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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



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Trump foe Bolton pleads guilty in classified files case

Washington, United States

John Bolton, who served as Donald Trump's national security advisor before becoming an outspoken critic of the US president, pleaded guilty Friday to one count of retaining classified documents.

Asked by federal judge Theodore Chuang if he was guilty, the 77-year-old veteran diplomat replied: "I am, Your Honor, and I'm sorry for it."

Bolton, who faces a maximum prison sentence of five years, must also pay a \$2.25 million fine and forfeit his federal pension as part of a plea agreement, the Department of Justice said. Sentencing was set for October 28.

"As Mr Bolton admitted, he shared more than 1,000 pages of information about his day-to-day activities as the National Security Advisor, including information related to national defense with two individuals who neither had the security clearances nor the need to know that information," prosecutor Kelly Hayes said after the hearing.

"Remarkably, he did so using his personal email account and non-government messaging applications," she said of his ac-



Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and former National Security Advisor John Bolton (C) departs U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland after a plea deal hearing on June 26, 2026 in Greenbelt, Maryland.

tions from April 2018 and September 2019.

Bolton, one of several Trump foes to be hit with criminal charges since the Republican president returned to the White House, was indicted in October on 18 counts of transmitting and retaining top secret national defense information.

The two individuals have not been identified, but Bolton is believed to have shared the information with

his wife and daughter.

The material was allegedly later used in a book that Bolton wrote, "The Room Where It Happened," that was highly critical of the Trump administration.

Bolton, who served as Trump's national security advisor during his first term, frequently appears on television news shows and in print to condemn the man he has called "unfit to be president."

- Hacked -

Amplifying the impact of Bolton's actions, his personal email was hacked by an Iranian-linked actor after he left office in September 2019, authorities said.

"He reported that hack to law enforcement but did not tell the agents or anyone else in the US government that the account contained national defense information," the Department of Justice said.

Trump has repeatedly lashed out at his former aide and withdrew his security detail shortly after returning to the White House in January of last year.

The Trump Justice Department has sought to bring cases against other prominent critics of the president, including New York Attorney General Letitia James and former FBI director James Comey.

Comey was indicted in April for allegedly threatening Trump's life, five months after a previous case against the ex-FBI chief was thrown out.

The indictment by a grand jury in North Carolina stems from an Instagram post Comey made that showed the numbers "86 47" spelled out in seashells on a beach. Trump has alleged that "86" was slang for kill and "47" was a reference to his being the 47th president.

The case against James, which has since been dismissed, centered on an allegedly falsified mortgage application.

Unlike the James and Comey cases, however, the investigation into Bolton's alleged mishandling of classified material began during the administration of former president Joe Biden. □

U.S. activates highest-level response to Ebola outbreak

Washington, United States

U.S. health authorities on Friday activated the highest level of response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, while announcing the shipment of experimental treatments to the region.

"Our assessment (is) that the risk to the United States continues to remain low," said Satish Pillai, who is leading the Ebola response at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The leading US public health agency nevertheless announced a Level 1 response the highest level as it did for the worst-ever Ebola epidemic in 2014. The heightened response level is an "internal cue" in-

dicating that the outbreak is a top priority for the agency, a CDC official said.

"We will mobilize staffing

and additional resources as efficiently and rapidly as possible," he added.

A little over one month af-



Healthcare workers disinfect a stretcher after transporting a patient suffering from the Ebola virus disease from an ambulance at the Ebola Treatment Center (ETC) in Bunia, Ituri, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo on June 23, 2026.

ter it was declared, the current Ebola epidemic has claimed 304 lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), out of 1,115 confirmed infections.

The outbreak has spread to neighboring Uganda, where containment measures have been effective. Kampala has reported 20 confirmed cases nationwide, including two deaths since May 15.

If it is not quickly contained, the outbreak could reach or even surpass the scale of the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic, US health officials have warned in recent weeks.

Originating in Guinea, that outbreak struck West Africa

and killed more than 11,000 people, according to the World Health Organization. No approved vaccines or treatments exist for the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola responsible for the latest outbreak.

U.S. health officials said Friday they are sending doses of an experimental treatment, known as MBP134, to the DRC and Uganda.

Additional doses of the treatment will be sent to the University of Oxford in Britain for a clinical trial, U.S. health authorities said in a statement.

Washington is ready to send 2,500 tests that can be used to screen deceased victims to determine which Ebola strains were present. □

Globalization isn't dead, just 'transformed,' says IMF chief economist

Washington, United States

While the global economy has faced shocks and trade turmoil, globalization is not dead -- it is simply being "transformed," the International Monetary Fund's chief economist told AFP Friday in an exclusive interview.

The world's lender of last resort will release an update to its World Economic Outlook on July 8, with all eyes on whether -- or how far -- it revises down growth estimates from its April update due to the economic fallout of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

By then, however, Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas will have moved on after completing a four-and-a-half year tenure that saw the IMF grapple with the economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Washington's upending of global trade through tariffs and the recent war on Iran.

Reflecting on a tumultuous time for the world economy, Gourinchas remains confident that recent upheaval in global trade caused by U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs are not necessarily ending globalization -- just adjusting certain bilateral relationships.

"Well, it's certainly not



Chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas speaks during an AFP interview at the IMF Headquarters in Washington, DC, on June 26, 2026.

dead," he told AFP in his office at the IMF's headquarters in Washington, pointing to solid global trade-to-GDP ratios.

"We haven't experienced de-globalization," he said. "We have experienced (that) it's being transformed."

Gourinchas, a 57-year-old Frenchman, said the latest movements should be seen mainly as "a desire to reduce the bilateral level of trade between the U.S. and China. I don't think that is something that is a mystery for anyone."

Since returning to office for a second term, Trump has

targeted US friends and foes alike with punishing tariffs, saying he intends to rebase manufacturing to the homeland and to address what he terms unfair trade practices.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer have described globalization as having taken economic integration too far, causing economic pain for American households while benefiting those abroad.

For Gourinchas, however, the latest trade turmoil which has seen major US trading partners retaliate

with tariffs of their own -- has provided opportunities, too.

"Other actors have stepped in," he said. "The supply chains have adapted, the Mexico's, the Vietnam's of the world have stepped in... the connector countries that have been able to grow on the back of this."

Still, it depends on how far Washington and other advanced economies push this fragmentation of the global economy, he said.

"If the strategy is not just to disengage from China, but it's to disengage more globally which I don't think

it is, by the way -- I don't think it's sustainable," he said.

He is skeptical, too, on whether the drive to move industries to the United States will end up boosting employment, saying it is "very, very hard" to see that happening. New factories in advanced economies are expected to rely heavily on technology and employ fewer workers.

- 'Middle-income trap' -

For the world's emerging market countries, there is another challenge in a fragmenting world economy: What will drive their own growth, if not demand from larger economies?

