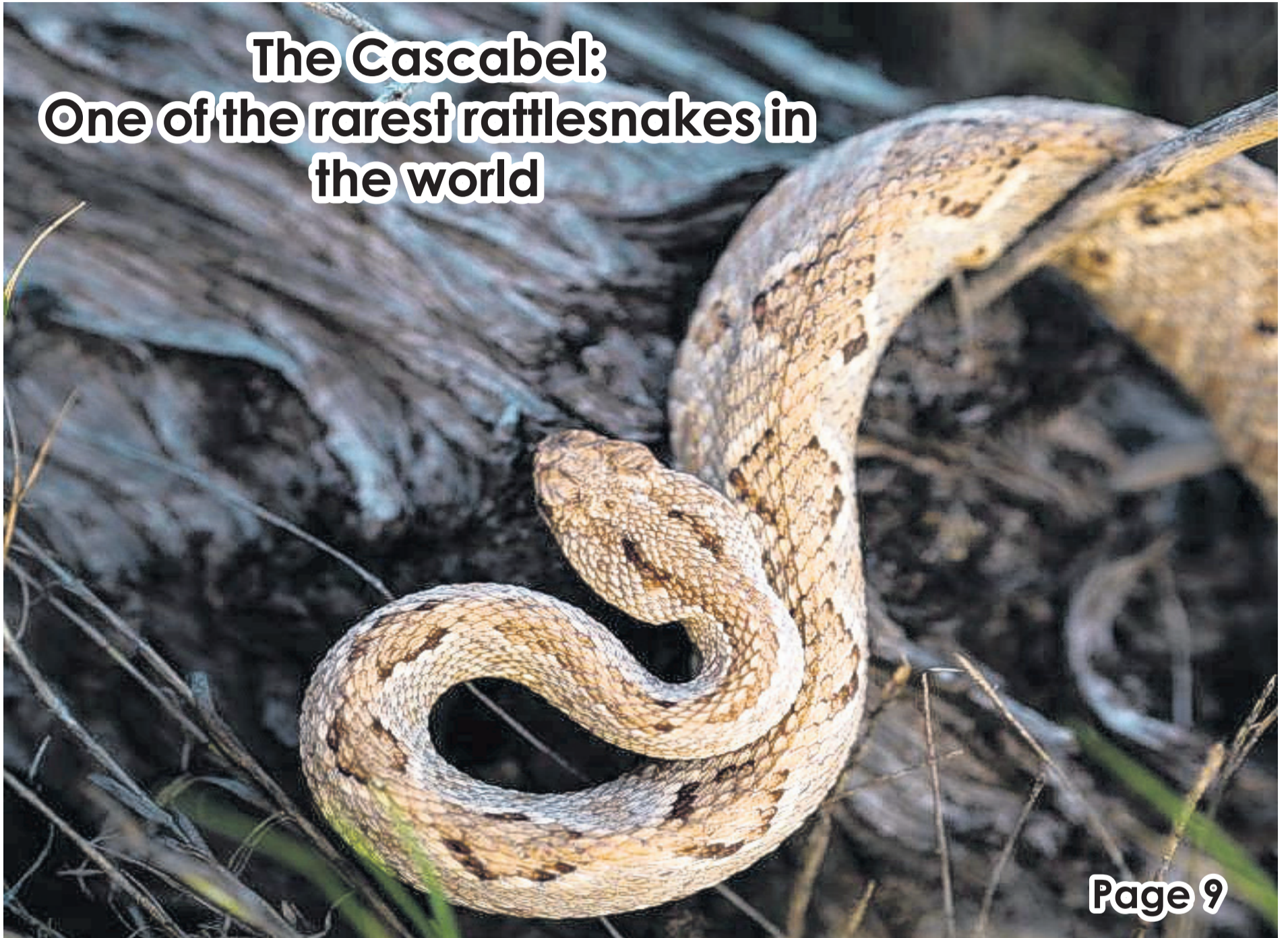




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Supreme Court boosts Trump's power to fire officials, but protects Fed

Washington, United States

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday fortified President Donald Trump's powers to fire members of independent government agencies, but carved out protections for the Federal Reserve by blocking the firing of Governor Lisa Cook.

In a 6-3 ruling, the court's conservative majority rejected a challenge by Democratic Federal Trade Commissioner Rebecca Slaughter, ruling that Trump had the power to fire "subordinates who exercise the President's power."

The decision is expected to have wide-ranging implications, with Trump having aggressively sought to expand executive powers as he works to transform the U.S. government and put political allies in key positions.

Trump hailed the verdict in a social media post, saying it expanded presidential power "at a time when it is most needed."

"It is such an Honor to be the sitting President who won this Historic and Unprecedented Ruling, one of the most important ever given with respect to Presidential Powers," he said.

Slaughter was dismissed without cause and lower courts upheld her claim that the move violated rules Congress put in place to protect the members of dozens of independent government agencies.



Federal Reserve Board Governor Lisa Cook arrives for a board meeting at the Federal Reserve on March 19, 2026 in Washington, DC.

But in Monday's decision, written by Chief Justice John Roberts, the court's majority cited writings by James Madison a framer of the US constitution who became president and other Supreme Court rulings that empowered the president on personnel decisions.

"Independent agencies are not 'independent' in the sense that they are free of the President and thus responsive 'only to the people of the United States,'" Roberts wrote in a decision that frequently cited earlier rulings.

