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Why 'Rock Stacking' is more dangerous than you think



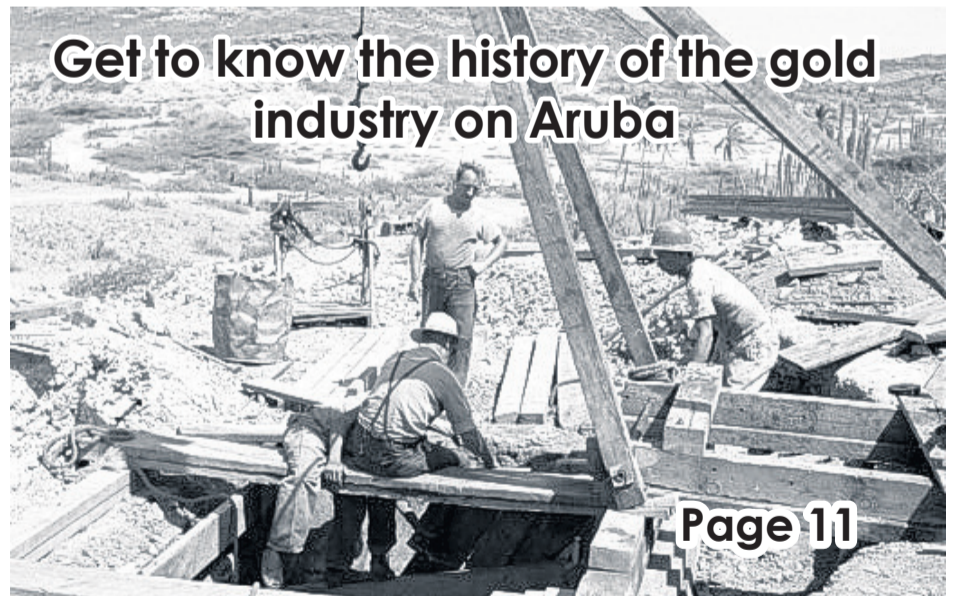
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Will SpaceX IPO make Elon Musk a trillionaire?

New York, United States

He is already the richest man in the world, but when SpaceX finally makes its hotly anticipated stock market debut, Elon Musk could become the planet's first trillionaire.

Forbes magazine on Tuesday estimated Musk's net worth at nearly \$835 billion, as compared with \$342 billion in its annual rich list in March 2025.

He is far beyond Google co-founder Larry Page, who is second at \$298 billion.

SpaceX's market debut, expected around June 12, will "all but guarantee his net worth rising above \$1 trillion," Forbes said in early April, when the company first filed to list on the Nasdaq.

The valuation of the company, founded in 2002, is expected to range from \$1.7 trillion to \$2 trillion, up from a range that topped out at \$1.5 trillion in March.

On Tuesday, platforms for trading unlisted shares valued the group at about \$1.5 trillion, with an individual share going for about \$129 on Forge Global (up from \$53 in mid-December) and \$118 on Nasdaq Private Market.

The 54-year-old Musk currently holds 12 percent of



SpaceX, Twitter and electric car maker Tesla CEO Elon Musk looks on as he speaks during his visit at the Vivatech technology startups and innovation fair at the Porte de Versailles exhibition center in Paris, on June 16, 2023.

common SpaceX shares and about 94 percent of Class B shares (each one retains 10 votes), according to a filing submitted to the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

According to AFP calculations, after the company goes public, Musk would hold about 42 percent of SpaceX capital and 79 percent of all voting rights or the equivalent of \$735-840 billion, given the latest valuation estimates.

"Current trends are an incredible and continued

centralization and concentration of wealth" in the hands of about 3,000 billionaires, William Robinson, a professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, told AFP.

"At the top end of those billionaires, the concentration is accelerating."

- 'Tech oligarchy' -

Robinson noted that at the same time, five billion people on Earth are living below the poverty line, creating an "extreme inequality" that can spawn civil wars

and other crises.

He says the "new billionaire class" -- more precisely, the "tech oligarchy" -- holds a structural power over states, economies and society that echoes the rise of Nazism and fascism 100 years ago.

In February, SpaceX took over Musk's artificial intelligence outfit xAI, which itself had absorbed the X social network (formerly Twitter) a year before.

Musk also own about 12 percent of electric car maker Tesla, whose market

capitalization currently sits at about \$1.58 trillion.

In mid-February, Musk said his net worth was almost entirely tied up in Tesla and SpaceX shares, and that less than 0.1 percent of his fortune was in cash.

Analysts expect to see a 2027 merger of SpaceX and Tesla, which is increasingly focused on robotics, energy and autonomous transport.

The two companies are already jointly developing some projects, such as the giant semiconductor manufacturing plant Terafab.

"We continue to believe that SpaceX and Tesla will eventually merge into one company in 2027 with the groundwork already in place for both operations to become one organization," said analysts at Wedbush Securities, noting that Tesla is a minor shareholder in SpaceX via its investment in xAI. Musk also holds shares in The Boring Company, a tunnel construction service, and Neuralink, which is developing implantable brain-computer interfaces. Robinson said Musk could take on an "aura of God" for some people should he become the world's first trillionaire but might develop a bit of a god complex himself as a result. □

CBS News fires '60 Minutes' veteran Scott Pelley

Washington, United States

CBS News fired longtime "60 Minutes" correspondent Scott Pelley on Tuesday following clashes over the show's future, the lat-

est shakeup under the network's new leadership.

Last year CBS became a part of Paramount Skydance and brought in Bari

Weiss -- a longstanding critic of progressive politics to lead its news division.

Many CBS News journalists quit following Weiss's appointment, alleging curbs on their editorial independence.

Newly appointed "60 Minutes" executive producer Nick Bilton said Pelley "hijacked my first meeting with staff to disparage me, my qualifications, and my intentions with remarkable incivility and contempt."

"Your antipathy to the future of the show has come through loud and clear. And I have heard you," Bilton wrote in a termination letter late Tuesday, according to CBS News.

"I therefore write on behalf

of (CBS News) to inform you that your employment with CBS is terminated for cause effective immediately," he said.

In response, Pelley said the new CBS owner is casting aside the "legend" of the flagship news magazine program "apparently to curry a moment of favor with the Trump administration."

"Last month, 60 Minutes lost its DNA when our entire senior leadership and two of our best on-air correspondents were cruelly fired without cause," Pelley wrote in a statement, cited in US media reports.

At the staff meeting on Monday, Pelley had re-

portedly accused top editor Weiss of "murdering the show."

CBS, a mainstay of the broadcast television landscape, was once home to famed US journalists Walter Cronkite and Edward R. Murrow.

Pelley, 68, joined CBS News in 1989. He previously worked as the "CBS Evening News" anchor.

In July, CBS announced the cancellation of "The Late Show," hosted by Stephen Colbert, a staunch Trump critic.

Trump has intensified his long-established hostility toward the media since his return to the White House, regularly deriding certain outlets as "fake news." □



U.S. journalist Scott Pelley attends a celebration of the announcement of CBS's new Fall schedule at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, May 2, 2024.

'20 minutes of terror': AI boosts U.S. voice impersonation scams

Washington, United States

Liz Benz still believes the distressed caller's voice was her son's -- the tone, enunciation and cadence all matched her 16-year-old.