The last decade has seen growth in developing countries stall, with the World Bank's Chief Economist Indermit Gill referring to it as a "lost decade" for many. Gourinchas said that emerging economies had shown remarkable resilience through the shocks of the last five years, mainly due to greater supply-chain integration -- but that resilience was not infinite.

"There is this concern about potentially having a middle-income trap for many emerging market economies," he said, pointing to limited sources of growth in a world where advanced economies were turning inwards. □

Vance says Watergate would be '12-hour news story' today

Washington, United States

U.S. Vice President JD Vance says it is "crazy" that the Watergate scandal brought down Richard Nixon's presidency, arguing that the political spying affair would dominate headlines for no more than a few hours.

"I think that his historical legacy is enjoying a bit of a renaissance, but I think deservedly so," Vance said on Thursday during an appearance at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in California.

"If Watergate happened tomorrow, it would be like a 12-hour news story. The idea that it would have taken down a presidency is crazy," added Vance, a possible 2028 presidential contender. Democratic commentator David Axel-

rod responded on X that Vance's view "speaks volumes about the moral and ethical degradation of the Trump era." The Watergate scandal began in 1972 with the arrest of five men caught breaking into Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate office complex in Washington.

Nixon, then seeking a second term, was comfortably reelected that November. Reporting by The Washington Post later uncovered a broad political spying operation and an attempted cover-up orchestrated at the highest levels of the White House.

After a long legal battle and with impeachment proceedings looming in Congress, Nixon resigned in 1974, becoming the only US president to step down from office. □



U.S. Vice President JD Vance attends a meeting between President Donald Trump and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on June 24, 2026.

Wole Soyinka university theatre: a talent factory for Nigeria and beyond

Ibadan, Nigeria

The actors, seasoned veterans as well as young amateurs, go through their lines and movements one last time before the curtain rises at the Wole Soyinka Theatre at the University of Ibadan, in southwest Nigeria.

Adebayo Israel was always passionate about theatre "but this is where I gained my confidence on stage", the 21-year-old student told AFP, warming up his voice ahead of that night's production of "Medaaye". Israel is the latest in a long line of actors to make their way through the theatre, which has become something of a proving ground for talent in the west African country.

Named after former University of Ibadan student Wole Soyinka, the first African to be awarded the Nobel prize in literature, the theatre continues to pump out talent seven decades after its 1955 founding, drawing audiences from across the country and the continent. "This particular department, this university, has produced actors and academics to develop the departments of theatre in every university in Nigeria," instructor Tunde Awosanmi



Actors perform on stage *Medaaye*, a play by Nigerian writer Femi Osofisan, at the Wole Soyinka Theatre at the University of Ibadan on June 19, 2026.

told AFP. Awosanmi also served as the stage director for "Medaaye", an African adaptation of the Greek tragedy "Medea" by Euripides.

For two and a half hours on a recent evening, the dialogue alternated between English, Yoruba and Pidgin, punctuated by songs and traditional dancing and accompanied by musicians seated among the

public in the front row. In the audience was the "Medaaye" playwright Femi Osofisan, the first African to receive the prestigious Thalia Prize, in 2016.

- 'Pool of talent' -

Osofisan, who was there for a week of events celebrating his 80th birthday, knows the venue well he studied and taught at Ibadan's theatre department. Ibadan-trained talent has

also been known to spill over into the country's raucous, fast-paced film industry, known as Nollywood, which is said to produce around 200 films per month. Both professional actors and students perform together.

Alumni of the Ibadan stage include playwright and actor Akinwumi Isola, actress Martha Ehinome and actor Gabriel Afolayan.

For Iyanuoluwa Ajibike,

30, the theatre's strength comes from its melting-pot atmosphere.

"It's a pool of talent because different people with different skills meet," the actor and producer told AFP.

"We have actors, directors, the costumers, the make-up artists, light technicians, choreographers, the sound designers. That's a draw for students, as well.

"I've learnt a little bit of costume, make-up, dance and the others," said Oreoluwa Tayo, a 22-year-old actor who hopes to venture into the management and business aspect of theatre production.

- 'Costs remain a hurdle' -

While the theatre has become a pillar of the city of Ibadan, it is also known to draw audiences from across the country.

Esther Adelana, 29, a public relations practitioner based in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, more than 650 kilometres from Ibadan, came all the way to watch the performance.

For her, the theatre epitomises "African culture in all its intelligence and excellence". □

Will Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce wed in New York? Clues abound

New York, United States

Will Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce's "Love Story" culminate in a Big Apple wedding? Increasing signs point to a mega-bash for the

A-list celebrity couple at Madison Square Garden next week.

Rumors have run rampant for weeks that the 36-year-old pop superstar and the

three-time NFL Super Bowl winner, both 36, could wed at the storied sports arena, home to the New York Knicks, the newly crowned NBA champions.

The couple, who announced their engagement in August last year, have been seen in various spots around New York of late, and clues have multiplied that the Garden could be their venue of choice.

The New York Times reported Thursday -- citing an entertainment industry executive and another person with knowledge of the matter -- that Swift had booked the arena for an "intimate" gathering of around 100 people on July 2, and for a larger event the following day with around 1,000

guests. The Times, along with other outlets including CNN, reported that a company specializing in wedding planning had obtained a permit to close the streets around the venue between July 2 and July 4, and erect a tent.

The permit application said the event would host from 500 to 999 people.

The Garden boasts both the arena space and a smaller theater traditionally used for concerts and meetings.

It is perhaps not a traditional wedding venue, but Swift would not be the first musician to marry there. Sly Stone, who died last year, was married there in June 1974 to actress Kathy

Silva during a concert by his band, Sly and the Family Stone.

Swift, a 14-time Grammy winner, is coming off a huge year with the success of her album "The Life of a Showgirl," induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and a new song on the "Toy Story 5" soundtrack.

Kelce, a tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs, has signed to play for a 14th season in the National Football League.

If the wedding plans come to fruition, it could be a huge weekend in New York, with July 4 celebrations culminating in a huge fireworks show, and World Cup action scheduled for July 5. □



(L-R) Singer Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce of the Kansas City Chiefs attend Game Three between the New York Knicks and the Cleveland Cavaliers in the NBA Eastern Conference Finals at Rocket Arena on May 23, 2026 in Cleveland, Ohio.



A boy poses at his home as he looks at social media on his tablet in Sydney on December 8, 2025.

Australia teen social media ban has little impact: research

Sydney, Australia

Australia's social media ban for under 16s has had little impact on teenagers' scrolling habits, researchers said Thursday in one of the first evaluations of the world-leading measures. Australia in December banned under 16s from the likes of Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, in a crackdown designed to protect children from online bullying and "predatory algorithms".

But there is little evidence to suggest teenagers have turned away from social media as a consequence, a team of Australia-based researchers found in a peer-reviewed study published by the British Medical Journal.

Underage users have been dodging the restrictions by using accounts registered to older people, setting up fake accounts, or by logging into private browsers. "We found insufficient evidence to conclude that exposure to the Act had any early substantial effects on social media use among adolescents aged under 16," the researchers wrote.

