims or those requiring complex surgeries.

Economically, the model is a win for the taxpayer. By reducing the overhead associated with large physical facilities and shortening recovery times, the Medicare trust fund stands to save billions over the next decade. It is a rare "triple-win" in public policy: better for the patient, better for the provider, and better for the budget.

The Five-Year Horizon

The decision to grant a five-year extension rather than a shorter two-year patch is particularly significant. It provides the long-term certainty that health systems need to invest in the necessary technology and staffing. Major institutions like Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins, and Kaiser Permanente can now refine their digital platforms and training programs, knowing the reimbursement framework is stable through the end of the decade.

As we look toward 2030, this extension paves the way for even more innovations, such as mobile imaging (X-rays and ultrasounds) performed at the bedside and expanded physical therapy programs delivered in the backyard.

The Acute Hospital Care at Home Extension Act reminds us that while medicine is a science of high-tech gadgets and complex chemistry, the most powerful tool in the healing arsenal remains the comfort of home. □

Stanford Breakthrough: "Immune system reset" cures Type 1 diabetes in mice

STANFORD, CA — In a major leap toward a permanent solution for autoimmune diseases, Stanford Medicine researchers have successfully reversed Type 1 diabetes (T1D) in mice by "re-educating" their immune systems. The study, published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, achieved a 100% success rate in both preventing and curing the disease without the need for lifelong insulin or toxic immune suppression.

The "Hybrid" Immune Strategy Led by lead author Preksha Bhagchandani and senior author Seung Kim, MD, PhD, the team addressed the two primary hurdles of T1D treatment: the original autoimmune attack and the rejection of transplanted cells. Their solution creates mixed chimerism—a hybrid immune system containing cells from both the donor and the recipient. This "reset" allows the body to accept donor cells as its own while simultaneously halting the autoim-

mune destruction of insulin-producing islet cells.

The Breakthrough Protocol

The researchers utilized a "gentle" conditioning regimen that avoids the harsh chemotherapy typically required for stem-cell transplants:

Targeted Preparation: Mice received low-dose radiation and specific antibodies (such as α CD117) to clear space in the bone marrow. **Dual Transplant:** A combined transplant of blood-forming



Mary Jane Navarro prepares to wash cells of serum, separated from the blood of vaccinated mice, while working on vaccine and protein research in the Veessler Lab at the University of Washington on May 10, 2022 in Seattle, Washington.

stem cells and pancreatic islet cells from the same donor was administered.

The Tweak: The addition of baricitinib, a drug already used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, was the key to achiev-

ing 100% efficacy.

Results and Safety

The study reported unprecedented outcomes: 19 out of 19 mice at high genetic risk for T1D never developed the disease. □

Will Oscars be 17th time lucky for songwriter Diane Warren?

Beverly Hills, United States

Diane Warren has become something of a fixture at Hollywood's annual Oscars ceremony.

The American songwriter has been nominated 17 times for best original song starting in 1987, including each of the last nine years. Though some of those nods were for massive hit songs such as Aerosmith's "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing" from "Armageddon" and Celine Dion's "Because You Loved Me" from "Up Close and Personal," Warren has never won the golden statuette.

But on March 15, luck may finally be on her side.

"This year's extra special, because this... is a song I wrote about me, which, you know, makes it very different," the 68-year-old told AFP. Warren says her entry for the 98th Academy Awards is a letter of love and empowerment to her bullied younger self.

Performed by Kesha, "Dear Me" is part of the soundtrack to "Diane Warren: Relentless," a documentary about her life and career.

Warren is one of the most



U.S. songwriter Diane Warren nominee for Best Original Song "Dear Me" poses during a photo session ahead of the 98th Oscars Nominees Luncheon at the Beverly Hilton hotel in Beverly Hills, California on February 10, 2026.

influential songwriters in American music, whose lyrics have been sung by everyone from Beyonce, Cher and Whitney Houston to Michael Bolton and Eric Clapton.

"This is my most personal song I've ever done for a movie," Warren said.

It's also a piece that has resonated with audiences who identify with the star's

troubled childhood.

"When I was a kid, I was bullied a lot," she said.

"I didn't have an easy time growing up and just felt alone and the world was against me.

"Music pretty much saved me."

- 'Love letter' to herself - That salvation and looking back on her successful life now inspired her to create something that could

let her younger self know things would work out.

"I wanted to write a love letter to her, that you're going to be okay," she said.

"I wanted to write... 'You don't know it now, when you're sitting in your room crying. You know you're scared to go to school because kids want to beat you up, but you know, you're going to be okay'.

"And you're going to go

back to your (high school) reunion, they're going to look really old, you're going to still look good, too, on top of it'," she added with a laugh.

Warren who holds the record for the most ever nominations without a win was recognized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2022 with an honorary award.

But, she says, just being part of the conversation is the real honor.

"We're chosen by the best of the best in film music on the planet composers, songwriters, music editors," she said of the nomination process.

"So if they choose you out of hundreds of songs or scores, you've won."

Warren will compete with "Golden," the catchy anthem from "KPop Demon Hunters," "Train Dreams," from the movie of the same name, "I Lied to You," from "Sinners," and "Sweet Dreams of Joy," composed by Nicholas Pike for the documentary "Viva Verdi!", which looks at a retirement home for opera singers in Italy. □

Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum discovers new Rembrandt

Amsterdam, Netherlands

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam said Monday it had uncovered a new painting by Rembrandt, using advanced scanning technology and stylistic analysis to confirm it was crafted by the Dutch master.

The 1633 work, entitled "Vision of Zacharias in the

Temple", disappeared from public view for 65 years, but was recently handed over to the museum for testing.

"Materials analysis, stylistic and thematic similarities, alterations made by Rembrandt, and the overall quality of the painting all support the conclusion that this painting is a genuine

work by Rembrandt van Rijn," the museum said in a statement.

The work depicts the biblical scene of Archangel Gabriel visiting high priest Zacharias to inform him he will have a son: John the Baptist.

Gabriel is not depicted in the painting but light shining in the upper right corner heralds his arrival.