In a scathing dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote that the majority opinion had upended the separa-

tion of powers.

"Today, the majority replaces 90 years of proven, workable practice with a half-baked theory of executive power that is simultaneously all encompassing yet also subject to necessary but undefined exceptions," Justice Sotomayor wrote.

"The one thing that does appear to be clear going forward is that chaos will follow."

Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren slammed the opinion, saying "Donald Trump has fired Democratic appointees and seized control of formerly independent agencies so they serve him and his billionaire friends instead of the Amer-

ican public."

- Fed governors protected -

In a separate case involving Cook, however, the Supreme Court ruled that while Trump had the power to fire Federal Reserve governors for cause, he could not do so "for any reason or no reason."

The U.S. central bank is a non-partisan institution that makes monetary policy for the world's largest economy, with governors appointed by the president after a Senate confirmation process.

The court made special mention of the importance of the Fed's independence.

"Not only the fact of in-

dependence but also the appearance of independence is key to the Federal Reserve's design," its 5-4 verdict read.

"We see no reason to leave the public in limbo, or to sow doubt as to the status of one of our Nation's (and the world's) most important financial institutions," Chief Justice Roberts wrote in his decision.

The court decided the case "on the narrow ground that the President failed to afford Cook the procedural protections to which she was entitled by statute," the verdict said.

It dismissed the "halfhearted contention" that the Fed governor had received due process.

Cook welcomed the decision, saying it "affirms" the central bank's independence, but Trump immediately went on the offensive. "We will take appropriate action immediately to make sure that someone who has committed wrongdoing will not be making vital decisions concerning the Welfare of the United States of America!" he posted on social media. It was unclear what Trump meant by the assertion.

Cook has denied mortgage fraud allegations and in its Monday verdict the Supreme Court said the government was "unlikely" to prevail on appeal in its attempts to remove the Fed governor. □

Dangerous heat wave to grip U.S. as nation marks 250 years



A sign is seen on a fence at the Reflecting Pool on the National Mall in Washington, DC, on June 26, 2026.

Washington, United States

A dangerous heat wave is expected to sweep across much of the central and eastern United States beginning Tuesday and lasting through the July 4 weekend, when the country celebrates its 250th birthday and hosts knockout stages of the World Cup. Temperatures are forecast to soar above 100F (38C), with high humidity pushing heat indexes even higher, the National Weather Service warned Monday. Overnight cooling will be limited, with many areas seeing lows in the mid- to upper-70s, the agency added. That combination of prolonged daytime heat and little nighttime relief is expected to increase the risk of heat-related illness, particularly

for the most vulnerable.

"Drink water often. Limit time outside in the afternoon. Check on neighbors," said the public alert system in the nation's capital Washington. The heat wave arrives as the United States prepares to mark the 250th anniversary of its independence from Britain, with the capital set to host what organizers say will be the largest fireworks display in history. The World Cup has meanwhile entered its knockout stages, with several matches set to take place in the sweltering conditions. More frequent, longer-lasting and more intense heat waves are one of the clearest signs of climate change globally, with Europe also recently hard hit. □

In Idaho, the next generation of U.S. nuclear reactors nears reality

Idaho Falls, United States

A new generation of small nuclear reactors is up and running or nearly so in the United States, in what backers are calling a turning point for the industry.

The milestone, made possible by billions in private and government funding, was on display in the middle of the Idaho desert, where a cluster of drab hangars might otherwise go unnoticed.

But the presence of heavily armed soldiers, security checkpoints, and signs warning of radioactivity are anything but ordinary.

It was here, at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL), that startup Antares on June 4 became the first company to run a new-design nuclear reactor in the U.S. in nearly 50 years.

"This is the first real moment in this new nuclear renaissance," said Jordan Bramble, CEO of Antares.

Aalo Atomic, another participant in the program launched in 2025 under President Donald Trump, is set to do the same in the coming days -- also here in Idaho, just hours before a presidential target date: July 4 and the nation's 250th anniversary.

Meanwhile, on June 18, another startup, Valar Atomic, hit the same milestone



U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright (R) speaks with The director of Idaho National Laboratory John Wagner during a tour of the Idaho National Laboratory in an area west of Idaho Falls, Idaho, on June 25, 2026.

in Utah, reaching what is known as criticality the point at which a reactor can sustain its own nuclear chain reaction.

After developing more than 50 reactor prototypes including the world's first to feed electricity into the grid, in 1951 INL had pressed pause following accidents at Three Mile Island in the U.S. and Chernobyl in current day Ukraine.

Then came the war in Ukraine, followed by the AI boom putting the energy sector under severe strain and leading both Joe

Biden and Donald Trump to revive civilian nuclear power.

- 'Simpler' -

Billions of dollars in both private and public funding have already been mobilized to develop these small modular reactors (SMRs) compact enough that one was transported to the site towed by a pickup truck. SMRs promise cheaper, faster-to-build nuclear power that can go almost anywhere from remote military bases to power-hungry data centers. But

they have yet to be proven at commercial scale, and some analysts doubt they can compete on cost with wind and solar.

Beyond financial support, the government has put INL's facilities and staff who have accumulated nearly 80 years of experience at the disposal of the selected companies.

The new reactors also use different technology from conventional plants, ruling out the kind of cascading disasters seen at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, and allowing for far simpler,

cheaper construction.

"The whole plant can get simpler. We don't need to have several feet thick of concrete and steel line containment," said Yasir Arafat, President and CTO of Aalo Atomic.