There is strong global interest in whether Australia's laws could provide a blueprint for how to rein in

increasingly powerful tech giants.

A growing mass of nations have either introduced or are mulling similar bans including the United Kingdom, Indonesia, the UAE and New Zealand.

The researchers surveyed more than 400 young social media users immediately before the restrictions came into effect, and again three months after. There was little change for users aged 12-13, a slight decrease for the 14-15 age group, and an increase in use for those aged 16 and older.

"The findings suggest that the period immediately after the introduction of the act was characterised by limited implementation, incomplete compliance, and substantial circumvention of social media restrictions."

- Not 'impossible' -

Tech companies face fines of up to Aus\$49.5 million (\$34 million) if they fail to show meaningful efforts to weed out underage users. Australia in March accused Facebook, TikTok and YouTube of failing to meet their obligations.

"Australia's world-leading social media laws are not failing. But big tech is failing to obey the laws," Com-

munications Minister Anika Wells said at the time.

"None of this is impossible. None of this is even difficult for big tech, who are innovative billion-dollar companies."

The nation's eSafety Commission separately flagged "significant concerns" about Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube.

A growing body of research suggests too much time online is taking a toll on teen well-being, and Australia's ban has been hailed as a godsend for parents sick of seeing children glued to their phones.

Although platforms have pledged to abide by the laws, they have warned the measures could instead push teenagers into dark, unregulated corners of the internet.

Social media companies bear the sole responsibility for checking that Australia-based users are 16 or older, and must prove they have taken "reasonable steps" to weed out young teenagers.

Some platforms are using AI tools to estimate ages based on photos, while users can also choose to prove their age by uploading a government ID. □



Palestinian youth learn the basics of cooking at the Smile Kitchen Academy, in the Rimal neighborhood of Gaza City on June 24, 2026.

Gazans nourish dreams at twice-bombed culinary school

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

Inside a Gaza City culinary academy that has been bombed and rebuilt twice during the war, students chop, whisk, and plate dishes with quiet determination, committed to mastering their craft despite the hardships that surround them.

At Smile Kitchen Culinary Academy, men and women receive training that brings a semblance of normal life in the otherwise devastated Palestinian territory, as well as valuable skills in an economy battered by years of war.

Huda Zamo, 34, told AFP she owned an online clothing business before the war, but decided to launch her own food services after being displaced by the war and seeing people's need for food.

"When the war came, everything was destroyed. We went through famine and displacement," she said, adding she learned about the academy via Facebook and figured the classes would be good for her to develop her new business.

According to the U.N., at least 1.6 million of Gaza's 2.1 million residents are facing high levels of acute food insecurity mainly due to Israeli restrictions on goods entering the territory.

Ahmed Abu Taha, the school's director, said keeping the school open in Gaza required a lot of logistics one would not expect elsewhere.

"Smile Kitchen Academy was established in 2016 and was bombed twice (by Israel) in 2021 and 2023," Abu Taha told AFP.

After the latest bombing at the beginning of the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, the academy closed for three years, until it finally reopened earlier this year, with new equipment.

"There is strong engagement from students in the Gaza Strip under these difficult circumstances," Abu Taha said, adding that some students hope to use their new skillsets in more promising markets.

"Students also aim to obtain an international certificate from the World Chefs organisation in Paris, which qualifies them to work in tourism establishments outside Gaza."

In the kitchen, students wearing white chef's toques and jackets emblazoned with a Palestinian flag on the sleeves labour under the supervision of teacher Nabil al-Shawaf. □

Gaza's surfers seek solace in the sea

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

Carrying their boards past tents and bombed-out buildings, a group of Gazan surfers headed for the sea, seeking solace in the waves despite the risk of Israeli attacks.

On the beach in Gaza City, the trio laid out their boards on the sand while they warmed up their limbs and readied their gear.

A few children splashed in the shallows as the surfers paddled out to sea, fighting the crashing waves.

"This sport is indescribable. When you catch a wave, ride it, glide along it, that feeling can't be put into words," said 23-year-old Tahseen Abu Assi, who learned how to surf from his father.

"I used to see him practicing it at the beach with his father, and I watched and learned from them," he told AFP.

"We learned little by little, and even with the war, the shelling, and the destruction, we're still continuing with this sport, because it lets us breathe and makes us feel safe."

A ceasefire between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist



Youths take their surfboards out into the Mediterranean sea off a beach in Gaza City on June 21, 2026.

movement Hamas came into effect in Gaza in October after two years of devastating war.

But the tiny coastal territory remains gripped by bloodshed, with each side accusing the other of near-daily violations.

Even out at sea, the violence persists. In mid-May, Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis reported receiving two fishermen who had been injured by Israeli naval gunfire near the beach in the

southern Gaza Strip. A few days later, a Gazan security source reported that three fishermen were wounded by Israeli fire near the coast off Gaza City.

"The situation is still unstable," Abu Assi explained. "At any moment, shells or explosives could land near you."

- Candle wax -

Out at sea, the surfers glide effortlessly across the crests of waves, momentarily free

from the hardships of daily life in Gaza.

But the severe shortages caused by the war and ongoing Israeli import restrictions have posed obstacles for the sport.

"One of the biggest challenges and difficulties we face as surfers in the Gaza Strip is the lack of tools and equipment specific to this sport," Abdel Rahim Al-Ustadh, 19, told AFP.

"Surf wax, which we put on the boards, is not available

at all in Gaza, so we resort to candle wax so we can keep this sport going," he added.

Ustadh said preserving old equipment was also essential, clutching a battered red and blue surfboard that was nearly two decades old.

"As surfers, we treat these boards like great treasures to us, because losing any board or having it confiscated threatens our ability to continue in this sport," he said.

The war in Gaza flattened swathes of the territory, displaced most of the population at least once, and left hundreds of thousands of people living in tents and temporary shelters.

Khalil Abu Jiyab, 18, said that before the war there had been a team of 17 surfers in Gaza.

Now, he said, there were just the three of them, pointing to shortages and a lack of boards.

"I've been surfing for 13 years now, and my hopes have almost been shattered," Abu Jiyab told AFP, but said he still dreamed of one day being able to surf in competitions outside the Gaza Strip. □

Back in stork: returning birds bring joy to Croatian village

Sisak, Croatia

Spring brings flocks of noisy visitors to the sleepy Croatian village of Cigoc, outnumbering the locals, filling prime rooftop real estate and flying off again without spending a single cent. But for the locals, it's a good omen.

For decades, villagers have welcomed dozens of white storks on the rooftops of their homes, where the birds nest in spring on their annual return from Africa.

"Storks were here long before me," pensioner Marijan Belosevic told AFP.

Their arrival, which has

earned the village the moniker "Stork Village", has long been seen as a positive sign, signalling the changing of the seasons and serving as a symbol of fertility and prosperity.

"I don't see how I could ever remove their nest or chase them away... I have a lot of respect for nature," Belosevic said, eyeing a nest atop his home hopeful that it might soon hold newborn chicks.