But it was an AI clone, making the American mother yet another victim of a growing wave of impersonation scams.

Rapidly evolving artificial intelligence technology has demolished the boundaries between reality and fiction, handing cybercriminals strikingly convincing voice cloning tools to steal from people by mimicking loved ones.

Buffalo-based Benz was jolted from her couch by a call from an unknown number. On the line was someone sounding like her son Fred, crying for help.

She was told Fred's friend had been shot and killed, and her son -- who was out at a local football game -- was being held hostage.

The 46-year-old insurance broker and mother of six was instructed to deliver cash to a nearby Walmart to pay off the man holding him.

Eventually, a selfie from Fred smiling at the game returned her to reality: the call, she realized, was an elaborate scam.

"Nothing could have prepared me to hear my son's voice, and nothing could have convinced me that this was a scam until I saw my son with my own eyes," Benz



This illustration image created on June 9, 2023, shows a smartphone recording in front of a voice cloning screen in Los Angeles.

told AFP, her voice trembling. "It was a good 20 minutes of terror."

- 'Anyone can do it' -

US authorities and consumer advocates are increasingly warning of scams built around impersonating family members.

The FBI said in April that Americans lost over \$893 million last year to AI-enabled hoaxes, including voice cloning scams.

Simple internet searches can surface a wide array of voice cloning apps, many available for free, that create realistic AI replicas using small samples -- sometimes only seconds -- of a person's

real voice.

"It used to be somewhat hard to make these things. Now anyone can do it in seconds," said Brian Long, chief executive of Adaptive Security, a company offering trainings on AI fraud protection.

"One guy in a room with a keyboard can make an infinite number of attackers," Long told AFP, adding that AI tools can build entire scripts off of snippets of audio captured from social media or voicemail recordings.

Benz's story highlights a familiar script: an emotionally charged call purportedly from a loved one in trouble -- arrested, in a car accident or caught up in a crime --

who needs money.

Then scammers typically pile on pressure, adding voices claiming to be attorneys, courtroom clerks or bank tellers -- a cast of fictitious characters in a chaotic, urgent-sounding call.

- 'Distressed voice' -

Many family-emergency scams do not even require a perfect voice clone.

"A distressed voice saying 'mom, help me' or 'dad, I've been in an accident' may only need to sound believable for a few seconds," Amit Gupta, the vice president of product management at cybersecurity firm Pindrop, told AFP.

"The objective is not perfect voice replication. The objective is creating enough emotional uncertainty and urgency that the victim acts before verifying."

Since taking her story public, Benz said she has received a flood of messages from other victims, many of whom opt to stay anonymous because of the shame attached.

Elderly people are particularly vulnerable, with experts warning of rising cases of "grandparent scams."

The FBI said Americans over 60 reported more than \$7.7 billion in losses last year, a significant jump over 2024.

"These are professionals, and when they get people on the phone, they are dealing with amateurs," said Philadelphia attorney Gary Schildhorn, who faced a similar attack in 2020.

Like Benz, he has since partnered with Adaptive Security to raise public awareness about the threat.

In 2023, Schildhorn testified before the US Senate about his experience with a scam call in which a voice impersonating his son Brett claimed he needed to post bail after a drunk-driving arrest.

The call sent Schildhorn, now 73, rushing to his bank.

"When I get to the bank, my phone rings. It's my son," he told AFP. "He's going, 'You've been scammed,'" Schildhorn said. □

U.S. finds huge drug tunnel under Mexico border

Los Angeles, United States

A sophisticated tunnel that runs hundreds of feet (meters) under the US-Mexico border and pops up in a California retail store was used to smuggle more than \$45 million worth of cocaine, US officials say.

The subterranean passageway, which stretches from the Mexican city of Tijuana to an outlet in the Otay Mesa Port of Entry, is estimated to be 1,933 feet (590 meters) long, 55 feet (16.8 meters) deep and up to 4.5 feet (1.4 meters) in height.

US investigators say it has reinforced walls, rail and ventilation systems, an electricity supply, and was accessed using a hydraulic lift.

Video released by the U.S. Justice Department shows apparently well-made concrete steps leading into the tunnel, which appears to be hewn from rock and with a concrete floor.

Homeland Security federal drug investigators spent months watching the comings and going

of people around a "Buy 4 Less" retail store on the U.S. side of the border.

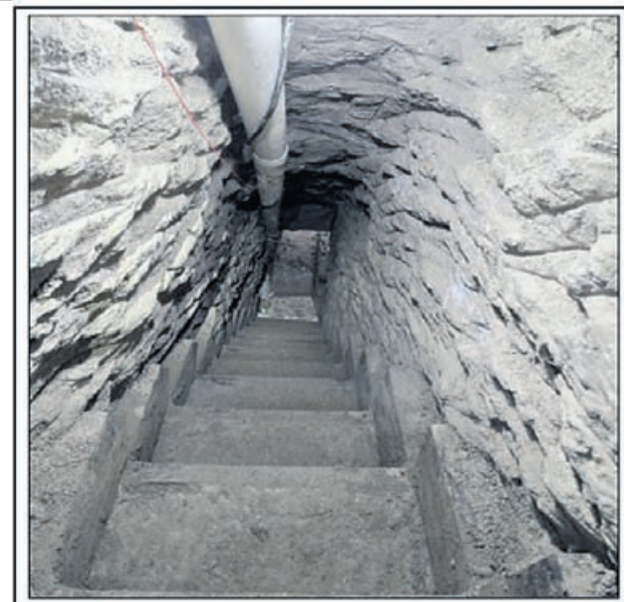
When they pounced, they found more than 1,000 kilograms (over 2,200 pounds) of cocaine that they believe had been transported through the tunnel and loaded onto trucks.

"Criminal organizations continue to look for ways to exploit our border, but they underestimate the determination of the men and women protecting it," said Justin De La Torre, chief patrol agent for the Border Patrol's San Diego sector.

"This tunnel's discovery is a testament to our strong partnerships and the unwavering commitment of law enforcement on both sides of the border."

Four people -- two from San Diego and two from Mexico -- have been charged in connection with the alleged importation of drugs.

The Justice Department says 99 subterranean



This undated handout photo released by the US Department of Justice on June 1, 2026, shows a U.S.-Mexico cross-border tunnel, stretching from Tijuana, Mexico to a purported retail store near the Otay Mesa Port of Entry in California.

passages have been discovered in the Southern District of California since 1993. □

German director Wenders pulls 1975 film over child nude scene

Berlin, Germany

Award-winning German director Wim Wenders said Wednesday he was withdrawing his 1975 film "Wrong Move" after a campaign by actress Nastassja Kinski against a scene in which she appeared topless when she was 13 years old.

In a statement on his foundation's website, Wenders apologised to Kinski and said that the Wim Wenders Foundation, which owns the film, is withdrawing it from all current channels of distribution.

"As the only person responsible at the time for 'Wrong Move' who is still here, I recognize that Nastassja Kinski should have been better protected back then," Wenders, 80, said in the statement.

"For that, I apologize to you, Nastassja, unreservedly, no ifs and buts," said Wenders, one of the most influential German directors of recent decades, whose accolades include a BAFTA award and a Palme d'Or at Cannes.