- 'Golden age' -

Even as the pace has sharply accelerated, Tori Shivanandan, President and COO of Radiant Nuclear, does not want regulatory shortcuts.

The team at the lab, "they hold the line, and we want them to, because ultimately, if we don't make safe products, we'll never sell reactors," she said.

Reaching criticality is not the same as being ready for commercial use.

The reactor designs whose prototypes operate under a special government waiver still need to be cleared by the U.S. nuclear regulator, the NRC.

But Energy Secretary Chris Wright, speaking to AFP at a "celebration of the golden age of nuclear energy" in Idaho Falls, was bullish on the timeline.

"We'll have hundreds by the end of the decade. In fact, our aggressive goal is we will have some of these reactors producing electricity for beneficial use next year," he said. □

Venezuela's quake-hit La Guaira port 'operational': U.S. military

Washington, United States

Venezuela's La Guaira port is now "operational" after undergoing repairs and is being used to deliver aid to the earthquake-hit South American country, the U.S. military said on Monday. Devastating back-to-back 7.2 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes struck near Venezuela's Caribbean coast last week, collapsing buildings, damaging the country's main airport and leaving more than 1,700 people dead and tens of thousands missing.

The port one of Venezuela's two main ports "is now operational, and the USS Fort Lauderdale is using the port to deliver critically needed supplies and

equipment to Venezuela," U.S. Southern Command said in a statement, referring to a U.S. warship dispatched to assist with aid efforts.

Earlier on Monday, a senior U.S. administration official told journalists that a "specialized team of Marines" was "working around the clock" to repair the port.

The U.S. State Department also announced that Washington has pledged more than \$300 million in funding to aid Venezuela, up from a previous commitment of \$150 million.

"These funds will provide emergency medical care, food assistance, water and sanitation, shelter, protec-

tion, and logistics," the State Department said in a statement.

The money is being directed through partner organizations including Samaritan's Purse, Catholic Relief Services, the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Programme and the Red Cross, the statement said.

Washington has also deployed four urban search-and-rescue teams to Venezuela that are made up of more than 300 first responders and almost two dozen search dogs, it added.

The U.S. assistance for Venezuela comes as ties between Washington and Caracas have warmed

in recent months after American forces captured former president Nicolas Maduro in January and

the Trump administration began working with an interim government led by Delcy Rodriguez. □



Graphic content / View of the port of La Guaira, La Guaira State, Venezuela on June 29, 2026, where forensic experts carry out body identification works on corpses laid out on the ground at a makeshift morgue, days after twin earthquakes struck the country.

World Cup turns New York's Times Square into global fan hub

New York, United States

Surrounded by dozens of dazzling screens and crowds of tourists, World Cup fans have turned New York's Times Square into a daily meeting spot for supporters from around the globe.

"I'm impressed. It's amazing to see so many people gathered," said Christoph Altmeks, a German, as he stood in the middle of a sea of his country's fans wearing white shirts.

The 53-year-old had complained that, given New York's huge population, "when you walk around through the city, there are not a lot of football fans."

So when he heard on social media that Germans were congregating in Times Square, Altmeks readily pulled on a jersey of his hero Rudi Voller -- plus a wig mimicking the famed striker's blond curls.

Off to the side, two Ecuadorans watched the German jubilation with some unease.

"I thought there would be more Ecuadorans here ... but I'm waiting for them!" said Juan Alvarez, 30, who is finishing his studies in New York.

Two Brazil supporters sipped



Panama fans gather in Times Square ahead of the 2026 World Cup Group L football match between Panama and England, in New York on June 26, 2026.

sodas a little further away.

"We saw on social media that the Brazilians took over Times Square... And then we showed up and there were only Germans!" said 32-year-old Fabricio Miatto. He said, however, he was impressed by a giant "Viking row" performed by Norwegian fans in the Manhattan intersection, where thousands simultaneously chanted "Row!" while pulling imaginary oars.

- 'Icon of city life' -

Amid a scent of beer and marijuana, many street vendors have descended on Times Square to sell flags, caps, vuvuzelas, fruit slices and churros.

Elsewhere, AFP saw one man begging and another with a sign reading "Stop World War III!" A woman dressed as the Statue of Liberty was offering to be photographed, and someone else posed in a panda costume.

Such is the eclectic and chaotic scene that awaits World Cup fans coming to Times Square.

The area is already a major tourist attraction, as well as a giant advertising platform with its bright screens, and is traditionally the setting for celebrations including New Year's Eve.

So it's only natural that fans have chosen it as a World Cup stage, according to Lynne Sagalyn, a professor of real estate at Columbia

University.

"Times Square is an icon of city life. It has a worldwide reputation as a place that must be seen and experienced," she told AFP.

"It is hard to think of any other US urban place that would instantly command such worldwide attention."

- World Cup vibe -

Alan Bonfield, a 33-year-old American who regularly spends time around Times Square, said the soccer tournament has transformed the landmark.

"Even though in Times Square you're never going to find it empty -- you can come here in the middle of the night -- the World Cup surely changes the demographic and the way it vibes," said Bonfield, wearing an Argentina jersey.

New York police are a visible and constant presence. At one point, they told off a tipsy fan for climbing on a bench.

But the gatherings have led to few incidents so far aside from a few scuffles shared on social media.

Shots fired by an unknown individual also caused a brief moment of panic among supporters last week, without injuring anyone. □



The Space Exploration Technologies Corp.