- 'Fascinating' -

Cigoc, some 90 kilometres (55 miles) southeast of Zagreb, lies in the Lonjsko Polje nature park, the country's largest protected wetland area.

Its rich ecosystem makes it a valuable habitat for as many as 250 bird species more than two-thirds of

Croatia's bird population, including the white and black storks. In 1994, when the Germany-based EuroNatur foundation designated it Europe's first stork village, it recorded more than 300 storks, more than double its human residents. As the number of the village's human inhabitants declines due to an ageing population and a shift to cities, stork numbers have fallen as well.

With insects and small mammals more difficult for them to find and eat on the now-abandoned farmland, fewer winged visitors are drawn to the area. But they still outnumber the locals, perched on the roofs of most homes.

"In the area, white storks nest on house and barn roofs, unlike most of Eu-

rope, where they typically nest in trees or cliffs," Davor Anzil from the village's education centre said.

The reality of hosting such a large group of birds can often be messy, with families receiving help to clean up their homes from their feathered houseguests.

But with people living so close to the animals, Anzil said the locals were also given a rare up-close glimpse of the birds' day-to-days and even dramas. He still vividly remembers a bitter four-day feud between rival females caught up in an avian love triangle, all unfolding on the roof of a home.

"There are so many fascinating stories here that even I, who have been working here for 28 years, am left stunned." □



Two storks with their chicks stand in a nest on top of the roof of an old wooden house in Cigoc on June 11, 2026.



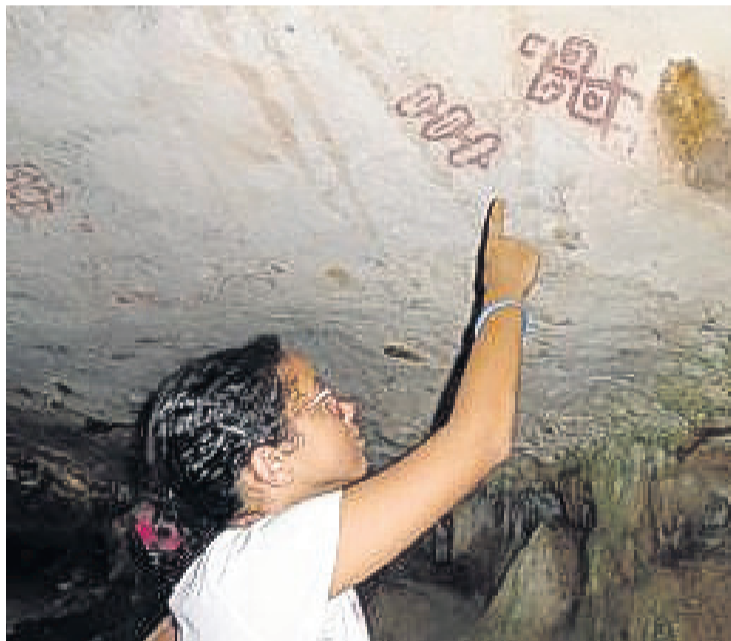
Visit the island's popular cave sites!

(Oranjestad)—Among the endless sea of dark brown sand and cacti, there are two caves hidden in the outskirts of San Nicolas, in the north-eastern area of the island. These caves, The Quadiriki cave and The Fontein Cave are open to visitors of the Arikok National Park, so if you ever decide to take an “off-road” tour in the park, be sure to visit these prehistoric caves.

Quadirikiri Cave

Known for its two chambers accompanied by a skylight, the Quadiriki Cave is the most popular cave among locals and tourists, as it is easy to walk through and provides great lighting for pictures.

Woman in Quadirikiri Cave, Arikok National Park, Aruba As with all prehistoric or ancient sites, there is always a folk legend that adds to the lore and mystery of the site. The Quadirikiri cave is no different. The most well-known legend behind the cave could be considered as Aruba's first love story, as it tells the tale of the undying love between the chief's daughter and her beloved. As legend would have it, the chief disapproved of his daughter's choice of lover, as he thought him unworthy. Stubborn and filled with anger, the daughter refused to turn away her beloved.



So, the chief decided to lock her up in the Quadirikiri Cave, in hopes that she would soon calm down and turn away her lover. Her beloved, in turn, was locked away in the Tunnel of Love (Now known as the Huliba Cave).

Through the pathways underneath the Tunnel of Love running up to the Quadiriki cave, the two love birds found each other, and refused to let each other go. Because of their stubbornness, they both died in the Quadiriki Cave,



their ascending spirits burning two holes in the ceiling of the cave. This is why the cave has two holes through which sunlight passes through to illuminate the chamber.

Though there have been discoveries of Amerindian drawing on the wall, these have mostly been ruined by vandalism. However, the Fontein Cave further up north, provides a better glimpse in prehistoric Amerindian paintings.

Fontein Cave

Longer than the Quadirikiri Cave, the Fontein Cave contains pathways that stretch to the limestone walls further down. Here is also where prehistoric drawings can be seen. Though this cave does not have its own legend, this was speculated to have been occupied or at least used by prehistoric Arawak settlers on the island for rituals and other spiritual ceremonies.

The Huliba Cave/ Tunnel of Love

The Huliba Cave, formerly known as the Tunnel of Love, was once open to the public, and was the

biggest and most accessible of all three caves. This cave had five chambers, including one that is heart-shaped. This cave had narrow stairs that led to long pathways deep into the cave, with a staircase leading to the exit on the other side. In one of the chambers, there used to be the carving of the Virgin Mary, put there for the protection of the cave.

However, the Huliba Cave has been permanently closed for a few years now, as a way to preserve the bat population that lives in the cave. These Long Tongue Fruit Bats and Insect Eater Bats are very important to the ecosystem of the island. Though this cave is no longer accessible to the public, it surely is interesting to learn more about the history of these caves and the Arawak tribes that resided or utilized them.

Do note that these caves are very dark, humid, hot, and are inhabited by bats. Do wear comfortable clothing and shoes, as the pathways in these caves may be rough and bumpy. Take care to not disturb the bats' habitat. □

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Beaches for the whole family to enjoy!

(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when traveling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to traveling parents to list off some of the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing

atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of Pos Chiquito. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big

and small families to set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach

Yet another highly popular beach sites, Eagle Beach and Palm Beach is where most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs

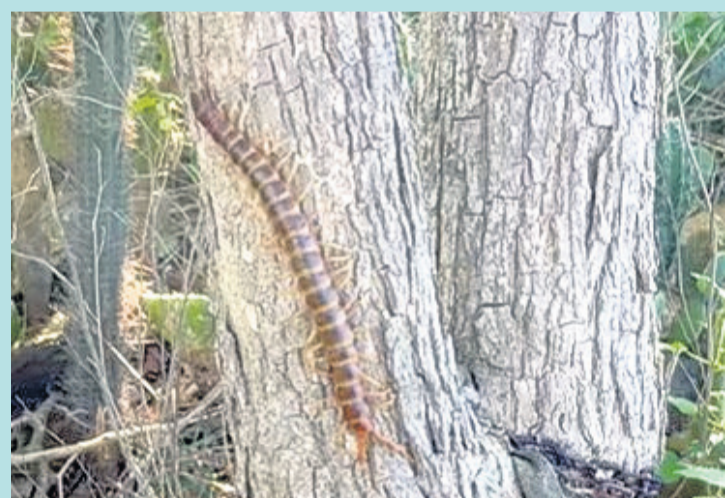


and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for your children to play and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it

may not be a very sandy beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals, even close to the shore. □



Fun facts about the 'Lisinbein'

The 'Lisinbein' (*Scolopendra gigantea*), also known as the Giant Centipede, is one of the largest centipedes in the world and is found in Aruba. Its size and hunting prowess make it a fascinating, if often misunderstood, creature.