"We always hope to find a new Rembrandt, but this happens rarely," Rijksmuseum director Taco Dibbits told AFP.

The painting disappeared from public view after a private individual purchased it in 1961. Its current owner contacted the Rijksmuseum, enabling experts to study the work with modern analytical tools.

"It was amazing that this painting that we didn't

know of came to us via somebody who sent an email to say 'could this be a Dutch painting?', who really didn't know what he had," Dibbits said.

- 'A wonderful experience'

The two-year research showed that the paints used are also found in other Rembrandt works of the period. The painting technique and build-up of paint layers are also comparable.

Scans revealed "compositional changes that support the authenticity of the work," the museum said.

Finally, the signature has been deemed original and analysis of the wooden panel confirms the date of 1633 on the painting is also correct.

"The way the painting was constructed, the different

layers, was typical for Rembrandt," Rijksmuseum curator Jonathan Bikker told AFP.

"And it's a dark painting, and the light is very important. Rembrandt, of course, is all about light and dark contrast," added Bikker.

The biblical topic is also typical of the work of the then 27-year-old artist, said Petria Noble, a specialist researcher on Rembrandt.

"1633 is really Rembrandt's early Amsterdam career and he's really interested in Bible stories and in history books," she told AFP.

"So everything fitted in terms of the material aspects, the stylistic aspects... It was a wonderful experience," added Noble.

The work is now on long-term loan to the museum and will be on display to the public from Wednesday. □

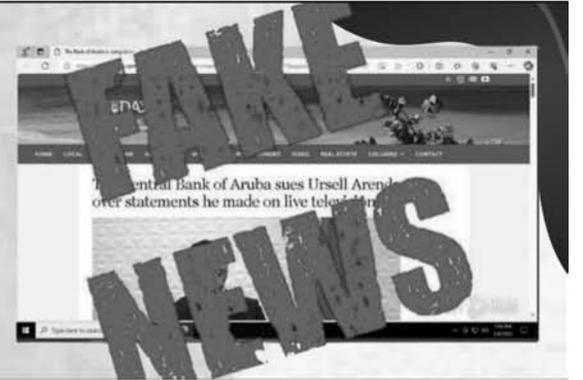


A handler holds Rembrandt's "Young Lion Resting" during a press preview at Sotheby's Old Masters presentation in New York on January 30, 2026.

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Thomas Kazungu Karisa (R), 36, a beneficiary of funding through a non-profit organisation GiveDirectly, sells Okra pods to a neighbour harvested from his crop on a communal patch of land where villagers from Milore village have taken advantage to grow food crops due to its proximity to a nearby dam in Kilifi County on April 9, 2025.

Sowing the Future: The green revolution transforming Kenya's heartlands

NAIROBI — From the rolling hills of the Rift Valley to the semi-arid plains of Makueni, a vibrant green wave is sweeping across Kenya. In a year defined by resilience and ingenuity, Kenya's agricultural sector is celebrating a "triple crown" of success: record-breaking harvests, a surge in youthful entrepreneurship, and the successful integration of climate-smart technology. Far from being a traditional "toil in the soil," farming in Kenya has officially entered its Agri-Tech Era, turning the nation into a global blueprint for food security and rural prosperity.

The "Smart" Harvest

The most visible success comes from the widespread adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) programs. Over the past 24 months, more than 500,000 smallholder farmers have transitioned from rain-fed reliance to precision solar irrigation.

The results have been transformative:

Yield Surges: Maize and potato yields in participating counties have risen by an average of 45%.

Water Efficiency: New solar-powered drip systems have reduced water waste by 60%, allowing farmers to grow high-value crops even during traditional dry seasons.

Export Excellence: Kenya has solidified its position as a global powerhouse in avocados and macadamia nuts, with export volumes hitting an all-time high in early 2026.

The Rise of the "Agri-Preneur"

Perhaps the most heartwarming development is the changing face of the Kenyan farmer. For decades, agriculture was seen as a fallback for the older generation. Today, it is the first choice for the "TikTok Generation." Through initiatives like the Kenya Youth in Agriculture

(KYA) strategy, thousands of university graduates are returning to their family land, armed with drones, data apps, and hydroponic kits. These "Agri-preneurs" are treating their farms like startups, using digital marketplaces like M-Farm and DigiFarm to bypass middlemen and sell directly to international buyers and local supermarkets.

"I used to want a desk job in Nairobi," says 24-year-old Sarah Musyoka, who now runs a thriving hydroponic strawberry farm in Machakos. "Now, I am an employer. I use my phone to monitor soil moisture, and my profits are triple what I would have earned in an office."

Empowering the Community

The success isn't just measured in tons of produce; it's measured in the vibrancy of rural life. With increased incomes, farming communities are seeing a surge in local investment. □

Mystery benefactor gifts Osaka \$3.6M in gold bars for aging waterworks

OSAKA, Japan — In an extraordinary display of civic philanthropy, the city of Osaka has been left "speechless" following an anonymous donation of 21 kilograms (46 lbs) of solid gold bars. The gift, valued at approximately 560 million yen (\$3.6 million), came with one explicit instruction: use it to repair and replace the city's aging water pipes.

A Staggering Act of Generosity

Osaka Mayor Hideyuki Yokoyama revealed the bullion totaling 21 individual bars during a press conference, describing the donation as "staggering". The Osaka City Waterworks Bureau received the gold discreetly in November 2025, but the news was only recently made public.

The Donor: Remains entirely anonymous. Notably, the same individual previously donated 500,000 yen in cash specifically for municipal waterworks.

The Motive: The benefactor reportedly decided to act after seeing frequent news reports of major water leaks and sinkholes caused by deteriorating infrastructure across Japan.

Osaka's Underground Crisis

While the donation is massive, it highlights the sheer scale of the city's infrastructure challenge. Osaka is Japan's third-largest city, and much of its subterranean network dates back to the rapid postwar economic boom of the 1960s and 70s.

Deteriorating Pipes: Over 20% of Japan's water pipes have exceeded their 40-year legal service life.

Leak Frequency: Osaka recorded 92 cases of pipe leaks under public roads in the fiscal year ending March 2025.