Washington, United States

Recent swings in tech stocks are reviving fears of an AI bubble -- and some experts warn that if it pops, the fallout could be bigger than anything Wall Street has ever seen.

- Bubble or no bubble? -

"There are many indications that we are in a bubble," said Itay Goldstein, a finance professor at the

University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School.

"It seems likely that there is overpricing," he added.

The numbers back him up. The five biggest companies on Wall Street -- all tech giants -- are worth a combined \$18 trillion, almost the size of China's entire economy.

Big tech has been pouring money into AI and now investors are getting nervous:

Should we fear an AI bubble bust?

will any of it actually pay off?

Six months ago, these same companies were buying back their own shares -- a move that signals excess cash and drives up the stock price.

Now they're taking on debt to fund their AI buildup in a significant reversal.

"The amount of debt that's being taken on is still relatively modest," said Brent Fredberg, director of investments at Brandes Investment Partners.

But a rise in interest rates -- recently floated by the US Federal Reserve -- could make that borrowing a lot more painful.

Fresh off its blockbuster IPO, space and AI giant SpaceX announced this week it plans to issue \$25 billion in bonds, raising new doubts about its financial health.

The news sent its share price lower. Analysts also warn of "circular financing" -- where big tech companies invest in AI startups, which then use that money to buy big tech's own products and services.

"This can lead to problems down the road," Fredberg said, calling out a potential house of cards.

- Early signs of a pop? -

Tech stocks took a beating this week, reigniting old fears about an AI meltdown.

But not everyone is sounding the alarm. Some say the recent selloff is just a breather after a long run-up and not the start of a real crash.

"The recent volatility reflects a valuation test, profit-taking and flow-driven positioning amid higher rates --

not a fundamental break," wrote Christian Stocker, a director at UniCredit, in a recent note.

Still, some warning signs are hard to ignore.

Oracle -- one of the biggest names in software and cloud computing -- just had its worst week since the dot-com bust of the early 2000s, with shares down 19 percent in five days.

For comparison: during the dot-com crash in August 2001, Oracle fell 20 percent, according to CNBC.

"The market is very skittish," Fredberg said.

- An unprecedented crisis -

If the AI bubble does burst, the consequences could be historic.

"We're talking about the biggest firms that are traded in the financial markets," Goldstein said. □

Farmers fear drought as Italy's longest river runs dry



This aerial photograph shows a sandbar on the Po River at Pontelagoscuro, northeastern Italy, on June 25, 2026.

PONTELAGOSCURO, Italy Seawater is seeping into Italy's longest river as the waterway starts to run dry in the heatwave, hitting a farming heartland that produces the milk for Parmesan cheese. The Po River has never fallen this low so early in the year, raising fears of a devastating drought in July in this corner of northern Italy. On the bank of one of its branches, farmer Federica Vidali looked anxiously at her sunflower field. The

first bloom of the season has appeared, but part of the field is already dry and starting to crack. One of the two canals that irrigate it has been shut because the seawater would enter and damage the crops. "We're left with the water that others are willing to leave us. But we're not second-division farmers!" Vidali told AFP. The Po River's flow has collapsed in a matter of days, dropping below 300 cubic

meters per second, compared with an average of around 1,500 in June, according to Aipo, the inter-regional river agency.

"It has never dropped so fast, so early," said Stefano Calderoni of the Italian irrigation association (Anbi). Sandbanks are multiplying, depths fall to barely one meter in places, and the river's few remaining fishermen swelter in the heat. "Before, we used to pass on the left; now the pas-

sage is to the right of the sandbank, and it's very, very narrow," said Daniela Cuoghi, a surveyor for Aipo.

The many Alpine lakes that feed the Po Valley, Italy's agro-industrial heartland, are still about 60 percent full. But farmers are drawing heavily from the waterways to irrigate fields parched by the heat.

It rained this winter, but the mountain snow that used to replenish the lake has already melted due to climate change.

"We're not in a drought situation yet, but at this rate, there's less than three weeks of water left in reserve," said Damiano Di Simine, an expert with environmental group Legambiente.

Drought last struck the Po Valley in 2022 -- but only at the end of July.

- 'Really big problems' -

Further downstream, at the river's mouth, the situation is already serious: seawater has pushed about 20 kilometres upstream.

Saltwater is beginning to contaminate farmland re-

claimed over the past five centuries from the delta marshes.

Barriers have been placed in the river to stop seawater, but they only work if river's flow is strong enough. "We'd need almost double the current flow for them to work," said Rodolfo Laurenti, the engineer in charge of irrigation in the delta.

Laurenti called for cooperation and solidarity between regions to manage water in the event of a crisis.

Farmers are also considering new dams or water retention basins, but "we're afraid that all these structures will still never be enough," Laurenti said.

A few kilometres closer to the sea, clam fishermen are also struggling with soaring June temperatures. The heat has warmed the lagoons, boosting the growth of algae that cover the shellfish.

They must also clear algae from the nets protecting clams from invasive blue crabs, which arrived from North America in recent years. □

Pyjamas and bets: Brazil YouTube channel reshapes World Cup viewing

Sao Paulo, Brazil

The hosts wear pajamas for night games and jokes fly but discomfort is growing over the pushing of bets on a YouTube channel that has reshaped how Brazilians are watching the World Cup.