Despite its fearsome reputation, it plays a crucial ecological role that often goes unnoticed.

As an apex invertebrate predator, *Scolopendra gigantea* helps maintain balance in the ecosystem. Moreover, they themselves are a food source for birds such as the Crested Caracara (Warawara) and the Aruba burrowing owl (Shoco).

It controls populations of smaller invertebrates and

even small vertebrates, ensuring that no species overpopulates, which could disrupt local biodiversity.

Its presence can indicate a healthy, functioning ecosystem. Its sensitivity to environmental changes makes it a bioindicator of ecological balance.

It can reach an impressive length of up to 30 centimeters (approx. 12 inches) and live for around 5 to 10 years in the wild. Its size and longevity makes it a significant and long-term part of the ecosystem.

A mother's love

In *Scolopendra* species, the 'mother' typically exhibits maternal care by curling around her eggs

and newly hatched young. She stays coiled around the clutch, protecting it from predators and fungi, which are serious risks in the moist environments these centipedes often inhabit. The mother maintains a clean environment for the eggs by carefully grooming them, which helps prevent fungal growth that could endanger the brood. This behavior may continue until the young centipedes have undergone their first molt, making them more capable of independent survival.

This form of parental care is beneficial in increasing the survival rates of offspring, as the mother's protection provides a safe 'environment' during their

vulnerable developmental stages. It's a fascinating adaptation because it shows a form of care that resembles more complex behaviors observed in vertebrates.

No bark, but all bite!

The lisinbein is known locally for having a really painful sting. While venomous, the Lisinbein is generally not aggressive toward humans unless provoked. Its role as a guardian of balance in the ecosystem helps protect the natural beauty of Aruba by keeping the ecosystem in harmony.

Editor's note: Information and pictures provided by Ms. Natasha Silva from the Aruba Conservation Foundation. □

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Up for a snorkeling adventure in Aruba? Top 3 shipwrecks to explore

(ORANJESTAD) – Aruba is not only the perfect vacation destination to sit back and relax on the sandy beaches but also has great snorkeling spots for passionate adventurers to explore. On the coast of the island, there are various shipwrecks that have become fan-favorites over the years. Here are the top 3 shipwrecks you should explore.

SS Antilla

Dubbed "The Ghost Ship", SS Antilla is the biggest and most visited shipwreck site off the coast of the island. Located in Malmok, this 400-foot ship's story is one of capture and sabotage during WWII.

After Germany invaded The Netherlands, Dutch authorities ordered the confinement of the ship's German crew, who were ported in Aruba because it needed to find a neutral port. The Dutch ordered the ship to be confiscated, but the German crew had other plans. Taking advantage of a delay caused by an anticipated armed resistance, the Germans started scuttling the ship, opening her seacock and setting her ablaze.

Eventually, the crew was arrested, but SS Antilla could not be saved by the Dutch forces. The Dutch fired two rounds of their 35mm gun aboard the 'Aruba' at SS Antilla and left her to sink.



The shipwreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you'll be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the shipwreck alone is already impressive enough.

SS Pedernales

Like the Antilla, the story of SS Pedernales dates to WWII. Pedernales was used as a lake tanker between Venezuela and Aruba, and sailed under British Flag. At this time, The US and Britain were using Aruba and Curacao as fuel stations for the war ships.

Under operation Neuland (disruption of British and American oil sources), Ger-

many fleets bombed Pedernales. The ship was later cut into three sections, two of which were taken to the US for reconstruction. The remaining part stayed in Aruba and was used as target practice. Eventually, the ship became a snorkeling site that has attracted many visitors throughout the years.

Pedernales lies on the north-west coast of Aruba, and is no more than 10 feet under water, making it an ideal site for snorkelers and divers of all levels.

Jane Sea Wreck

The Jane Sea Wreck lies near Palm Island at 100 feet underwater. Jane's story is

heavily speculated, making her origin a tale of legends.

Launched in 1959, the 190-foot ship was initially called "Blackthorn". Her last owner, S&D Shipping Ltd. named her Jane Sea. Jane was a cement freighter between Venezuela and Aruba.

The story goes that the Jane Sea arrived one day at the Barcadera Harbor, where Aruban customs discovered several tons of cocaine. The ship was confiscated and petitioned went out for her owner to claim her. However, several years went by and no one came forward to claim the ship,

so dive operators decided to sink her as an artificial reef. This happened in 1988. Jane Sea earned the nickname Jane C, because of the illicit white powder discovered on board.

Jane is now beautifully overgrown with coral and is home to a diverse set of marine life, like turtles, octopus, crabs and sometimes even nurse sharks.

The stories behind these shipwrecks enriches their exploration and offers snorkelers and divers a glance into the past, as well as the beautiful marine life that have molded these wrecks into their home. So, grab your equipment and discover another side of what Aruba has to offer!

We highly recommend you embark on your adventure with the guide of a professional and be sure to take of yourself and Aruba's precious nature. ☐

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Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time.



For many years, this site was also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the

little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea.



Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional,

there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use

(Oranjestad)— **Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.**

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts



to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate



tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes.

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris □

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in both at maximum and minimum speed is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky



to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout) Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could and has caused confusion among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of

the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out head-

ing east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located farther west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! ☐