Cost of Repair: Renovating just a 1.2-mile (2km) segment of pipe costs roughly 500 million yen (\$3.2 million) nearly the entire value of the gold donation. □



100g gold bullion bars of the German precious metals trading company Degussa (Deutsche Gold- und Silber-Scheide-Anstalt - German Gold and Silver Refining) are pictured in Dortmund, western Germany on February 9, 2026.

Vietnam AI law takes effect, first in Southeast Asia

Hanoi, Vietnam

A law regulating artificial intelligence went into effect in Vietnam on Sunday, making it the first country in Southeast Asia with a comprehensive framework on the booming technology. Passed by the National Assembly in December, the law focuses on the risks posed by generative AI, requiring human oversight and control along the lines of the European Union's landmark AI Act.

Many nations are moving to address the dangers of chatbots and image generators from misinformation to online abuse and copyright violations but few have enacted legislation.

The legislation, which is in force as of March 1, "paves the way for Vietnam to deeply integrate with international standards while maintaining digital sovereignty", the government said in a December report. It requires companies to clearly label AI-generated content such as deepfakes that cannot readily be differentiated from reality.

It also requires them to disclose to customers when they are interacting with an



A worker uses a mobile phone at a park in Hanoi on December 18, 2023.

artificial rather than human agent.

The law applies to developers as well as providers and deployers of the technology, whether they are Vietnamese organisations or foreign entities operating in the country.

Vietnam has set ambitious double-digit growth targets for the next five years, with expansion of the digital economy a key part of its development strategy.

AI and the data economy

are "pillars" of a "more sustainable and smarter new development" model, Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh was quoted as saying Wednesday on the government's website.

Under the law, the government will establish a national AI computing centre, improved data resources and large language models in Vietnamese.

- 'Not the final word' -

So far only a handful of

countries have implemented far-reaching regulatory frameworks on AI.

The United States has opposed what Vice President JD Vance called "excessive regulation", warning it could stifle innovation in the key sector.

In January, South Korea became the first country to have an AI law take full effect, while the European Union is gradually phasing in a set of rules that will become completely applica-

ble in 2027.

While Vietnam's law is a regulatory milestone, analysts said its impact would depend on how the government enforces it and on what guidance it issues on implementation.

The law is "not the final word" but rather a "decisive starting point", Vietnam-based LNT & Partners law firm said in an analysis on its website.

"It establishes responsibility, human control, and risk management as the governing themes of AI regulation," the firm said.

However, it added, "the true impact will depend on implementing decrees, sectoral regulations, and enforcement practice".

Patrick Keil, senior legal adviser at law firm DFDL, called the law "a significant statement of national ambition" but told AFP businesses will continue to face some uncertainty about their obligations until the government issues further guidance.

At an AI summit hosted by New Delhi in February, 91 countries and international organisations called for "secure, trustworthy and robust" AI. □

Yangtze River rebirth: 10-year fishing ban halts decades of ecological decline

WUHAN, China — In one of the most significant freshwater conservation success stories in decades, a new study reveals that the

Yangtze River is undergoing a dramatic ecological recovery. Just five years into a landmark 10-year fishing ban, researchers re-

port that the "Mother River" of China is teeming with life once again, reversing a 70-year downward spiral of biodiversity loss.

The "Goddess" Returns: Finless Porpoise Population Soars

According to recent official data, the population of the Yangtze finless porpoise he river's critically endangered flagship species and a vital "barometer" of its health has climbed to 1,426 individuals. This represents a significant increase from the 2022 survey and a nearly 40% rebound from the population low recorded in 2017.

Unprecedented Recovery

Metrics

The study, published in the journal *Science* in February 2026, analyzed fish communities across 57 sections of the river's main stem. The results are a testament to the resilience of nature:

Biomass Explosion: Total fish biomass has more than doubled compared to pre-ban levels.

Species Diversity: Researchers recorded 351 fish species in the basin, an increase of 43 species compared to the period before the moratorium.

Endangered Sightings: Rare species thought to be on the brink are reappearing. The Chinese high-fin banded shark

was recorded naturally reproducing in 2024 and 2025 for the first time in over 20 years.

A Model for Global Conservation

Launched in January 2021, the ban required a massive social and financial effort, including the retirement of 111,000 fishing boats and the resettlement of 231,000 fishers into new industries with government support. International experts are hailing the results as a blueprint for other major waterways. Sébastien Brosse, a biologist at the University of Toulouse, described it as "the most positive freshwater conservation story" he has seen in 20 years. □



Cargo ships sail on the Yangtze River in Wuhan, in China's central Hubei province on December 22, 2024, ahead of the fifth anniversary of China confirming its first death from the Covid-19 coronavirus.



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Aruba's underwater wonderland

(Oranjestad)—Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots you can explore. So take your snorkeling gear and visit some of these top places for underwater exploration.

Tres Trapi

'Tres Trapi' means three steps in Papiamentu. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by a tiny stairway carved into the rocky coastline. Tres Trapi is a small beach, located on the north-western side of the island, an approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you walk right into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While you're snorkeling, you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean Sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animals, keep your distance and just enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken WWII ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach is a lagoon with crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Further in the lagoon, you'll find a lot of people snorkeling. This is an excellent spot to go under water exploring—but do take care not to go too far out; outside the lagoon the waves can be pretty rough! In the lagoon there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. The main entrance to reach the beach is through a small bridge that takes you through the mangrove trees. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, accompanied with wooden stairs built to allow easy access to the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you'll find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is snorkel heaven. □



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Casago Aruba offers more than just stylish villas. Their curated portfolio includes a **wide variety of condos, homes, and villas** in different sizes to suit all types of travelers—from solo adventurers and couples to large families and groups. Every stay is backed by local expertise, with concierge support, 24/7 guest assistance, and an attention to detail that consistently exceeds expectations.

Whether you're here to relax on world-famous beaches, explore Aruba's cultural gems, or discover hidden corners of the island, Casago Aruba ensures your getaway is as smooth as it is memorable.