A record 18 million viewers tuned in to watch Brazil's match against Scotland on CazeTV, which has become a major competitor to media giants like Globo and ESPN in just four years on air.

It is the only place Brazilians can watch all 104 matches of the 2026 World Cup for free, with exclusive rights to 49 games.

In one segment, fans are encouraged to send in videos of themselves shouting out of their windows to celebrate goals.

"Young people are no longer just spectators ... they want to take part" in the broadcasts, Bruno Brum, from marketing agency End to End, told AFP.

But in Brazil, where sports gambling and addiction have exploded in recent years, questions have arisen over the constant display of QR codes linking to betting sites and hosts offering betting tips in the middle of matches.

This prompted a public consumer protection body to open an investigation this week into suspected "abusive advertising."

In response, the channel announced it would take a more cautious approach to such ads, which have since decreased.

"It's crazy to encourage people to gamble during a football match," center-left lawmaker Tabata Amaral told AFP.

She has introduced a bill aimed at restricting advertising for betting websites, whose logos already appear on the shirts of most top-flight Brazilian clubs.

The government of leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva considers online gambling a public health issue, particularly among lower-income Brazilians who fall into debt to place bets.

- 'Revolutionary' -

CazeTV has shot past 35 million subscribers during the World Cup.

On Wednesday, 18.3 million devices were connected during Brazil's 3-0

win over Scotland, setting a new global YouTube livestream record, according to FIFA.

The driving force behind the project, 32-year-old Casimiro Miguel, better known as "Caze," first rose to prominence as a Twitch

streamer known for his sharp humor.

A chubby-cheeked caricature of Miguel serves as the logo of the channel, co-founded by sports marketing agency LiveMode. □



Brazilian fans watch a live broadcast of the 2026 FIFA World Cup football match between Brazil and Scotland at Casa Caze TV in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on June 24, 2026.

Thousands ride through Rome as Vespa celebrates 80 years

Rome, Italy

An icon of the Italian way of life, the Vespa was celebrating its 80th birthday on Saturday, as thousands of riders paraded through Rome on the legendary scooters.

A few donned biker jackets despite the scorching heat while others opted for t-shirts, the hum of their machines filling the capital with a colorful buzz.

Organizers said some 25,000 Vespas took part in the parade.

Some rode solo, others in pairs, whizzing through the city centre -- even along streets usually closed to private traffic.

"We brought our Vespa over from the United States. We travelled through Germany, then via Vienna ... and I then rode my Vespa from Austria to Rome, a journey that took two weeks," Texas resident David Baamonde told AFP-TV on Saturday.

"For me, the Vespa is a way of life, a sense of carefree living, enjoying the moment, discovering scenery it's a lifestyle," said Italian Andrea Musco.

Featuring in cinema classics like "Roman Holiday" and "La Dolce Vita", the Vespa has a long association with the Eternal City.

"The history of the Vespa, which accompanies the



Vespa enthusiasts from around the world ride during the parade of the Vespa World Days marking the 80th anniversary of the iconic Italian brand of scooters in Rome on June 27, 2026.

birth and rise of Italy after the Second World War, is in a way an iconic symbol of our history, of our culture," said Roberto Gualtieri, the Italian capital's mayor.

- 'Vespa is special' -

The Vespa, which means "wasp" in Italian a reference to the sound of its engine was born on 23 April 1946, when the first patent for its manufacture was filed in Italy by Piaggio. It is still produced at the Pontedera site in Tuscany.

It was "the symbol of an Italy emerging from the

war and getting back on its feet," Gualtieri said, adding that he was "proud" that Piaggio had decided to organize the anniversary in the city.

"Telling the story of 80 years of the Vespa is, in part, telling the story of how Rome has managed to capture the world's imagination", particularly through cinema, he said.

The celebrations began on Thursday with the inauguration of a "Vespa Village" at the Foro Italico, a sports complex in the north of the capital, and culminated

on Saturday with the grand parade through the streets of Rome.

Thousands of "Vespisti" from all over the globe turned up in the scooters, which are instantly recognizable because of their rounded lines, their brightly colored metal bodywork and their round headlight mounted on the handlebars. Andrew Ward, 57, and his sister Julie Stover, 63, came from the United States and rented a Vespa in Rome to take part in the parade.

"We had scooters and motorcycles our whole lives.

But I always wanted a Vespa and eventually we got Vespas. Now I have two!" Ward, a regular at "Vespisti" gatherings in his country, told AFP.

"It's a high-quality scooter. And it comes with a certain status. It's classy, you know. It's not like the cheap scooters that you see on the road all the time. Vespa is special," Stover added.

- Social significance -

Designed to be a popular and affordable means of transport, the Vespa which benefited from all sorts of innovations derived from aviation, Piaggio's core business also has social significance.

Its history is intertwined with "the history of a country emerging from the post-war period, that wants to move, that wants to get back up," Matteo Colaninno, executive chairman of the Piaggio group, said at the presentation of the celebrations.

"And this desire to move is not just physical mobility," it is also "a kind of drive toward economic mobility and above all social mobility," he said.

"Today, the Vespa has become a global phenomenon; we are on the verge of 20 million vehicles produced" since 1946, Colaninno said. □

'High-strung' camels race in Australian outback

Marree, Australia

Camels with "a bit of fire in them" raced in a remote Australian outback town this weekend at an annual event celebrating the desert beasts first imported in the mid-19th century.