German director Wim Wenders (L) and German actress Nastassja Kinski pose upon arrival for the 30th European Film Awards in Berlin, on December 9, 2017.

Last month Kinski, 65, gave an interview to the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily in which she said she had for years been trying to get Wenders to change the film, without success.

"That was my first film, he was my first director, and

he didn't protect me," Kinski told the newspaper.

"Even though I didn't know all that much at 13, I picked up on the fact that something wasn't right," she said. The Wim Wenders Foundation said it would seek a "broad dialogue" with German film institutions about

what to do with the film in future.

"Only after that process has taken place -- even if it takes considerable time -- and once we have been able to present a mutually agreed solution, which will include Nastassja Kinski, will we make the film available

again," it said.

Wenders added in the statement: "The many reactions, comments and conversations of recent days have played a significant role in further sharpening my understanding of the events of that time. For that, I am grateful.

"Only an open and respectful exchange can lead us to reconsider positions and reassess responsibilities."

- 'Long overdue' decision -

In a statement to AFP, Kinski's lawyer Christian Schertz said that he "welcomed" the decision but said that it had been "long overdue". "I also regret that it has only happened as result of public pressure," he said.

"We have to wait to see what (Wenders's) offer of dialogue actually consists of," Schertz said.

Nastassja Kinski is the daughter of late German film icon Klaus Kinski and his second wife Brigitte. She achieved Hollywood fame with films such as "Cat People" and "Tess".

By the power of great skills: Nicholas Galitzine on He-Man transformation

Los Angeles, United States

In "Masters of the Universe," the insecure Adam transforms into He-Man simply by wielding the Sword of Grayskull.

But for actor Nicholas Galitzine, the transformation into the muscular 1980s hero required a Herculean effort.

"I wish I could just point the sword in the sky, and then transform," laughed Galitzine, who stars in the film which hits US theatres on Friday.

"But no...it was a massive undertaking," he told AFP. For months, Galitzine's routine revolved around eating a lot (or a little, depending on the phase), lifting weights, and doing cardio whenever he had a spare minute.

"I knew it was going to be really, really hard, but I don't think I realized how mentally strong you have

to be if you're going to do this thing," said the Briton, who spent much of the process enviously eyeing the food his friends were eating.

"You're working out five, six days in a row, and you come into work, and you just really, really, really don't feel like doing it.

"You have to tell yourself:

'no matter what, I'm not missing a workout today.'" Before mastering the universe and his caloric intake, Galitzine turned heads as Prince Henry in the adaptation of gay romance "Red, White & Royal Blue," and wooed Anne Hathaway as a boy band singer in "The Idea of You." The 31-year-old didn't grow up watching He-

Man's adventures, much less the 1980s big-screen adaptation of the Mattel character starring Dolph Lundgren, but he said he was drawn to the project as soon as he read the script.

The actor said he was "laughing almost all the way through it. And as soon as I finished the script, I called my agent and I said: 'I need to do this movie!'"

Humor, he said, was a key part of the film directed by Travis Knight, co-founder of the stop-motion studio Laika, responsible for hits like "Coraline."

"How we meet Adam, there's a lot of comedy... he's a bit of a goofy guy, not totally comfortable in his own skin, so there was lots of material to play with."

The actor shared the

screen with "Riverdale" star Camila Mendes, in the role of his friend Teela, and fellow Brit Idris Elba who plays Duncan, Adam's close friend and mentor.

The trio faces off against the evil Skeletor (Jared Leto) and Alison Brie, who plays his right-hand woman, the sorceress Evil-Lyn, in a fight for Eternia.

For Mendes, 31, taking on the role of a strong heroine was a longed-for opportunity.

"Teela is sort of that grounding force throughout the film," she told AFP. That grounding role is seen in interplay between Teela and both Adam, and Duncan, her father.

"There's humor in watching Teela get frustrated with the two of them because they're sort of all over the place, and she's like, 'Oh, great, I have to do it myself once again,'" she laughed.



Nicholas Galitzine attends the "Masters Of The Universe" New York Screening at Regal Times Square on June 01, 2026 in New York City.

Indian stars push to end elephants in Bollywood

Mumbai, India

Bollywood stars are campaigning to end the use of elephants in Indian films, saying that life-size robot replicas and AI-generated images do the job without cruelty.

Top directors, producers and actors have backed the campaign by animal rights group PETA India, which this month highlighted how the rise of slick AI images provide even less reason to use real animals.

"Elephants shouldn't suffer for our entertainment," said A-list actor and producer John Abraham, describing why he and more than two dozen stars were supporting the campaign.

"With today's technology, we can bring elephants to life beautifully through CGI (computer-generated imagery) and mechanical artistry, without confinement or cruelty."

There are fewer than 50,000 Asian elephants in the wild, according to the World Wildlife Fund the majority in India, with others in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

There are more than 2,600 captive elephants in India, according to environment



Bollywood actor and animal rights activist Dia Mirza speaks during the launch of 'Ellie', a life-size animatronic elephant part of a People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) nonprofit organization campaign, in Mumbai on May 5, 2023.

ministry estimates. They are used for tourism, entertainment, and in temples.

PETA told AFP captive elephants are "separated from their families, kept near-constantly chained and are controlled with weapons". India's Animal Welfare Board must give permission for elephants to be used in films.

The number of real ele-

phants being used have dropped dramatically since its 2021 order that it was "advisable" that special effects or animatronics be prioritised "to prevent unnecessary pain and suffering to animals".

- 'Living free' -

Now PETA campaigners are highlighting how AI-generated images, showcased in

a social media campaign this month, provide increasingly lifelike images.

"Elephants are highly intelligent, emotional animals who require living free in lush jungle homes for their mental and physical well-being," it said.

"In contrast, elephants used in films, shows and advertisements face extreme loneliness and severe cru-

elties." Campaigners point to the use of CGI imagery by Richie Mehta in the 2024 series "Poacher", a Malayalam-language crime drama about ivory smuggling, and to a robotic elephant with flapping ears used in a dance routine for an advertisement by clothing company Ramraj Cotton.

Other high-profile hits who used CGI for elephants include 2020 historical action movie "Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior" and the 2006 superhero film "Krish".

That compares to times past when movies, such as 1971 hit "Haathi Mere Saathi" used multiple real elephants alongside tigers and lions in dance scenes. Last month, the Malayalam-language film "Kattalan" -- about ivory-smuggling gangsters -- featured real elephants, producers told Indian media.

- Empathy -

PETA has long campaigned for the end of elephants in Hindu temple ceremonies, where the animals are paraded through packed crowds with flashing lights, thumping drums and ear-splitting music. □

Ecuador clamps down on lucrative illegal gold mines

La Merced de Buenos Aires, Ecuador

"Bomb incoming!" A military radio intercepts a voice alerting miners about an attack, while dozens of soldiers advance over Ecuador's Andean mountains where illegal gold extraction runs rampant.

The explosion detonates in a gorge hours later, while a separate blast elsewhere sends chunks of metal flying.

The resounding booms signal the Ecuadoran army's attempt to crush illegal mining operations, which are run by criminal groups in the northern La Merced de Buenos Aires region near the Colombian border.