CROSSWORD

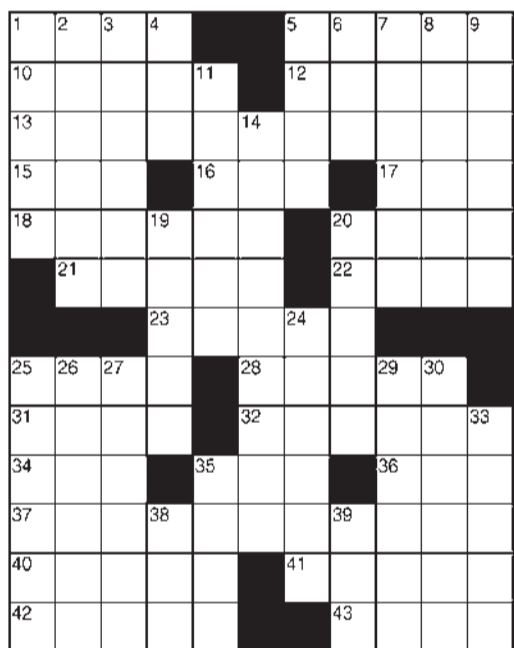
By **THOMAS JOSEPH**



- ACROSS**
- 41 Lesson
 - 1 Sibilant leader
 - summons
 - 5 Eiffel direction
 - Tower setting
 - 10 Match in value
 - 12 Singer Cara
 - 13 Gram-matical category
 - 15 "My country — of thee"
 - 16 Attempt
 - 17 Beavers' creation
 - 18 Black Sea port
 - 20 Old letter
 - 21 Laundry problem
 - 22 Comment-ary piece
 - 23 Signed
 - 25 Auto-maker Benz
 - 28 Make wavy
 - 31 Singer Burl
 - 32 Yearly
 - 34 Catch some z's
 - 35 Employ
 - 36 Uno plus due
 - 37 Spot for spectacles
 - 40 Exodus figure

DOWN

- 1 Basil-based sauce
- 2 Ten-armed swimmers
- 3 Circle-in-a-circle, in Venn diagrams
- 4 — Mahal
- 5 Feel sorry for
- 6 Rainbow shape
- 7 Study
- 8 Preposter-ous
- 9 Appeared
- 11 Admits
- 14 Site for a car's oil
- 19 Goes yachting
- 20 "The Kiss" creator
- 24 Writer Heming-way
- 25 Checkers demand
- 26 Arthurian island
- 27 Meal
- 29 Change genetically
- 30 Church leader
- 33 Dis-trustful
- 35 Cold War side
- 38 Glimpse
- 39 Bossy's chew



2-28

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

2-28 **CRYPTOQUOTE**
GPZOBUP PFP AJUDBYV, YL LYP

HXY GBHUXUP QDL JLW XAP

UL LUDPA OPLONP. — OABYHP
Cryptoquote: GENTLENESS CLEARS THE SOUL, LOVE CLEANS THE MIND AND MAKES IT FREE. — DAVID BOWIE

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.

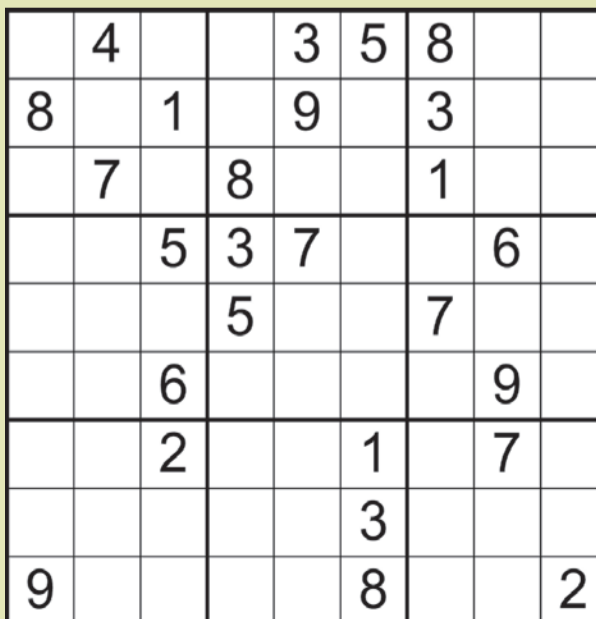
JUNE CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

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



Difficulty: ★★★★★

6/27

Answer to previous puzzle



Difficulty: ★★★★★

6/26

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European economies suffer from heatwave

Paris, France

When the mercury rises so do the costs for an economy as productivity melts and growth becomes lethargic, providing an additional challenge to Europe as it struggles with high energy prices.

"Extreme heat is emerging as a structural economic risk, with Europe highly exposed," wrote the trade credit arm of European insurer Allianz as the continent swelters under its second heatwave of the year. Europe has a number of weaknesses: an ageing population, dense urban centres with many buildings not built for extreme heat, and just 19 percent of households with air conditioning compared to 90 percent in the United States, the analysts noted. Heatwaves are becoming frequent as Europe warms faster than other regions of the world, and many scientists consider human activity will cause more extreme weather events.

"France is working in slow mode," recently observed Patrick Martin, head of Medef, France's main employers' organisation. "Inevitably, it disrupts work and leads to less work being accomplished," he told BFM television.

Allianz Trade has identified "a critical threshold" of around 30C beyond which productivity losses intensify rapidly. According to AFP's calculations more than 100 million people in Europe were set to experience temperatures in excess of 35C on Thursday, and nearly two-thirds of Europeans living where temperatures would surpass 30C.

- Medium-term impact -

In a blog post last year the European Central Bank said heatwaves in the spring, autumn and winter can boost economic activity, particularly construction, agriculture and outdoor dining.

"By contrast, heatwaves during the already warmer summers reduce economic activity, as physical exertion outdoors becomes increasingly impaired," it



A couple cools off in the Trocadero Fountain with the Eiffel Tower on the background during a heatwave in Paris on June 26, 2026.

said.

Drops in productivity, the need to shift investment to climate adaptation, and energy price hikes that dampen purchasing power all contribute to a drop in economic activity. ECB research found that summer heatwaves reduce regional activity of around one percent.

And in contrast to traditional views of a temporary disruption, the ECB found "the reduction in output is prolonged and even intensifies, reaching a trough of 1.5 percent lower after two years". The Banque de France's new governor, Emmanuel Moulin, recently told France Inter radio that "there is clearly a negative effect on growth in the me-

dium term".

- Food supplies a concern -

Extreme heat, which can provoke a hike in energy prices thanks to higher demand due to air conditioning, can also contribute to higher food prices and inflation over the medium term as it curtails yields and disrupts supply chains.

The ECB calculated that a 2022 drought caused European food prices to rise 0.7 percentage points. Olive crops were particularly affected, with the price of olive oil skyrocketing. The central bank is concerned that climate change related increases in food prices could increase and create more difficulties for it to forecast inflation.

"Without a rapid shift that commits to climate adaptation and carbon neutrality, these phenomena risk becoming a long-term structural drag on the economy," said Hazem Krichene, a climate and sustainability economist at Allianz.



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OTHER

Dental Clinic	587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba	587 0002
Urgent Care	586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic	588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Police Oranjestad	527 3140
Police Noord	527 3200
Police Sta. Cruz	527 2900
Police San Nicolas	584 5000
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

OpenAI restricts limited release of new model to U.S. only

San Francisco, United States

OpenAI on Friday launched a U.S.-only preview of its latest powerful AI model series to a limited group of partners at the request of the US government, the company said.

The release comes two weeks after the White House took Silicon Valley by surprise by ordering OpenAI's rival Anthropic to ban all foreign nationals from accessing its Fable 5 and Mythos 5 models, citing national security concerns.

Anthropic swiftly shut down all access to those models, saying it could not reliably comply with the restriction on foreign nationals.