A Partner for Homeowners

Behind the scenes, Casago offers a robust suite of property management services designed to help homeowners

maximize rental income while minimizing stress. Services include:

- **Promotion** through Casago's professional booking platform and expert local marketing strategies
- **Complete management** of check-ins, guest communication, cleanings, landscaping, pool maintenance, and repairs
- **Transparent maintenance** reporting, real-time reservation tracking, and on-site security monitoring
- **Full handling** of tax filings for both local and state requirements
- **Monthly property inspections** and full utility bill management
- **Strategic planning** to help homeowners increase profitability and keep their properties in top condition

This full-service model ensures that every home is maintained to the highest standard while giving property owners full peace of mind.

Rooted in Community and Sustainability

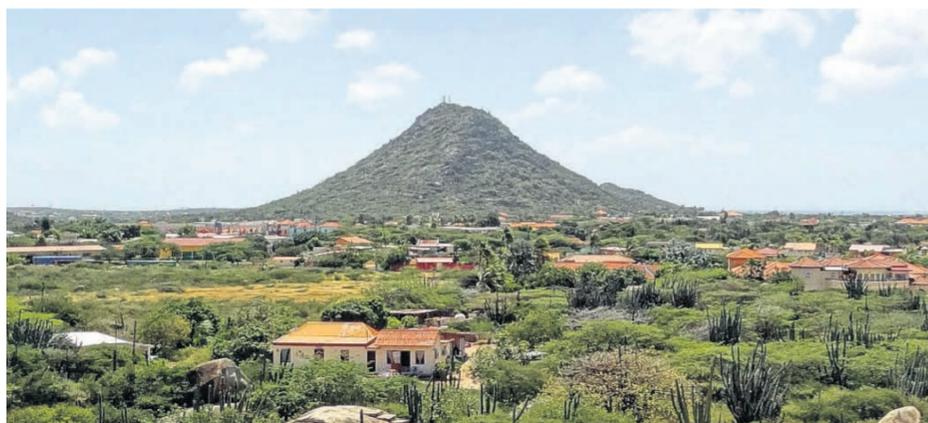
What truly sets Casago Aruba apart is their commitment



to the local community and to sustainable practices. The team works closely with local businesses and artisans, promotes eco-conscious travel, and supports initiatives that contribute positively to the island's environment and economy.

As one of the fastest-growing vacation rental and property management companies on the island, Casago Aruba continues to expand its footprint—welcoming more travelers, partnering with more homeowners, and raising the standard of hospitality in Aruba. □

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the

island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna

mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consist-

ed of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □

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Birds of Aruba



descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have



started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory. English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje). Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. ☐

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and



“Aruba to me is a fairytale”

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

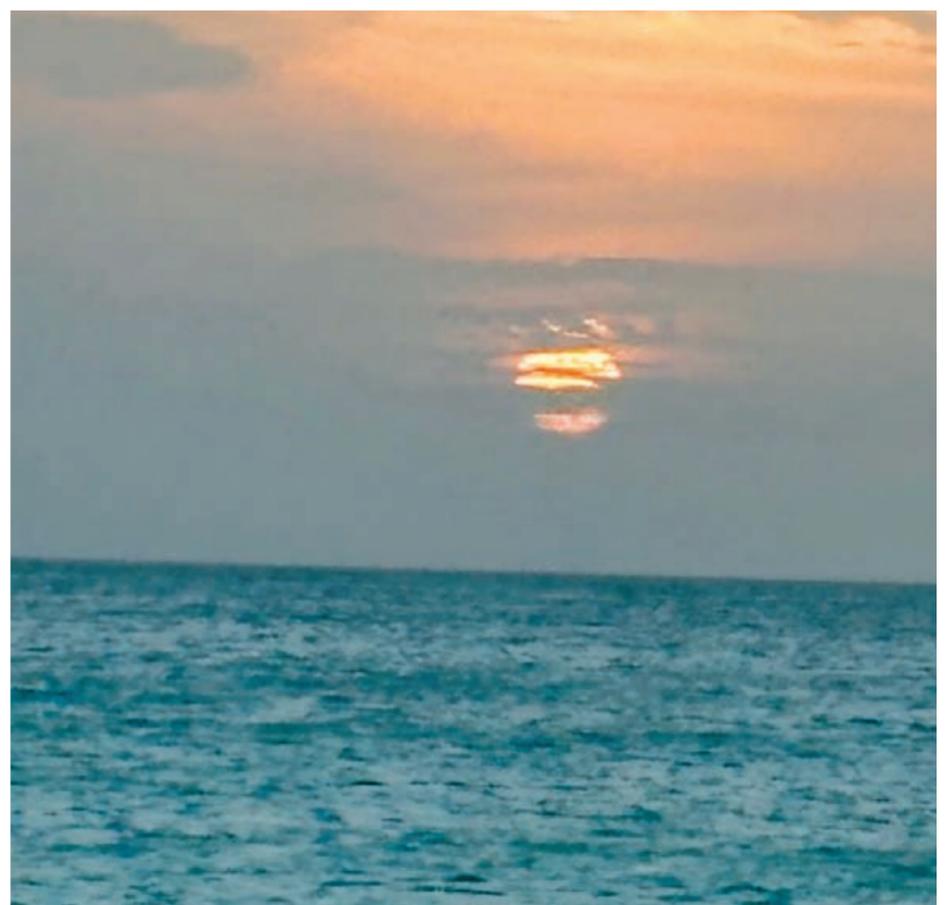
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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Laura & Nicholas Najjar from Boston, Massachusetts.

They wrote to us saying: “Aruba to me is a fairytale: Once Upon a Time and Happily Ever After”

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! ☐



Keeping up with the conniving spider... Nanzi fools Cha Tiger

Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of

him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his

money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They



all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children..."

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body

fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch.

Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife. □

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.

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Meet Aruba's biggest hero, Boy Ecury



(Oranjestad)—As part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and due to its strategic geolocation, Aruba was unexpectedly involved in the Second World War. As is known around the globe, this chapter in world history is one of the most tragic yet, and many soldiers and rebels have died on the front line during this time.