Hundreds of spectators descended on Marree, which has a population of 65 and lies nearly 600 kilometres (370 miles) north of the South Australian capital Adelaide, for a 13-race spectacle on Saturday known as the Marree Camel Cup.

More than 10,000 camels were imported into Australia from 1840, many of them released into the wild with the development of railways and then the

arrival of motor vehicles in the 1920s.

Now, estimates of the wild camel population range from 300,000 to a million animals.



Jockey Patrick Dennis (L) riding camel Young Gun powers to victory in the Marree Australasian Camel Cup run in the South Australian outback town of Marree on June 27, 2026.

Trainer Kyrraley Woodhouse, who started camel racing professionally in 2013, said most of her camels had been taken from the wild to run in the

Marree event, which drew more than a dozen competitors.

Picking the right animal is key.

"You would want a little bit of temper, a little bit of fire in them a sort of splashy look in the eye," Woodhouse told AFP.

"They want to be wary of you a little bit but not, like, aggressive," she added.

"We want something sort of like a racehorse, a little bit high strung, a little bit forward -- something that's got a heart, that's going to run."

This year's Marree Camel Cup winner was Young Gun, ridden by Patrick Dennis.

Muslim cameleers, many from Afghanistan and other parts of Central and South Asia, were brought to Australia in the 1860s to harness the animals for transport in the arid interior, and some of their descendants remain in Marree.

Camels in the outback compete with stock for food, destroy fences, foul waterholes and damage Indigenous cultural sites, authorities say.

Without management, camel populations could double every eight years, South Australia's primary industries department says. Camel numbers are kept in check by mustering, shooting and trapping at water points. □

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Traffic signs



(Oranjestad)—Though Aruba's traffic is relatively easy to manage, driving here—especially if it's your first time visiting—can be foreign. To help you out, here's a breakdown of some traffic signs you might encounter on the road.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed

out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. *Bebouwde kom* signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a *bebouwde kom* is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, *bebouwde kom* signs are also paired with a similar

sign crossed out. Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a

counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections.

This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba.

Picture credits: aruba-travelguide.com

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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!

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals



(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that you have to pay before leaving. This would surely not be a pleasant experience. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □

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. □



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Snakes of Aruba

Arikok National Park is home to various unique plant and animal species such as Aruba's rare endemic rattlesnake *Crotalus unicolor*). This rattlesnake is locally known as the 'Cascabel'. But Aruba has two more snake species living on the island: the Santanero and the Boa.

Cascabel (*Crotalus unicolor*)

The small Cascabel or Aruba Island Rattlesnake averages 70 cm in length. The body color is often uniform gray or light brown. There may be a faint pattern of diamond shaped markings on the back. This pattern is most noticeable on younger snakes. The most distinctive feature of this snake is the rattle at the end of its tail which makes a buzzing sound when the snake is alarmed. Cascabels are shy and not aggressive, but their venom can be dangerous to humans. It is best to leave this snake alone. Do not attempt to catch or kill it.

Cascabels hunt by waiting

under bushes and fruiting trees to catch passing lizards, mice, rats, small rabbits, and an occasional bird. This is often considered to be one of the rarest rattlesnakes in the world. The range of the Cascabel is restricted to the rugged and mountainous areas of the island mostly within Arikok National Park. The Arikok National Park was designated in the early 1980s to include most of the rattlesnake's population, providing a safe refuge in which the snake can be protected and monitored. The government has also implemented outreach and education initiatives to change local perception of the snake and highlight its ecological and economic importance – it is now being promoted as a national symbol.

Arikok's partnership with the Toledo zoo has safeguarded the rattlesnake ex-situ and led to a number of research projects collecting critical data on the Cascabel's abundance, life history and habitat re-

quirement to help guide future conservation efforts.

Santanero

The slender Santanero or Aruban Cat-eyed Snake is typically less than 50 cm long. This snake is recognizable by the large scales on the top of its head and by its pattern of dark brown bands alternating with light brown bands. The belly is plain white or cream colored without any markings. This snake is shy and not aggressive. However, it has enlarged teeth at the back of its mouth and mild venom which is not dangerous to humans. However, the venom can paralyze small lizards and frogs. Santaneros are most active at night when they search for food. During the day, they hide under rocks or leaves. They frequently climb trees and cactus. Santaneros eat toads, frogs, insects, and lizards. You may find Santaneros near dams during periods of rainy weather or crossing roads at night. This snake is found island wide. A Santanero in your garden will keep away the unwanted



ed insects. If you encounter a Santanero around your garden, please do not harm this species.

Boa (*Boa constrictor*)

Boas are Aruba's largest snakes. The longest Boa found on the island was slightly less than 3 m. Newborn Boas average 35 cm. Boas are not venomous. The most distinctive feature of a Boa is its pattern of dark brown and tan blotches which become red toward the tail. The belly is white or cream colored with numerous black spots. Boas are excellent climbers

and may be found in trees and cactus. Boas also hide in the leaves under bushes waiting to catch prey that pass. Boas catch their prey with their teeth and then constrict it in their coils. The Boa's diet consists of birds, lizards, rats, mice, and rabbits. Large Boas have been known to eat small goats and chickens. When threatened, Boas will hiss loudly. Boas are a non-native species. The first Boas were reported on the island in 1999. Since that time they have been found across the entire island in all types of habitats. □



A brief history of the California Light House

(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Light house at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck.