The latest models from leading AI companies, such as Anthropic's Mythos series and now OpenAI's GPT-5.6, have drawn major concerns over their reportedly unprecedented ability to identify software vulnerabilities weaknesses in code that hackers can exploit.

Under pressure over the novelty of their capabilities, Trump earlier this month signed an executive or-



In this photo illustration, the OpenAI logo is displayed on a laptop screen on May 20, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

der setting up a voluntary federal review of national security risks in advanced AI models before their release.

The White House has communicated little about how it will enforce its executive order in which companies are understood to be participating voluntarily and what models would fall un-

der its review rules. The intervention was striking for a White House that has otherwise pushed to loosen AI oversight even moving to block states from writing their own rules.

The strong action against Anthropic has drawn accusations of government overreach, and OpenAI said it was uncomfortable

with the process it was required to follow for its new models.

OpenAI said it briefed the U.S. government on its new models' capabilities ahead of the launch and, at the government's request, is beginning with a limited preview for a select group of trusted partners whose identities have been

shared with authorities.

The partners are US-based, but OpenAI said overseas employees at those companies or entities would also have access to the new models.

"We don't believe this kind of government access process should become the long-term default," OpenAI said in a blog post.

"It keeps the best tools from users, developers, enterprises, cyber defenders, and global partners who need them. We are taking this short-term step because we believe it is the strongest path to broader availability in the coming weeks."

When Anthropic was initially targeted, some believed the safety-focused company was being unfairly singled out by the Trump administration for political reasons.

In an earlier clash with the White House, Anthropic angered Trump's team by refusing to allow its technology to be used for mass surveillance and autonomous weapons, leading the Pentagon to cancel its contracts with the company. □

How some Venezuelans' smartphones warned of quake

Paris, France

Many social media users in Venezuela have reported receiving alerts on Android smartphones moments before Wednesday's quake with almost 600 confirmed dead.

Google's Android and Apple's iOS, both include the option to display government alerts for emergencies like earthquakes.

But the search giant last year also detailed its system that uses the billions of Android smartphones worldwide to detect earthquakes in the first place.

- How it works -

Almost all smartphones contain an accelerometer, a movement sensor used for tasks like flipping the screen when users turn it sideways.

That same sensor "can also detect the ground shaking from an earthquake," Google wrote in a July

2025 blog post.

Accelerometers can spot potential earthquakes' fast-moving initial "P" wave, sending information about the tremor to a Google server.

By rapidly cross-referencing many such reports, the system can "confirm

that an earthquake is happening and estimate its location and magnitude," Google said.

"The goal is to warn as many people as possible before the slower, more damaging S-wave of an earthquake reaches them". Google offers two

stages of alerts.

"BeAware" warns of weaker tremors, while for the heaviest quakes, "TakeAction" takes over the screen and plays a loud sound even when the phone is on silent mode.

- How effective is the system? -

Google said last year that its systems had already sent 790 million alerts to individual phones, warning of over 2,000 potentially dangerous earthquakes detected from April 2021. While that gives many more people than before access to early warning information, there have been hiccups.

Android phones failed to sound warnings ahead of devastating February 2023 earthquakes that killed almost 60,000 people across Turkey and Syria.

Google said last year that it has since updated its al-

gorithms to avoid a repeat.

The company also apologized in February 2025 for a false alarm sent to some Android users in Brazil.

This week in Venezuela, hundreds of people have posted praise for Google on X, with some including unverified videos of alerts prompting people to leave buildings.

- What about Apple? -

Beyond government warnings, Apple says on its website that users in the US and Taiwan can also receive alerts from other "alert originators" about earthquakes.

The company did not respond to AFP's questions about how that system works by time of publication.

Neither has the iPhone giant enlisted its users' phones for a distributed detection system like Google's. □



Apple Craig Federighi, Apple senior vice president of Software Engineering, speaks about iOS 9 during Apple WWDC on June 8, 2015 in San Francisco, California. Apple announced a new OS X, El Capitan, and iOS 9 during the keynote at the annual developers conference that runs through June 12.



Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk reacts after defeating Netherlands' Rico Verhoeven (off frame) by TKO during their WBC World Heavyweight Championship 'Glory in Giza' boxing match at the Pyramids of Giza on May 23, 2026.

Usyk pugilist who kept Ukrainian spirits high in darkest days

Paris, France

Oleksandr Usyk's boxing feats have boosted Ukrainian morale during the four years since Russia invaded but at 39, the old warrior has decided job done and being king of the heavyweight division belongs to someone else.

Not that he is retiring just yet only giving up his belts. Although he was dissuaded from taking up arms in 2022, he told AFP last year that he had been inspired by "both the heroes of the past and the modern Ukrainian heroes who are now defending our homeland in the armed forces".

Usyk can thank his late father, also called Oleksandr, for his extraordinary resilience in brutal bouts with two outstanding British opponents, twice beating Tyson Fury and Anthony Joshua.

Usyk has been undisputed world champion at both cruiserweight and heavyweight and boasts an unblemished record of 25 victories, including 16 knockouts, in as many fights.

Usyk senior whom his son says was his seminal influence was wounded twice fighting for the Soviet Army during their 10-year-long occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989.

"My father was a tough man, indeed," said Usyk.

"He taught me iron discipline, but he also taught me to believe in myself.

"He was the first to tell me that I would become a champion when no-one else believed it, and everyone looked at him as if he were crazy."

His father whom Usyk recalled would have nightmares and call out the names of comrades who had died in Afghanistan lived just long enough to see his son crowned Olympic heavyweight champion in London in 2012.

"I inherited my fighting spirit from him," said Usyk, who returned from London and placed his gold medal in his father's lifeless hand.

- 'God forbid' -

Usyk, who at times has cried recalling that moment, has never shied away from promoting Ukraine before or after bouts.

He held up a sabre which belonged to 17th century Ukrainian leader Ivan Mazepa after his victory over Fury in Riyadh in December, 2024.

"It is crucial to show that Ukraine is not Russia," he explained.

"That it is a nation with a 300-year history of resisting the Russian Empire, no mat-

ter what name it has taken in different historical periods."

Usyk has also shown his generous side, partly funding the rebuilding of a house which belonged to a friend of his who was killed by the Russians.

Oleksiy Dzhunkivskiy, a former teammate of Usyk, was shot in the hall of the five storey building in Irpin, a suburb of Kyiv.

"I randomly chose this house," he told AFP in 2023. "When we came to look at it and saw how destroyed the house was, I was a little surprised.

"In this house there was a boxing gym of my good friend. He and I were in the national team, we went to boxing competitions together."

Overall Usyk's foundation has raised millions of euros from various donors to support the military, reconstruction efforts, and humanitarian projects.

But the married father of four, who still lives in Ukraine when not either at a training camp or a bout, would have been defying his father's wishes had he joined up with the military. Usyk's father never talked directly about his experiences in Afghanistan but his message to his son was clear. □



Japan's Naomi Osaka returns the ball to Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova during the women's singles quarter-final match of the WTA 500 Bad Homburg Open tennis tournament in Bad Homburg, western Germany on June 25, 2026.