One of those rebels who have fought against the Nazi regime, was an Aruban named Segundo Jorge Adelberto "Boy" Ecury. Born in Aruba on April 23rd, 1922, Boy spent his childhood on the island, before being sent to The Nether-

lands by his father when he was 15 years old to continue his studies abroad. This was in 1937, three years before WWII broke out.

During the war, he actively participated in the rebellion in The Netherlands against the Nazi regime, but his rebellious streak and constant drive to fight for justice began even before the war broke out. Being a person of color with a Haitian heritage living in The Netherlands made him vulnerable to discrimination, and this inspired him to be an activist, to stand up and fight against discrimination and oppression.

After seeing the horrific

bombings of Rotterdam first-hand, he decided to join the resistance. At the same time, he was still studying and living with family in Tilburg. It was there where he met people who printed and distributed the rebellion newspaper. This would be the first of three rebellion groups that he would join throughout his 4-year service to the resistance.

Boy's primary task as member of the group was to distract the German soldiers while others ran into hiding into alleyways. This he was able to do because of his skin color and confronting demeanor. Boy also participated in the multiple sabotaging operations against the German military occupying The Netherlands. These included bombings on German military trucks and trains. The group also helped people go into hiding, as well as opened fire against allies of the Nazi regime. In these operations, Boy really stood out for his cold bloodedness.

In 1943, he received a notice to be placed for work in Germany. This he refused, of course, and went into hiding using multiple addresses in multiple cities. Because he was a wanted man, he of course could not continue to be active as a rebel. However, stubborn and naturally rebellious as he was, he always



tried to join in on the operations regardless.

In 1944, after his friend Luis de Lannoy, a fellow rebel from Curacao, was arrested and executed, he moved to Delft, where he joined his third and last group in Rotterdam. During this time, he wrote a goodbye letter for his family, possibly knowing the risks of him being active again in the big cities.

Eventually, he proved himself right. On November 5th, 1944, Boy Ecury was arrested by German soldiers. He was placed in the "Oranjehotel" prison in Scheveningen, The Hague, where he was questioned. Despite being sold out by an acquaintance, he him-

self never gave away the names of his comrades. Famously, he told his cell mate: "I will die with a smile on my face."

On November 6th, 1944, Ecury was executed. He was only 22 years old.

Ecury was buried with military honor. In 1949, the Aruban Government erected a monumental bust of him in front of what is now the linear park trail, and in 1984 he received the Resistance Memorial Cross postmortem.

Boy's life motto was this: "In my father's house, there is no place for a traitor." □

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

Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's

until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas – more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

If you are looking for history San Nicolas has it.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San

Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

The Community Museum holds a remarkable collection that spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaux of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of ed-

ucation or enjoyment.

The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection



of artists from around the world. □

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

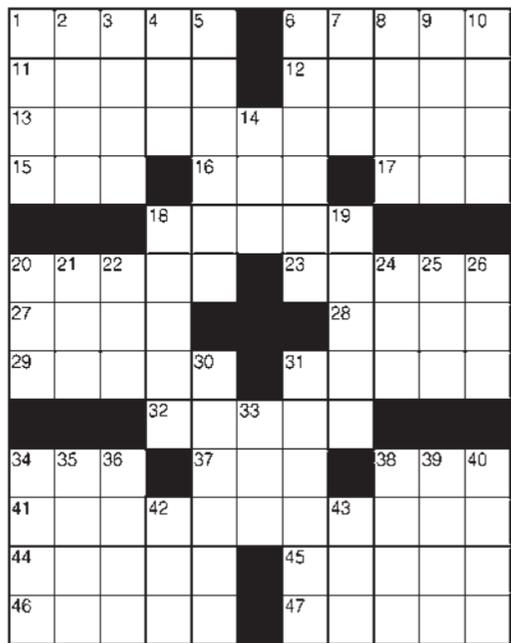


ACROSS

- 1 Planet's path
- 6 Trivial
- 11 One of the strings
- 12 Put on a pedestal
- 13 Ibsen play
- 15 Rent out
- 16 Rap's — Nas X
- 17 Silent assent
- 18 Apple centers
- 20 Smallest mammal
- 23 African charger
- 27 Bucket
- 28 Persia, today
- 29 Really stoked
- 31 Hang loosely
- 32 Sired
- 34 Cry loudly
- 37 "The Matrix" hero
- 38 Carnival city
- 41 Ibsen play
- 44 Central
- 45 Shady spot
- 46 Cowboy contest
- 47 African scavenger

DOWN

- 1 Track shape
- 2 Take
- 3 Wader, e.g.
- 4 Ailing
- 5 Animal suet
- 6 Composer Gustav
- 7 Wedding words
- 8 Person, place, or thing
- 9 Words of approximation
- 10 Oboe part
- 14 Knight's address
- 18 Star
- 19 Polo, for one
- 20 Relaxing resort
- 21 Deli meat
- 22 Tear
- 24 S&L offering
- 25 Snooze
- 26 Count start
- 30 "Raging Bull" star
- 31 "Camp-town Races" snippet
- 33 Hair goo
- 34 Blend
- 35 Cry of distress
- 36 Flex
- 38 Bumpkin
- 39 File stand-in
- 40 Gumbo vegetable
- 42 Tiny
- 43 Use a towel



3-14

A XYDLBAAXR
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.

3-14

CRYPTOQUOTE

FV CYXV SVPITGV WH'G HQV

YBCN HMTV IZXVBHTMV.