AFP witnessed these attempts in action while accompanying an operation into the rugged terrain, where soldiers covering their faces "for security"

patrol on foot, sporting rifles, helmets and bullet-proof vests.

The army has gone as far as using tanks, BM-21 rocket launchers and mortars to attack illegal mines in several areas.

The mountainous region "has great wealth that has not been tapped," said operation leader Colonel Christian Ruales.

In 2019, security forces evicted around 3,000 miners from the mountains in what was one of Ecuador's largest operations against illegal mining.

According to Ruales, the presence of soldiers is essential to curb the practice. "Otherwise, this would flare up again," he said, warning of further illicit projects emerging.

- Money maker -

"They're coming to blow it up," the voice crackles

through the radio again, warning that the "greens" the soldiers are approaching.

Despite the constant military presence, gold extraction is going full steam ahead, with the precious metal's value reaching a record of almost \$5,600 per ounce in January.

The illegal trade yields even higher profits than drug trafficking in some Latin American countries, according to the Ecuadoran Chamber of Mining. And in Ecuador alone, between 60 percent and 70 percent of gold mined is illegal, generating more than \$1.6 billion annually.

"I see raids, but mining doesn't stop," Brian Proano, a food vendor and former illegal miner told AFP.

"Mining is going to continue because there's no work out here," he added.

- Power struggle -

The activity spells both environmental and social problems in La Merced de Buenos Aires.

AFP saw traces of chemicals like cyanide discarded by a clandestine gold refinement facility on a riverbank, exuding a thick liquid

and a strong, vinegar-like odor.

The Oliver Sinisterra Front a dissident group of Colombia's now-defunct rebel army FARC is active in the region. Local gold exploitation sparked a power struggle between the front and the Ecuadoran gang Los Lobos. □



View during an operation of army members against illegal mining in Buenos Aires, Imbabura province, Ecuador, on May 27, 2026.

Japan's samurai spirit still burns in cooler conditions

Minamisoma, Japan

Japan's thousand-year-old samurai horse festival has survived wars, earthquakes and a nuclear disaster. Now it's battling a new challenge climate change.

The Soma Nomaio began as a way to train mounted warriors and it still looks the same a millennium later, with riders dressed in samurai armour competing in horseback events.

Until 2024, the festival took place at the height of Japan's gruelling summers, which had become so hot that riders and spectators were collapsing and horses dying of heatstroke.

That prompted organisers to switch the festival to the cooler temperatures of late May.

Mitsukiyo Monma, who has been taking part in the event for 54 years, told AFP that the change had given the festival a new lease of life.

"You have to wear a kimono under the armour, which is not like going out in just a T-shirt in the summer," said the 69-year-old, adding that he needed medical attention on a day when the mercury was close to 40C.

"Your clothes would be



This picture taken on April 22, 2026 shows samurai armours displayed in Mitsukiyo Monma's house in Minami-Soma city of Fukushima Prefecture.

so soaked that you could wring out the sweat," he said.

"When the festival moved to May, it was the first time I could drink hot coffee before going out."

Scientists say climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent and severe, and temperatures around the world have soared in recent years.

Japan is no exception. Last year, the country had its hottest summer since records began in 1898.

Temperatures rising to 40C and above have become

so common that Japan's weather agency recently created an official designation for them, labelling them "cruelly hot" days.

- 'Truly a samurai' -

Such conditions are hardly ideal for the Soma Nomaio, where participants compete on horseback in samurai armour weighing around 25 kg.

The main event starts with races around a flat, oval track, with riders carrying giant flags on their backs. Hundreds of riders then gather in a large grass field and compete to grab co-

loured flags that drift to the ground after being fired high into the air.

On the last of the festival's three days, participants try to grab wild horses with their bare hands and offer them to the gods.

The action is fast and furious, and Monma says it is serious business for the riders taking part.

"I feel like I've truly become a samurai," he said.

"I feel more courageous, and on the day itself, my whole body and mind tighten."

The Soma Nomaio takes place around Minamisoma,

almost 300 kilometres (190 miles) north of Tokyo.

It started around 1,000 years ago and records suggest it has been held uninterrupted for at least the last 400 years.

The festivities kept going even in the aftermath of a 2011 earthquake and tsunami that left over 18,000 people dead or missing and caused a devastating meltdown at the Fukushima nuclear plant.

Fumihiko Futakami, director of the Minamisoma City Museum, says the Soma Nomaio was a source of comfort when he was evacuated to Tokyo after the disaster.

"Even for people who have left here and now live elsewhere, when they think of their hometown, they think of mounted warriors," he said.

"It's the identity of our town."

- Uncertain future -

The festival's warrior roots meant only samurai could take part until the feudal system was abolished in the late 19th century.

Women were admitted after World War II, and festival veteran Monma fulfilled a lifelong dream when his two granddaughters joined him for this year's event. □

Bayeux Tapestry to be moved in secret to British Museum: minister

Paris, France

France's medieval Bayeux Tapestry will be moved to Britain in secret in a shock proof container so that it

can be displayed in London this year, the culture minister said Wednesday. The 11th century artefact depicting the 1066 Norman



This photograph shows a detail of Bayeux Tapestry before being placed in a crate for transfer to the British Museum, at the Bayeux Tapestry Museum, in Bayeux, northwestern France, on September 18, 2025.

conquest of England is to go on display at the British Museum from September and French Culture Minister Catherine Pegard said all possible precautions will be taken to protect it.

Normally on display in the northern French town of Bayeux, President Emmanuel Macron agreed a loan to celebrate cross-Channel relations.

Some experts have however voiced concern about possible damage to the 70-metre (230 feet) embroidery, which already has over 24,000 stains, 9,000 holes and 30 tears.

But Pegard said she had "found the insinuations of

incompetence that some have tried to spread particularly unfair".

"Nothing, absolutely nothing, has been left to chance, particularly when it comes to the movement of this work," she told a Paris press conference.

The tapestry will travel, on a date kept secret, to the British Museum in a crate specially designed to cushion vibrations, the minister and officials said.

According to a culture ministry study published on Wednesday following a second trial run carried out in April, the crate can absorb 96 percent of the force of a significant im-

pact over the entire journey.

The conclusions of this study amount to giving the green light for transporting the tapestry, even though "zero risk does not exist", the minister said.

"Never in the history of transporting works of art have so many tests, so many protocols, so many risk checks been carried out for a single relocation," she said, comparing the crate to "a cradle in which a newborn has been laid". When it returns to France at the end of 2027, the Bayeux Tapestry will undergo a long-planned restoration that had been postponed. □

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Span-



ish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to

hitch a ride home, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get

out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel.

For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass holds a lot of value to our culture of folkloric story-telling. □

Source: visitaruba.com

A quick snack for the road

Learn how to make the Aruban Pastechi!

(Oranjestad)—If you ever been to Aruba before, you probably heard of (and even tried) the Aruban Pastechi. Beloved by young and old, this tasty treat is a staple for party snacks, a quick lunch or even breakfast!