Osaka sinks Wang to reach first grass court final

Bad Homburg, Germany

Four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka is into the first grass court final of her career after blasting past China's Wang Xinyu at Bad Homburg on Friday.

The Japanese sixth seed Osaka won 6-3, 6-3 in sweltering conditions at the key Wimbledon preparation tournament and will face Czech fourth seed Karolina Muchova in Saturday's final.

With the mercury topping out at 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit), the semi-final between Muchova and Romanian Elena-Gabriela Ruse was suspended for more than an hour and a half due to extreme heat.

The match resumed and Muchova won 6-4, 6-4 in one hour and 40 minutes, not including the delay.

Tournament organizers also brought forward Saturday's final to 11am local time, amid predictions of 41 degrees later in the day.

After her match, Osaka said she was thrilled to reach a first career grass court final but had her eyes on the big prize.

"I'm also really happy, but there's one more match to be played and we're going to focus on that," Osaka said.

Osaka said her daughter, who will turn three during Wimbledon next week, was already waiting in London but was not yet aware of her mother's true occupation or status in the game.

"I don't know if she knows I'm successful, I think she just knows I play tennis," said the 28-year-old.

"Sometimes when we're at home and I pick up my tennis bag, she'll ask 'Oh, are you going to play tennis?'

"I don't know if she really likes it, but I think she knows what I do, but she probably doesn't know how good I am at it."

Osaka blasted six aces and broke her opponent once to take the first set comfortably.

Early in the second, Xinyu answered an Osaka break with a break of her own but the Japanese player quickly wrestled back control of the match.

Osaka broke Xinyu again and took the match in one hour and 10 minutes to continue her strong grass court form just days out from Wimbledon, where she has been handed the 14th seed.

Osaka won two titles apiece on the hard courts of the Australian and U.S. Opens, but has struggled on grass, never making it past the third round at Wimbledon. □

Orange wave: Dutch World Cup dream gathers pace

Kansas City, United States

Few observers tipped the Netherlands as potential World Cup winners, but a quietly efficient group-stage campaign has propelled them firmly into the conversation.

Ronald Koeman's team beat Tunisia 3-1 in Kansas City on Thursday to top Group F with seven points, ahead of Japan and Sweden, who both also qualified for the knockout rounds.

Next, the Dutch face Morocco in the Mexican city of Monterrey on Monday, with the winners of that last-32 match going on to face South Africa or Canada.

It was put to Koeman after Thursday's game in the stormy American Midwest that they had done the hard part by topping their group, thus avoiding Brazil. But the head coach, who captained the Netherlands the last time the World Cup was held in the United States, in 1994, warned against thinking too far ahead.

"We need to prepare for Morocco first because it will be a big game," he said.



(From L) Netherlands' forward #10 Memphis Depay, defender #04 Virgil van Dijk, midfielder #08 Ryan Gravenberch, defender #05 Nathan Ake and midfielder #20 Teun Koopmeiners celebrate after winning the 2026 World Cup Group F football match between Tunisia and the Netherlands at the Kansas City Stadium in Kansas City on June 25, 2026.

"It's a good team with a lot of quality, and they can score easily."

The Netherlands, followed everywhere by their legions of orange-clad fans, are World Cup royalty but have never been crowned, finishing as runners-up in 1974, 1978 and 2010.

Often cited as the best

nation never to have won the tournament, they are unbeaten in 15 World Cup matches since losing the final in 2010, if penalty shoot-outs are excluded.

The team did not qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

It is difficult to argue that the Dutch do not punch

above their weight for a country with a population of about 18 million.

On the other hand, they have boasted richly talented squads for generation after generation, none of whom have managed to get over the line.

Koeman's squad lacks the superstar names of the

past such as Johann Cruyff, Marco van Basten and Arjen Robben but he still has great quality and depth, particularly in midfield and defence.

Liverpool centre-back Virgil van Dijk is the undisputed leader of the pack, marshalling a powerful back line that includes Denzel Dumfries and Micky van de Ven.

The midfield is also elite, with Frenkie de Jong pulling the strings alongside Ryan Gravenberch and Tijjani Reijnders.

If there is a weaker area of the team, it is in attack, where the Dutch can no longer call on world-class forwards such as Robin van Persie and Robben, who hung up their boots nearly a decade ago.

- Brobbey goals -

But they managed 10 goals in their three group games, with Brian Brobbey and Cody Gakpo, who has a knack of scoring at major tournaments, sharing five goals between them. Sunderland's Brobbey was only given a few minutes at the end of the Netherlands'

opening game a 2-2 draw against Japan but he has since proved his worth, netting three times.

Van Dijk said the powerful forward was a great outlet. "Brian's quality is so strong," he said. "We've seen it obviously throughout the whole year in the Premier League. If he has you pinned up, you can't get the ball."

Former Germany and U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann believes the Dutch deserve to be considered as World Cup contenders alongside the usual suspects.

"It's a team that definitely you've got to have on the plate for going far, going maybe to the semi-finals, being able to compete with Spain, France that we all mentioned as the top favourites alongside obviously Argentina and Brazil," he said on ESPN.

"They seem to be a group now that sticks together. We have a coach, Ronald Koeman, who's very, very experienced. □

Mets fire Mendoza as manager after 34-47 MLB season start

New York, United States

Carlos Mendoza was fired as manager of the New York Mets on Friday with the struggling Major League Baseball club mired in a six-game losing streak.

In making the announcement, the Mets also named vice president of

player development Andy Green as the interim manager for the remainder of the 2026 campaign.

Green will attempt to revive a Mets squad that has started 34-47 last in the National League East division with the NL's third-worst record.

The Mets have not won

the World Series since 1986 but did reach the championship series in 2000 and 2015.

"I want to express my deepest gratitude to Carlos Mendoza for his leadership and unwavering commitment," Mets owner Steve Cohen said in a statement. "He represented this organization with integrity and dedication. "Our commitment to bringing our fans a championship-caliber team has not changed. There is no sugar coating it: this season has been a disappointment and our fans deserve better than what we've delivered."

The Mets, who opened the season 9-19, which included a 12-game losing streak, had not dumped a manager in mid-season since Willie Randolph in

May 2008.

Mendoza, 46, guided the Mets to a 206-199 record over 2.5 seasons after arriving in November 2023 following four seasons as a bench coach for the New York Yankees.

"Carlos has led the organization with passion and grace and is beloved by everyone who works with him on a daily basis," Mets president of baseball operations David Stearns said.

"Carlos's impact on our players, staff and culture over the last three seasons has been transformative. Unfortunately, we know we are falling short and change is necessary to move forward."

Green, 48, managed the San Diego Padres from 2016-19, going 274-366 over parts of four seasons. □



Carlos Mendoza #64 of the New York Mets signals for a pitching change during the fifth inning against the St. Louis Cardinals at Citi Field on June 11, 2026 in New York City.