— BWJJW AWYXIBBW

Cryptoquote: AMATEURS SIT AND WAIT FOR INSPIRATION; THE REST OF US JUST GET UP AND GO TO WORK. — STEPHEN KING

Cruise ship Schedule: March 03-06 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	03	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	B	1
		SEVEN SEAS GRANDEUR	10.30	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	I	1
WED	04	BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS	08.00	****	B	1
		AMBASSADOR SHIP 3	09.00	18.00	C	1
		BRILLIANT LADY	10.00	22.00	I	1
THU	05	BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS - Dept.	****	18.00	B	-
		MAJESTIC PRINCESS	07.00	16.00	C	1
		SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	18.00	I	1
FRI	06	CARNIVAL GLORY	09.00	22.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN STAR	11.00	20.00	C	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 basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

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



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 occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

6			9	4		1	3	
	4	1	3	2				
2	3							5
	7			3		2		
	5	3		2			6	
	9		7		6	5		8
9		4	2		7	8		1
3	1	8		9		6		
7				1				

Difficulty: ★★

3/3

Answer to previous puzzle

6	3	2	7	8	5	9	1	4
7	5	9	2	4	1	8	3	6
8	1	4	6	3	9	7	5	2
3	2	8	1	5	4	6	9	7
9	7	1	3	6	8	2	4	5
5	4	6	9	7	2	1	8	3
4	8	7	5	9	6	3	2	1
2	6	5	8	1	3	4	7	9
1	9	3	4	2	7	5	6	8

Difficulty: ★

3/2

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El Nino may return in 2026 and make planet even hotter

Paris, France

The warming El Nino weather phenomenon could form later this year, potentially pushing global temperatures to record heights. There is a 50- to 60-percent chance of El Nino developing during the July-September period and beyond, according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The World Meteorological Organization will issue an update on El Nino on Tuesday.

Here's what you need to know about El Nino and its cooler sister, La Nina:

- Why the name? -

El Nino and its cooler sister La Nina are two phases of a natural climate pattern across the tropical Pacific known as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

Peruvian and Ecuadoran fishermen coined the term El Nino ("the boy" or "the Christ Child") in the 19th century for the arrival of an unusually warm ocean current off the coast that reduced their catch just before Christmas.

Scientists chose the name La Nina as the opposite of El Nino. Between the two events, there is a "neutral" phase.

- El Nino -

El Nino can weaken consistent trade winds that blow east to west across the tropical Pacific, influencing weather by affecting the movement of warm water across this vast ocean.

This weakening warms the usually cooler central and eastern sides of the ocean, altering rainfall over the equatorial Pacific and wind patterns around the world.

The extra heat at the surface of the Pacific releases energy into the atmosphere that can temporarily drive up global temperatures, which is why El Nino years are often among the warmest on record. "All else being equal, a typical El Nino event tends to cause a temporary increase in the global mean temperature



General view of lagoons in "Pan de Azucar" Natural Park at the Paramo el Consuelo in Belen, Boyaca Department, Colombia, taken on April 21, 2024.

on the order of 0.1C-0.2C," Nat Johnson, an NOAA meteorologist, told AFP.

El Nino occurs every two to seven years.

It typically results in drier conditions across southeast Asia, Australia, southern Africa, and northern Brazil, and wetter conditions in the Horn of Africa, the southern United States, Peru and Ecuador.

- Another record? -

The last El Nino occurred in 2023-2024, contributing to making 2023 the second highest year on record and 2024 the all-time high.

Carlo Buontempo, director of the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service, told AFP in January that 2026 could be "another record-breaking year" if El Nino appears this year.

However, El Nino's impact would be higher in 2027

than in 2026 if it develops in the second half of this year, said Tido Semmler, a climate scientist at Ireland's National Meteorological Service.

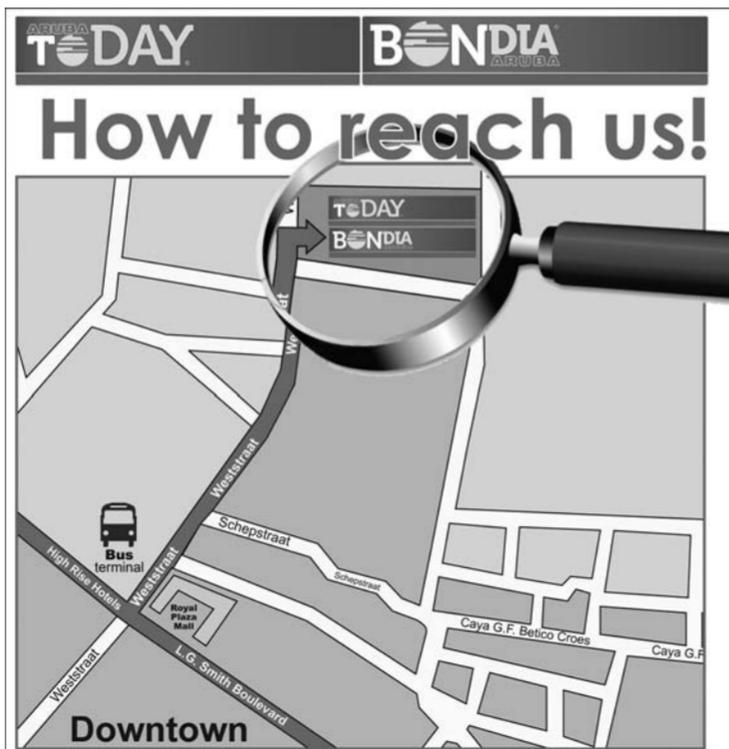
"It takes time for the global atmosphere to react to the El Nino," he said.

"Having said this, there is a risk of 2026 being the warmest year on record even without El Nino, due to the global warming trend," Semmler told AFP.

"2027 would face an increased risk of getting a record warm year if El Nino developed in the second half of 2026," he added.

- La Nina -

The latest La Nina episode was relatively weak and short lived, starting in December 2024 and due to enter a neutral phase during the February-April period. □



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Can Anthropic survive taking on Trump's Pentagon?

Washington, United States

In an unprecedented dispute between the US government and a private business, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has declared AI company Anthropic a supply chain risk a measure usually reserved for companies from adversary nations, like China's Huawei. The Pentagon is furious that Anthropic is insisting on certain conditions for the use of its technology no mass surveillance or fully autonomous weapons systems even as the military has been using the company's models for classified operations for more than two years.

Some believe the decision could destroy one of America's most high-profile companies in a unilateral act of corporate destruction.

Will Anthropic survive this?

The battle is bigger than the actual financial contract, which amounted to \$200 million.

The existential threat is the supply chain designation,



Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei looks on as he takes part in a session on AI during the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos on January 23, 2025.

which means any company that works with the US military would have to prove it has no dealings with Anthropic.