Here's how to make the Pastechi dough.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of wheat flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder (if using self-rising flour, omit baking powder)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 0.5 cup of melted butter
- 1 cup water
- 1 egg

Directions:

Sift your flour into a bowl and add all the dry ingredients before giving it a quick mix. Next add the butter, water and egg and mix until thoroughly combined. At this point, your dough will start to get sticky; time for an arm workout. Knead

your dough into the bowl you are using or on a clean surface with some flour lightly dusted until its surface is smooth. You'll know your dough is ready when it doesn't stick to your hands or the surface on which you're kneading it. Let your dough rest covered for 15-20 minutes.

After resting, divide your dough into approximately 100 gram balls and roll it flat with a rolling pin. The thickness of the pastechi depends on your taste, but the average thickness would be around ¼ inch or so.

Filling for the pastechis varies according to your taste. The easiest and most common filling you'll find in Aruba is a simple cheese filling. For this, we usually use shredded Gouda, but feel free to use any cheese that melts well when frying the pastry.

Place the filling on your rolled out piece of dough, fold it in half and pinch the sides shut with a fork. If you have a folding tool, feel free to



use it for this process. Your pastechi is ready for the fryer!

If you want to store some pastechis for later use, you can freeze them. A good tip is to place a piece of wax paper in between each pastechi if you are to store them on top of one another. This way the pastechis don't stick to each other when defrosting.

Here in Aruba we enjoy pastechi at any time of the day, but it has become almost tradition to eat pastechis for breakfast on the way to work. Many roadside snack trucks sell pastechi from early morning to noon, and offer a variety of fillings like cheese; ham and cheese; ground beef and pulled chicken to name a few. □

Why 'Rock Stacking' is more dangerous than you think

(Oranjestad)—
"Rock stacking" is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba's wilderness. Conservation organizations repeatedly warn people not to participate. To understand the growing opposition to the practice of stacking rocks, it is necessary to understand the deep and negative impact behind it.



The act, called rock stacking, has been practiced for thousands of years and was originally used to guide people on hikes or travelers in mountainous regions, as well as for rituals, burials, and memorials. However, the modern trend is quite different. Today, the popularity of rock stacking has less to do with utility and tradition and more to do with social media. An American artist based in Colorado, Michael Grab, noted that the trend really began gaining popularity around 2014 and 2015, before it exploded and became an international art form.

The reasons behind participation vary widely, ranging from something purely

practical or a tradition from the past, to an activity for its "beauty." For many, it is about leaving a mark, creating "art," or simply enjoying the process of balancing rocks. In recent times, those who participate in this especially in Aruba do so to leave proof of their presence or simply to post on social media.

Although it may seem harmless, there are several problems and negative impacts behind it. One of these is that many animal species hide under rocks to live, reproduce, or escape predators. If you move a rock, you may be destroying a home. If you stack one on top of another, you may expose prey to predators. Whether this is done

in nature areas, along the coast, or in desert environments, it can destroy entire colonies and, in the worst case, threaten species that are already endangered.

There are microorganisms and small species such as insects or certain snakes that live in the soil beneath rocks commonly used for stacking. These rocks help trap moisture underneath, allowing the ecosystem to sustain itself. When you remove a rock, the soil is exposed and the moisture can dry up, killing all living organisms that depend on that humid environment.

Additionally, each rock is full of life everything from aquatic plants to microorganisms attaches to them.

Especially when it comes to rocks near the sea, they create habitats for some marine animals. Holes in the rocks can hold eggs, supporting them until the animals hatch. An expert explained that removing rocks from a fragile environment is essentially the equivalent of removing bricks from someone's house while also taking everything out of their refrigerator.

There is also the issue of erosion and soil damage, because rocks help hold the ground in place, sealing the surface and helping manage excess water, even allowing new life to grow. When these rocks are removed, the soil becomes loose, significantly

increasing the rate of erosion in that area.

This erosion can cause sedimentation in nearby bodies of water, negatively impacting aquatic habitats and water quality.

Rocks along the coast are part of a natural ecosystem and play an important role in protecting the shoreline from erosion and the force of the ocean. When people remove or stack rocks, it affects coastal stability, increases the risk of erosion, and damages ecosystems. According to South African National Parks, this is particularly relevant for an island like Aruba especially considering that most, if not all, rock stacking on the island takes place near coastal areas.

It is understandable that rock stacking may seem like a fun activity to do while off-roading; however, the survival, protection, and conservation of the island are just as important if not more so to ensure that in the future there will still be an island for both locals and visitors. We want our visitors to appreciate what Aruba has to offer in a healthy and sustainable way. □

Visit the historic museum at Fort Zoutman!

(Oranjestad)—**Located in the middle of downtown Oranjestad, situated right next to the government building "Cocolishi", is one of the oldest buildings of Aruba: Fort Zoutman. First constructed in 1796, this site has been used (or left unused)**



in many ways and have survived eras of war and attempted dismantling.

When anyone refers to Fort Zoutman, they are actually referring to two separate buildings that, over the years, have been merged: the fort and the tower. That's right, the iconic 5-story, squared tower was not part of the original structure of the fort, and is actually called "Willem III Toren". Constructed in 1867, this tower was named after the then-reigning king of The Netherlands, Willem III. Willem III Toren was originally a light tower, but after a request from Lieutenant Governor Jan Helenus in 1866, it also became a bell tower.

The fort itself was originally constructed to protect the commerce bay of Paardenbaai from pirates and other disreputable characters roaming the Caribbean Sea. Un-

like the Willem III Toren, Fort Zoutman had a more tumultuous past, including the on-and-off reception of unwanted members of the English military several times (The Netherlands was at constant war with England back in the colonial era).

Over the years, both the fort and the tower had functioned as different government center points, including a tax and stamps office. For some time these two buildings also housed a police precinct and jail, and even experienced abandonment until the Cultural Center Aruba Foundation (CCA) petitioned for its renovation in 1964, turning the site into the Historic Museum it currently is.

Despite its small size, The Historic Museum guards a rich depository of the commercial, military and social history of Oranjestad, offering a glance into how the social cul-



ture of the town came to be. If you are interested in history and want to learn more about Aruba, then Fort Zoutman should definitely be included into your itinerary.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9am-6pm, and Saturday from 10am-2pm.

Source: The Old Fort of Aruba by Jan Hartog.

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Conchi: Aruba's hidden natural pool

(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there is an additional "hidden" natural pools that is situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary. This is Conchi.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch,

Conchi—also known "Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok

National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely



no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

Fun fact: "Conchi" means small bowl in Papiamentu. Once you get there, you may see why we call it that. □

Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

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 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 island's 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 during breeding season? 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).

The afore mentioned 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! □



Aruba's kite flying tradition

(Oranjestad)—Every year for King's Day, Arubans gather with friends and family to fly kites. Big or small, paper or plastic, blue skies fill up with these colorful flying contraptions, brightening our yearly celebration of the Dutch Monarch.



The tradition of flying kites starts at home in the weeks leading up to King's Day. These kites were traditionally made with things found in the nearby mondi* and in the kitchen at home. Using dried up cactus sticks for the frame, old news papers, and glue made from flour, water and salt to dry faster (some people even use cornstarch slurry as glue), kids usually make

their own kites with their friends, parents or other close family members. Tails are made from old bed sheets, ripped and tied together to create a long string of fabric trailing behind the back end of the kite. To finish off the process, people used fish lines

or thin rope to tie three corners of the kite together. Another long string of rope is tied in the knotted center and bundled up, used to steer the kite as it flies in the air. Decorating the kite was especially important, and children would use paint to create their own design-



the more colorful, the better!