These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There

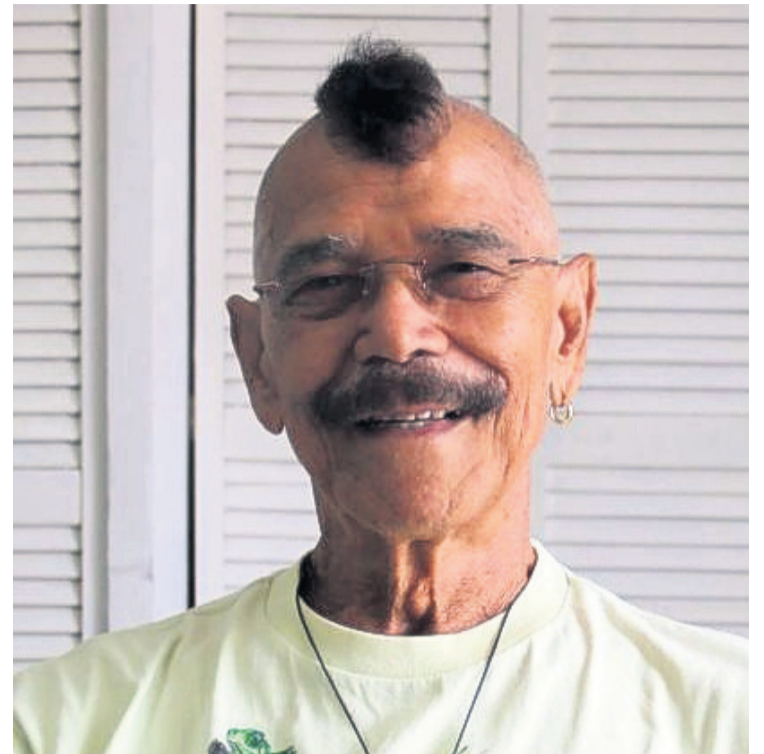
were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be trans-

ported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets,



until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job

as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □



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Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names; Ayo & Alto Vista

(Oranjestad)—Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Ayo

Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word "Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamentu spoken today, 'Ayo' means 'bye'.



At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists

and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and his-



tory.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

Alto Vista

This word combination can

be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.

In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aruba. The walls of this church were made with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi.

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV. □



Forgotten gems: Open air movie theaters

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

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commissioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who

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

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much



entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a

drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in

one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

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

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

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

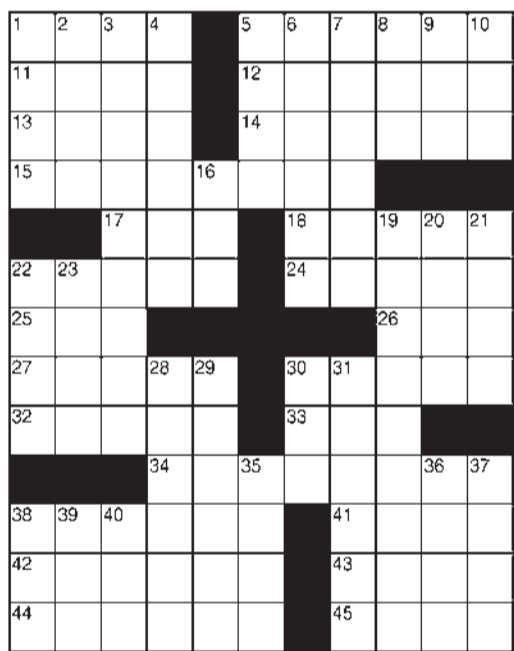


ACROSS

- 1 Knights' titles
- 5 "Wait a minute!"
- 11 Brad Pitt movie
- 12 Incite
- 13 Amo, —, amat (Latin lesson)
- 14 Drinking establishment
- 15 Kitschy quality
- 17 Skirt edge
- 18 Joel Coen's brother
- 22 Hotel units
- 24 Boosted
- 25 "Aladdin" monkey
- 26 Right away
- 27 Suggest
- 30 Yard tools
- 32 Minuscule
- 33 Writer Tan
- 34 Curved sword
- 38 Drinking establishment
- 41 Departed
- 42 Arthurian island
- 43 Player's fee
- 44 Draws toward midnight

DOWN

- 1 Wild guess
- 2 "— La Douce"
- 3 Drinking establishment
- 4 Method
- 5 Toppers
- 6 Gives an address
- 7 Singer Lyle
- 8 Bill word
- 9 Syr. neighbor
- 10 Hamilton's bill
- 16 Mornings: Abbr.
- 19 Drinking establishment
- 20 Lotion additive
- 21 Anchor's delivery
- 22 Enthralled
- 23 Conical instrument
- 28 Sneaker part
- 29 Magnate
- 30 Flock father
- 31 Female friends, to Fernando
- 35 Travel stops
- 36 Opposed
- 37 Clarinet part
- 38 Mule of old song
- 39 Director DuVernay
- 40 Back muscle, for short



3-2

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

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

3-2 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

R B W U B I U X R D U N W U , H L H
O U M U R Z M X I N U N B I X N U R U M Z
H R E X I N , O C X Z Q B B D O B A E N H
Q M H I Y : " C B O Z B Q A H E N X
Q B X Z . " — R Z U G U I O M H Y C Z
Cryptoquote: POWER IS BEING
TOLD YOU'RE NOT LOVED AND NOT BEING
DESTROYED BY IT. — MADONNA

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 occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

JULY CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

07 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B
	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
08 WED	FREEWINDS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: Berth: E
12 SUN	FREEWINDS Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
14 TUE	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B
	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 11:30 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
	CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
15 WED	ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: I
	FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E
19 SUN	FREEWINDS Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
21 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B
	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 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

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

Difficulty: ★★

6/30

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★

6/29

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World's largest particle smasher halts for upgrade to boost hunt for dark matter

Meyrin, Switzerland

The world's most powerful particle accelerator will Monday shutter operations for four years of renovations to dramatically boost its collision-capacity and the potential for unlocking one of the greatest mysteries of the Universe: dark matter.