Dean Ball, who helped craft the Trump administration's own AI policy, called the decision "corporate murder," warning that the message sent to every investor in America was unambiguous: do business on our terms, or we will end

your business.

Anthropic has vowed to challenge the supply chain risk designation in court, calling it a "dangerous precedent for any American company that negotiates with the government." Legal experts say the company has strong grounds, but the court process could take months or longer a serious vulnerability for a company that had hoped

to go public this year and, given the fragile economics of the AI industry, must maintain investor confidence to survive.

Still, "Anthropic will suffer a setback when it loses the government as a client, but it will survive and continue to grow," Erik Gordon, a business professor at the University of Michigan, told AFP.

The company for now "has

one of the best products," he said.

- Is this a win for OpenAI? -

Just hours after the US government banned Anthropic, rival OpenAI announced it had reached a deal for the Pentagon to use its AI models in classified systems.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman said the agreement contains the same two limitations Anthropic had been insisting on.

But OpenAI appeared to enshrine these differently: while Anthropic tried to have the limits spelled out explicitly in the contract, OpenAI agreed that the Pentagon could use its technology for "any lawful purpose" a formulation Anthropic had refused.

OpenAI also says its technology will be cloud-only, preventing models from being embedded directly into weapons hardware, and that an engineer will be deployed to oversee classified use.

Critics are calling on OpenAI employees to quit or put pressure on their leadership to support its archrival Anthropic. □



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Amazon to invest another 18 bn euros in Spain data centres

Barcelona, Spain

Amazon on Monday announced another 18 billion euros (\$21 billion) of investment in data centre projects in Spain, more than doubling its spending there on the infrastructure

crucial for artificial intelligence and cloud computing.

The total of 33.7 billion in investments through to 2035 would support almost 30,000 jobs, Amazon said



Picture shows a logo of the U.S. electronic commerce and cloud computing company Amazon at its facilities in San Fernando de Henares, the biggest in Spain, on November 23, 2018.

in a statement released during the Mobile World Congress telecoms trade fair in Barcelona.

Cash will flow "to expand and support data infrastructure, delivering advanced artificial intelligence and cloud computing capabilities to organisations across Europe," the company added.

The U.S. tech giant had already committed 15.7 billion euros in 2024 to expand data centres in the northeastern Spanish region of Aragon.

"In a world filled with uncertainty, our country is a safe bet," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez posted to the X social network after meeting Amazon representatives at the Mobile World Congress

(MWC) telecoms trade fair in Barcelona.

While large, the sums involved in the Spanish investment pale in comparison to the hundreds of billions AI and cloud giants including Amazon, Microsoft, Google and OpenAI plan to spend on computing infrastructure in the coming years.

The upped investment nevertheless marks "a long-term bet on Spain," Amazon's chief global affairs and legal officer David Zapolsky said in the statement.

Aragon is sparsely populated and benefits from strong sunshine and wind, making it a popular site for solar parks and wind farms two renewable energy sources that have surged in Spain in recent years. □

New rules, same old suspects as F1 revs up for 2026 season

Paris, France

The start of any Formula One season is a game of smoke and mirrors: this one, which gets underway in Melbourne on March 8, has the added intrigue of sweeping changes that could shake up the established order.

For all the pre-season testing, the finger-pointing, the accusations of 'sandbagging' and loopholes in the new regulations, the guessing games have left us nowhere closer to predicting how the 24-race 2026 season will pan out.

Beyond the obvious, of course: the champion will come from one of four teams, the usual suspects of McLaren, Mercedes, Red Bull and Ferrari.

And that is no disrespect to the other seven teams including newcomers Cadillac and Audi.

The major overhaul to chassis and power units, designed to create more overtaking opportunities and improve the sport's eco-sustainability, have dominated the pre-season testing.

So the smoke will only begin to lift on the true force of each car when they take to the track at Albert Park.

Only then will we get an



People walk through a Williams F1 team fan zone in Melbourne's central business district on March 2, 2026, ahead of the season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix.

idea of whether McLaren's Lando Norris will be in pole position to retain the world title he won so dramatically from Max Verstappen last season.

The pit lane talk has been hanging the favourite's tag around the neck of George Russell as Mercedes are rumoured to have made the best of the rule changes. That may depend, however, on whether they have indeed exploited a loophole in the new rules, as many are claiming, which could give them as much as 0.3 seconds per lap over their rivals.

In sport of fine margins, that is a gaping chasm.

When Verstappen grumbled publicly about the new cars in Bahrain, describing them as "Formula E on steroids" and "anti-racing", Russell leapt to their defence.

"The guiding principles are still very much the same," said the Briton.

"You're pushing the car to the absolute limit.

"You're trying to brake as hard as possible and as late as possible, and carry as much speed through the corners."

- 'Reliable' Red Bull -

The Russell-Verstappen dynamic is certainly one to watch.

The pair have had a number of spats going back to the Azerbaijan sprint in 2022. It picked up in 2024 with Russell accusing Verstappen of being a bully and the Dutchman describing Russell as a "backstabber".

For these last four years the Mercedes was not a match on track for Verstappen's Red Bull but if that changes this year then the rivalry could reignite.

Questions remain about the efficiency and reliability of the new Red Bull engine which is the first that the team has developed and built itself, with some input from Ford.

Having said that, the four-time world champion's father Jos Verstappen, who is not renowned for holding back, called it "promising". "I am satisfied with what is happening, especially when we look at the engine," he said.

"It is powerful and reliable. During the first race, we will see where it really stands."

Russell and Verstappen will also face stiff competition from their young teammates, 19-year-old Kimi Antonelli and 21-year-old Isack Hadjar.

"If the car is capable of winning, then I will win races," the ambitious Hadjar, promoted from Racing Bulls, told AFP.

If the Mercedes engine has capitalised on a loophole, which will be closed mid-season, then it should also assist Norris and his teammate Oscar Piastri whose McLaren's use the same power units.