People usually fly their kites in big open fields, like empty soccer and baseball fields found all around the island around noon, when the sun is at its brightest. In the past few years, kite

flying has become a sport in which groups of people would battle against each other to see whose kite is the biggest, the prettiest, and whose could fly flawlessly and longer in the air.

*Mondi: Aruban woods.

Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) – Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner
The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically

eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken stewed or fried with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi bonch'i rabo (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays



Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo

di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, baskets, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and of-

ten open until late at night offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun.

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source:
Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

Get to know the history of the gold industry on Aruba



BNA-DIG-HARTOG-CAHA-001-017-016 | Biblioteca Nacional Aruba - Sección Digital
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(Oranjestad)— We have talked about the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin before and its brief history during the gold industry on Aruba, but get to know a little more about the history of the “Aruban Gold Rush.”

The first hint of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when rumors about gold being found in dug up treasure chests of the Spanish colonial era prompted the first official exploration for gold on the island, commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some specks of gold, it was not enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young farmer boy named Willem Rasmijn found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep in the area of Rooi Fluit on the north coast. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold.

When the colonial governor in Curacao, Governor Cantz'laar, heard about the news, he sent his adjutant, Capitan van Raders, to start harvesting gold. This was in July 1824. In August of that same year, the governor followed suit to the island, accompanied by high-ranking military officials. When citizens started swarming the area in search for gold, The Netherlands sent more troops to safe guard the gold.

Prominent places where gold was found was in Daimari, Wacobana, Arikok, Rooi Fluit, Hadicouradi and later West punt, where gold ore was found. Because of a lack in advanced technology and materials to harvest the gold, the process took a more primitive approach: Clay rocks containing traces of gold were left to dry in the sun. Then, workers would start chipping the clay away on a large canvas to catch the gold particles that were left behind after the wind blew away the dust from the clay.

In the harvest period of 1824-1825, there was a total of 71,000 kilos collected through commissioned harvesting. Locals themselves reportedly found about 25 pounds worth of gold in the nearby rivers. The following years after that first big harvest, commission work fell off, and in 1828, the director of the goldmines, Johan Gravenhorst, decided to halt harvesting.

Almost 40 years later, the London-based Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was granted concession. The firm built their gold mines on Bushiribana, and in the port of Oranjestad a long road that connected the gold mill to the port. The ores themselves came from Sero Plat en Sero Cristal.



By this point, workers were still using primitive methods to harvest the ores. For example, when someone had to go into the mines, there were no stairs or lifts; the person had to be brought down in a big bucket, with two or more workers holding the bucket by a thick rope above ground.

Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. reportedly operated until 1899, and right after the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. was established, coincidentally also based in London. This time, the gold mill in Balashi was built, and more mines were dug up all around the island. The gold ores that were found were transported via track engine, locally called the “trekinchi”. Despite being more equipped for the job, the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. could not produce any real profit, and so the concession was terminated just eight years later, in 1908.

A local firm, the “Aruba Goud Maatschappij” (Aruba Gold Company) took over the concession, along with all the materials and equipment. In the beginning, the company saw good profit, and for a while, the island's economy depended primarily on the mining and harvesting of gold. But just like its predecessors, the streak of luck for the Aruba Gold Company came to an end when WWI broke out.

The main reason why production stopped this time was reportedly because of a lack in dynamite for extracting the ores from the mines, as well as a lack in raw materials like German cyanide for the refining process. By the time the war ended, the equipment that was left at Balashi were too old to use again. After the war, gold production on the Aruba was left to a standstill.

According to an issue in Aruba Esso News paper in 1953, Henny Eman wanted to start up digging again, this time using independent miners. He argued that there was proof of more gold to be discovered. Plus, hiring independent miners would boost the island's employment rate.

When it was proven that gold was in fact still present, the executive board on the island promised to fund the project only if the gold dug up proved to be valuable. However, nothing else was reported after this, so it could be concluded that there was no real profitable market on the island anymore.

The ruins of the Bushiribana and Balashi Gold Mills are still standing, and open for the public to visit. These structures offer a glance into the past, to a time where Aruba experienced one of its first wave of industrialization. Today, these structures are persevered as historical monuments. □

Source:

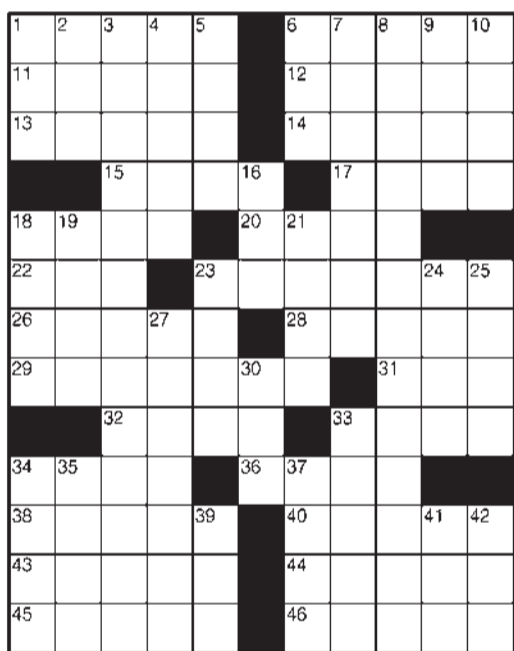
1. “De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)” by Evert Bongers.
2. Aruba Esso News, 1953 issue.

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH



- ACROSS**
- 45 Putting site
 - 1 Indiana player
 - 6 Make lumber out of
 - 11 Texas landmark
 - 12 Sung drama
 - 13 Meek
 - 14 Salad servers
 - 15 "Frozen" queen
 - 17 Dele undoer
 - 18 Feel sorry for
 - 20 Damon of "The Martian"
 - 22 Hubbub
 - 23 Family of five, say
 - 26 Rose part
 - 28 Paris subway
 - 29 Depth charges, in naval slang
 - 31 Egg layer
 - 32 Sicilian peak
 - 33 Accomplishment
 - 34 Remove
 - 36 Work the fields
 - 38 Steer clear of
 - 40 Many Mideast natives
 - 43 Audacity
 - 44 Dome home
- DOWN**
- 1 Contrived
 - 2 Oscar winner
 - 3 Made oneself prominent
 - 4 Writer
 - 5 Reactor parts
 - 6 Lush
 - 7 John or Paul
 - 8 Made every possible effort
 - 9 Spur on
 - 10 Days gone by
 - 16 Dr.'s org.
 - 18 One of a bear trio
 - 19 Midmonth day
 - 21 Prepares for war
 - 23 Large family
 - 24 Open space
 - 25 Warning word
 - 27 When Macbeth dies
 - 30 Afternoon break
 - 33 Smith's place
 - 34 "Shucks!"
 - 35 Finished
 - 37 Animal home
 - 39 Animal home
 - 41 Squeezing snake
 - 42 Boston team, for short



2-3

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.