"The biggest challenge at the minute is battery management and knowing how to utilise that in the best way," said Norris. □

NFL salary cap passes \$300 million for first time

Los Angeles, United States

NFL teams will each have a salary cap above \$300 million for the first time, the league said Friday, as American football continues to enjoy explosive growth.

The league's annual per-team salary cap is calculated based on league revenues, which have skyrocketed thanks to lucrative TV, licensing and sponsorship deals in recent years.

"NFL clubs were informed today that the salary cap for the '26 season will jump \$22 million per club to \$301.2 million," said league spokesman Brian McCarthy.

"Tremendous growth," he posted on social media. Around 90 of the 100 most-watched live telecasts in the U.S. each year are football mainly NFL, plus a handful of college games. This month's Super Bowl between the Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots was watched by 124.9 million viewers the second-most watched show in US history, behind the previous year's Super Bowl.

A game on Thanksgiving Day last year between the Kansas City Chiefs and Dallas Cowboys shattered regular-season TV records,

with an average 57.23 million audience.

The 2025 regular season as a whole averaged 18.7 million viewers per game the second-highest on record. The cap was introduced in 1994, determining how much each team can spend on players' salaries, and intended to keep the league competitive.

It is calculated through a formula agreed upon with the NFL Players Association as part of their collective bargaining agreement.

The cap was initially set at \$34.6 million and reached \$150 million in 2016. It has



Sam Darnold #14 of the Seattle Seahawks raises the Lombardi Trophy during the Seattle Seahawks Super Bowl LX victory celebration and parade at Lumen Field on February 11, 2026 in Seattle, Washington.

doubled in the decade since.

On top of the cap, there will be an additional \$77.6 million per team for player benefits, which includes performance-based pay

and benefits for retired players.

That lifts total per club player costs for the 2026 campaign to \$378.8 million or more than \$12 billion across the entire NFL. □

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Knicks halt Spurs' 11-game NBA winning streak

Los Angeles, United States

Jalen Brunson scored 25 points as the New York Knicks halted San Antonio's 11-game NBA winning streak with an emphatic 114-89 victory at Madison Square Garden on Sunday. Victor Wembanyama and the Spurs arrived in New York brimming with confidence after going undefeated February, building their longest winning streak since a 13-0 run in the 2015-16 season.

Wembanyama, who had struggled in the Spurs' last two wins, came out firing, but the French superstar's 25 points, 13 rebounds and four blocked shots weren't enough. Devin Vassell with 18 points and Stephon Castle with 13 were the only other Spurs players to score in double figures.

They hit just nine of 34 from three-point range and were harried into their season-high 22 turnovers that the Knicks parlayed into 24 points. Bridges came up big on the defensive end with five steals.

"Good win by our guys," Knicks coach Mike Brown said. "(San Antonio) is a really good team. They obvi-



Victor Wembanyama #1 of the San Antonio Spurs dunks the ball during the third quarter of the game against the New York Knicks at Madison Square Garden on March 01, 2026 in New York City.

ously missed some shots, but I thought our weak side defense was really good. For them to shoot 26, 27% from (three-point range), our activity on the weak side was really good."

San Antonio got off to a quick start and led by as many as 12 in the first quarter, but the Knicks were up by one at the end of the first period and never trailed again, using a 26-2

scoring run spanning the first and second quarters to seize control.

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 12 points and grabbed 14 rebounds for the Knicks, who had six players score in double figures and held the Spurs to their season-low in points.

- Thunder, Pistons march on -
Second-placed San Anto-

nio's defeat saw them lose ground in their pursuit of the Oklahoma City Thunder at the top of the Western Conference.

Oklahoma City, the reigning NBA champions, improved to 47-15 after a 100-87 victory over the Dallas Mavericks in Texas.

The returning Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the OKC scoring with 30 points, edg-

ing closer to Wilt Chamberlain's record for the most consecutive games of 20 points or more.

Sunday's performance was Gilgeous-Alexander's 123rd consecutive 20-point game, leaving him three adrift of matching Chamberlain's historic mark of 126 set between 1961 and 1963.

The Minnesota Timberwolves meanwhile remain firmly in the playoff hunt after scoring an impressive 117-108 defeat of the Denver Nuggets in Colorado.

Minnesota recovered from an 11-point first quarter deficit after a 36-19 second quarter thanks to 21 points from Anthony Edwards and 20 points from Jaden McDaniels. Donte DiVincenzo added 17 points which included five three-pointers. At the top of the Eastern Conference, the Detroit Pistons maintained their grip on the standings with a 106-92 defeat of the Orlando Magic in Florida.

An upset looked on the cards after Orlando led throughout the first half to edge into a 57-50 lead at the break. □

Takele defends Tokyo Marathon title after sprint finish



Ethiopia's Tadese Takele (front) races to the finish line to finish first followed by Kenya's Geoffrey Toroitich (middle) and Kenya's Alexander Mutiso (back) in the men's category of the Tokyo Marathon in downtown Tokyo on March 1, 2026.

Tokyo, Japan

Ethiopia's Tadese Takele successfully defended his Tokyo Marathon title on Sunday, edging Kenya's Geoffrey Toroitich in a sprint finish to cross the line in 2hr 3min 37sec. Takele finished with the same official time as Toroitich after a dramatic battle for the line, with Kenya's Alexander Mutiso just one second further behind in third place. "I knew that the final stage would be decisive," said the 23-year-old Takele. "Around 41km I wanted to wait and see what would happen and then I made my move right before the finish."

Kenya's Brigid Kosgei won the women's race in 2:14:29, a new course record. Ethiopia's Berukan Welde was second in 2:16:36, followed by her countrywoman

Hawi Feysa in 2:17:39.

In warm, dry conditions in the Japanese capital, a men's leading pack including Takele, Toroitich, Mutiso and Kenya's Daniel Mateiko broke away around the 37km mark.

Takele made a late move and managed to stay in front despite a last-gasp challenge from Toroitich.

"Today's race was a great one," said Takele. "There was intense and positive competition, and I'm truly happy that I was able to win."

The men's field was weakened by the withdrawal through injury of Kenya's Timothy Kiplagat and Ethiopia's Milkessa Mengesha in the lead-up to the race. □