2-3 CRYPTOQUOTE

C GEXN ZNNT, ETS EDKEBI
IGEDD ZN, BLPY RYCNTS.
DCXN DLTQ ETS JYLIJNY.
— "IAEY AYNM CC: AGN
KYEAG LR MGET"

Cryptoquote: DID YOU EVER DANCE WITH THE DEVIL IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT?
— "BATMAN"

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.

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.

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.

JUNE CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 02 TUE | GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C |
| 09 TUE | CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I |
| 16 TUE | ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C SEVEN SEAS MARINER Arrival: 10:00 Departure: 21:00 Berth: I |
| 17 WED | CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I |
| 23 THU | CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C |
| 30 TUE | GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C |

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★

6/4

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

6/3

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U.N. warns world to prepare for El Nino extreme weather

Geneva, Switzerland

There is an 80-percent chance of the warming El Nino phenomenon developing between June and August, increasing the risk of extreme weather events, the World Meteorological Organization said Tuesday.

"Fuelled by unusually warm ocean waters in the tropical Pacific, El Nino conditions are developing and are set to influence global temperature and rainfall patterns," the United Nations' WMO weather and climate agency said.

Forecasts from the WMO global network "indicate a pronounced shift toward El Nino conditions, with probabilities reaching 80 percent for June-August", the Geneva-based organization said.

El Nino is a natural climate phenomenon that warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

It typically takes place every two to seven years and lasts around nine to 12 months.

Conditions oscillate between El Nino and its opposite La Nina, with neutral conditions in between.

The likelihood of El Nino developing by November is "near or above 90 percent", and most forecast models suggest it will be "at least moderate and possibly strong", the WMO said in its quarterly El Nino/La Nina update.

WMO chief Celeste Saulo said the world needed to get ready for an El Nino which could "exacerbate drought and heavy rainfall and increase the risk of heatwaves both on land and in the ocean".

The WMO says that even a moderate El Nino makes some weather and climate extremes more likely.

The last El Nino contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high at around 1.55C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial



Street vendors rest at a park on a hot summer day in Karachi on June 2, 2026.

average.

- 'Urgent climate warning': Guterres -

In late April to mid-May, the sea-surface temperature in the central-eastern Equatorial Pacific the sea used as a monitoring reference was approaching El Nino thresholds, the WMO said, with sub-surface temperatures more than 6C above average.

Meanwhile, the Southern Oscillation Index the atmospheric component of El Nino is also consistent with the phenomenon developing.

The WMO said there was no evidence that climate change increases the frequency or intensity of El Nino events.

However, the agency believes it can amplify the associated effects, because a warmer ocean and atmosphere increase the availability of energy

and moisture for extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and heavy rainfall.

"El Nino is arriving on our doorstep," UN chief Antonio Guterres said in a video message.

"The world must treat it as the urgent climate warning it is. El Nino conditions will pour fuel on the fire of a warming world.

"The only effective response is climate action equal to the crisis ending the addiction to fossil fuels, accelerating the shift to renewables, protecting the most vulnerable, and delivering early warning systems for all." □

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

U.N. urges AI firms to reveal environmental footprint

Paris, France

A U.N. report on Wednesday urged artificial intelligence firms to disclose their environmental footprint, warning that the AI boom is putting growing pressure on power grids, water supplies and land resources. The study also urged governments to require standardised environmental reporting from AI providers, and called on users to choose less energy-intensive tools that can accomplish the same task.

"What we are showing here is probably just the tip of the iceberg," Kaveh Madani, director of the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), told AFP.

"We need to require more transparency. We need the providers to provide that information," Madani said. The authors of the report, "Environmental Cost of AI's Energy Use: Carbon, Water and Land Footprints", used primary data from a range of sources to make their es-



Visitors look at Gigabyte's modular AI data center display during Computex in Taipei on June 2, 2026.

timates, Madani said.

- 'Not an anti-AI report' -

The global AI market is expected to grow from \$189 billion in 2023 to \$4.8 trillion by 2033, the UNU-INWEH report said.

Data centers, the warehouses of servers that power AI and other digital services, consumed 448 terawatt-hours (TWh) of electricity in 2025.

If data centers were a country, their consumption would have ranked in 11th place just under France

with 468 TWh, the study said.

AI workloads accounted for a fifth of the total electricity use at data centres last year, and they are expected to rise to 40 per cent by 2030.

Consumption by data centers is projected to exceed 945 TWh by 2030, ranking sixth among countries and emitting 399 million tons of CO2 equivalent. By comparison, the UK's net emissions reached 367 million tons last year.

The report cautioned that

reducing carbon emissions did not automatically reduce water or land impacts.

Data centers could guzzle 9.32 trillion liters of water by 2030, enough to meet the annual basic water needs of the entire population of sub-Saharan Africa, the report said. The land they occupy would be 18 times bigger than New York City. ChatGPT alone is estimated to process around 2.5 billion prompts per day, translating into roughly 383

GWh of electricity a year -- enough to meet the annual demand of nearly three million people in sub-Saharan Africa, the report said. AI videos are the the most energy-hungry product. A single short AI-generated clip can draw as much electricity as hundreds of AI-generated images.

The report also warned of a growing digital divide, with most AI-specialized data centers located in the United States, China and the European Union while many developing countries bear environmental costs linked to mineral extraction and waste disposal.

"This is not an anti-AI report," Madani said. "We are simply saying that we have to proactively monitor their impacts to be able to curb them, to be able to control them before it's too late."

- Chatbot or cookbook? -

The report said AI developers and service providers should "make the invisible visible" by publishing clear, standardized accounts of energy and environmental footprints for training models and generating responses for users. □



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Global media join forces to confront AI challenges

Marseille, France

Around 30 European and North American media outlets on Wednesday joined a coalition launched by Britain's BBC,

Sky News and The Guardian, aiming to secure fair payment for news content from artificial intelligence giants.

New members of the SPUR

Coalition include France's CMA Media, Switzerland's Ringier and Canadian groups including The Globe and Mail and CBC/Radio Canada.

"The world's leading publishers are determined to open a new chapter in their relationship with technology platforms and public authorities," CMA deputy chief Jean-Christophe Tortora told a gathering of global news publishers' association WAN-IFRA in southern French city Marseille.

He called for "a 'new deal' based on fair value sharing, content protection and the defense of reliable and independent journalism".

SPUR was co-founded by the BBC, Financial Times, Guardian Media Group,

Sky News, Telegraph Media and Belgium's Mediahuis, which operates in several European countries.

Tortora urged French President Emmanuel Macron to raise the publishers' concerns at this month's meeting of G7 leaders in Evian, eastern France.

The three-day WAN-IFRA meeting was dominated by the media sector's fears about whether its business model can survive the emergence of artificial intelligence.

"Tech giants strip-mine news websites without permission or compensation" to provide training data for large language models, New York Times publisher Arthur Gregg Sulzberger told the congress on Monday. □



Editor-in-Chief of The Globe and Mail and President of the World Editors Forum (WEF) David Walmsley looks on after giving the 2026 WAN-IFRA Golden Pen of Freedom award on the first day of the 77th World News Media Congress in Marseille, southern France on June 1, 2026.



Diana Shnaider celebrates her victory at the end of her women's quarter final singles match against Aryna Sabalenka on day 11 of the French Open tennis tournament on Court Philippe-Chatrier at the Roland-Garros Complex in Paris on June 3, 2026.

Sabalenka implodes as Shnaider books French Open semi with Chwalinska

Paris, France

Aryna Sabalenka saw her golden opportunity to claim a maiden French Open title go by on Wednesday as the world number one spectacularly crashed out to Diana Shnaider in the last eight, while Flavio Cobolli won to ensure an all-Italian men's semi-final.

After battling back from a set down and being led by a double break of serve in the second by the world number one, Shnaider prevailed to set up a last-four meeting with Polish qualifier Maja Chwalinska.

"I screw up, and then she stepped in and she played great. I feel like mentally I couldn't really recover after the second set," Sabalenka said after her 3-6, 7-5, 6-0 loss.

"I don't know when was the last time that happened to me that I lost 10 games in a row. I don't know. I guess mentally I got into very deep, deep, dark hole over there, and I just couldn't get back mentally on track."

Sabalenka's collapse on Court Philippe Chatrier was reminiscent of last year's final when Coco Gauff battled back to beat the four-

time major winner in three sets.

But this year's defeat to 25th seed Shnaider will sting just as much as Sabalenka had entered the last eight as the overwhelming favourite to win Roland Garros, following the early exits of principal challengers Gauff, Iga Swiatek and world number two Elena Rybakina.

"I don't like easy wins, you know. I guess for me it's about suffer, overcome, and get it done," Sabalenka said tongue-in-cheek. Shnaider's best previous performance in a major was a fourth-round run at the US Open in 2024.

But now the 22-year-old finds herself the favourite to reach the final at Roland Garros.

"It's gonna be a big switch for me for tomorrow's match," Shnaider said.

"(I'm) Happy for (Chwalinska). Yeah, I'm expecting a huge fight tomorrow. I feel like both of us is gonna be leaving it all out tomorrow with a huge opportunity in front of us."

- 'What's going on' -

Earlier, world number 114 Chwalinska continued her stunning French Open run

by becoming just the second women's qualifier to reach the last four at Roland Garros in the professional era.

The 24-year-old Pole again defied the odds to down Russian 22nd seed Anna Kalinskaya 7-6 (7/3), 6-3.

"I honestly don't know what's going on. I know I repeat myself but every single match here is kind of crazy for me so I'm very grateful," Chwalinska said on court.

It was her eighth win at the tournament after she battled through three qualifying rounds to reach the main draw of a major for just the third time in her career.

Prior to her run in Paris, Chwalinska had only ever won two tour-level matches on clay in her career, now she stands one victory away from competing for the biggest title the surface has to offer.

"I feel like I just, for some reason, I don't process it, you know," Chwalinska said.

"But definitely after the tournament finishes, I will kind of have time to, I guess, be grateful for what happened and process it as well." □



Tomas Hertl #48 of the Vegas Golden Knights skates against the Carolina Hurricanes in Game One of the Stanley Cup Final at Lenovo Center on June 02, 2026 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Golden Knights sink Hurricanes in thrilling Stanley Cup opener

Los Angeles, United States

Czech international Tomas Hertl scored a late winner as the Vegas Golden Knights came from behind to defeat the Carolina Hurricanes 5-4 and take a 1-0 lead in the Stanley Cup Final series on Tuesday.

Hertl rammed in a snap shot with 3min 24sec remaining to settle an enthralling opening game at the Canes' Lenovo Center arena in Raleigh after Vegas had fought back from an early 2-0 deficit.

"Obviously we didn't have a great start but it's kind of our story all season but we never give up," Hertl said. "As a team it doesn't matter whether we're up or down, we just keep playing."

The tone for a tumultuous contest was set in a frenetic opening, when Nikolaj Ehlers scored after just 25 seconds for Carolina.

The 30-year-old Danish international picked up the puck inside his own half and went hurtling down the ice before unleashing a ferocious shot that flew past Golden Knights goalie Carter Hart.

That was the precursor for a sustained period of pressure by the Hurricanes, with Hart making a string of saves in the Vegas goal to keep his team in the contest.

The relentless Carolina pressure finally got its reward though and it was Ehlers again who doubled the Hurricanes lead.

Vegas conceded possession at the blue line and Carolina's Jalen Chatfield picked out Ehlers in acres of space, who coolly flipped a deft finish past Hart to make it 2-0.

Vegas grabbed a lifeline with 6min 32sec left in the first period when Shea Theodore's long-range slap-shot somehow found its way through a crowd of players around the goal to reduce Carolina's lead to 2-1.

Within 30 seconds of the second period getting underway Vegas had drawn level through an Ivan Barbashev snap shot.

William Karlsson then reduced the Carolina home crowd to stunned silence as Vegas took the lead, the Swedish forward jabbing home from close range after superb work from Mitch Marner behind the goal. Carolina came roaring back and equalized thanks to Jordan Staal's snap shot late in the period that made it 3-3. □

Mclroy chasing elusive Memorial, Scheffler eyes three-peat

Los Angeles, United States

Rory Mclroy is targeting a first ever victory at the PGA Tour's Memorial Tournament on Thursday as he returns to action in his final event before this month's US Open.

The Northern Ireland star, who clinched back-to-back Masters victories in April, has never won at the Jack Nicklaus-hosted tournament in Dublin, Ohio a gap on his CV he is determined to fill.

Mclroy's best finish at Muirfield Village came a decade ago, when he finished tied for fourth in 2016. After clinching a career Grand Slam with his maiden Masters win last year, Mclroy said on Wednesday the Memorial, along



Scottie Scheffler of the United States talks with his putting coach Phil Kenyon prior to the the Memorial Tournament presented by Workday 2026 at Muirfield Village Golf Club on June 03, 2026 in Dublin, Ohio.

with Tiger Woods' annual tournament at Riviera Country Club, were now top of the list of his priorities.

"I would say here and Tiger's event at Riviera, they're the two that I would love to win," Mclroy told reporters.

"I've been lucky enough to win at Bay Hill, but not while Arnold (Palmer) was alive. So I always thought it would be cool to win here and take that little walk up the hill off the 18th green and shake Jack's hand.

"Jack and I share a nice history. We've known each other now for nearly 20 years or I've known him for nearly 20 years. He's been nothing but great to me and my family.

"So, yeah, this is certainly one I would love to get done."

Mclroy acknowledges the challenging set-up at the par-72, 7,569 yards layout does not necessarily favor his game.

"For being such a long golf course I feel like it takes driver out of my hand a lot, which I pride myself on that being one of my biggest weapons," Mclroy said.

"The fairways pinch in right around the spots where I would be finishing driver. So it's frustrated me in a way that I feel like my biggest weapon is in some way neutralized here."

Mclroy believes success this week will hinge on tweaking his natural game. "It's just about me being a little more disciplined and not being so aggressive with my strategy," Mclroy said.

The biggest threat to Mclroy's hopes of a first win in the tournament is likely to come from two-time defending champion Scottie Scheffler, who is chasing a rare hat-trick.

World number one Scheffler could become the first player to win the same event three years running since Steve Stricker won the John Deere Classic three times on the spin between 2009 and 2011. □

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