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) a 27-kilometre proton-smashing circular tunnel at the heart of Europe's physics lab CERN near Geneva has most famously been used to prove the existence of the Higgs boson, dubbed "the God particle".

In the tunnel, running about 100 meters below the French-Swiss border area, superconducting magnets and accelerating structures propel particles to extreme energies and then smash them together at phenomenal speeds.

But from Monday, activity will stop, as the extraordinary device undergoes upgrades aimed to further increase the precision and intensity of particle collisions.

Once completed, the enhanced particle smasher, donning the enhanced name of High Luminosity LHC (HL-LHC), is scheduled to begin operations in June 2030, and to run for about a decade.

'Many discoveries' await - "This is a very important moment. From Monday, we will be entering a new phase," HL-LHC project chief Markus Zerlauth told reporters.

"We still have lots of physics questions without answers. There are still many discoveries to be made." The goal is to increase the "luminosity" -- that is, the total number of collisions produced over a given period -- by a factor of 10 compared to the LHC.

The total cost of the upgrade is expected to tick in at 1.2 billion Swiss francs (\$1.5 billion).

That will be covered by CERN membership fees, along with in-kind contribu-



Some of the 1232 dipole magnets that bend the path of accelerated protons are pictured in the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in a tunnel of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), during maintenance works on February 6, 2020 in Echevex, France, near Geneva.

tions, making up 10-15 percent of the total, including from the United States, Japan, Canada and China. The upgrade will require fully replacing the components in 1.2 kilometers of the 27-kilometre tunnel. New superconducting magnets, capable of further concentrating the particle beams, will be installed to increase the number of collisions.

Once operational, between 140 and 200 collisions will occur each time two packets of particles meet inside detectors in the tunnel, up from 60 cur-

rently. Overall, "the increased number of collisions will allow us to collect up to 100 times more data", Zerlauth said.

The number of collisions will be so high several billion per second that it will be impossible to store all the data produced. Which collisions should be recorded will need to be selected in real time -- a task that will be entrusted to artificial intelligence systems capable of identifying the most promising events.

But "AI does not replace

physicists", insisted Nedaa-Alexandra Asbah, a research physicist at CERN's ATLAS experiment, which helped discover the Higgs Boson using the LHC. □

ARUBA TODAY
BONDIA

How to reach us!

Downtown

HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad Hospital 7:00 pm/10:00pm Tel. 527 4000	San Nicolas IMSAN 24 HOURS Tel. 524 8833
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PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Paradera
Tel. 582 1780

San Nicolas:
Centro Medico
Tel. 584 5794

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
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulance	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous Tel. 583 8989
Against Domestic Violence(FCVR) Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Cycling industry bets on smart bikes to boost sales

Frankfurt, Germany

At the Eurobike trade fair, hopes are high that smart and AI-enabled bicycles can revive an industry that has been dealing with years of flagging sales.

Artificial intelligence, long used in cars and smartphones, is now entering the cycling world in areas ranging from electric motors to safety and services.

At the stand of Avinox, a manufacturer of motors for electric bicycles, the DNA of parent company and Chinese drone specialist DJI has been transposed to cycling. The motor on display features sensors that continuously monitor the cyclist's movements and terrain conditions, allowing AI to automatically adjust the motor's assistance to the pedal drive.

This makes the ride "easier and safer without having to think about it," Avinox developer Ferdinand Wolf said. The system even allows a rider to transmit their real-time heart rate so that the e-bike motor modifies the level of assistance as needed.

- Safety alerts -

Elsewhere at the show, there is technology that aims to keep cyclists alive and injury-free.

At Germany's Canyon, a racing bike equipped with



A service robot is seen behind an electric bike at a booth at the EUROBIKE 2026 fair of the international bicycle industry in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany on June 24, 2026.

cameras and radars promises to alert cyclists "to the presence of elements they do not necessarily perceive", company spokesman Ben Hilldson said.

"If a car is parking, the system can anticipate the opening of a door and warn the cyclist," he said. The rider would then be alerted via either visual signals on the frame, vibrations in the handlebars or through technology inside their helmet.

Canyon is presenting a helmet fitted with a large visor

capable of displaying real-time alerts or receiving an audio signal, depending on the user's preference.

The products are for now in the prototype stage, Hilldson said. Canyon is also working with carmaker Volkswagen on a communication system that would allow the bicycle to interact with surrounding cars and other infrastructure, with the launch expected in about three years.

The main obstacle: almost all vehicles currently on the road are not yet equipped to exchange such data.

- Smart networks -

Artificial intelligence is also shaking up services in the cycling industry.

At insurer Linexo "around 90 percent of claims will be handled entirely automatically by the end of the year", head of the bicycle division Soeren Hirsch said. Automation handles standard cases, while experts review complex claims and detect fraud, "the only way to keep insurance premiums stable", he added.

Start-up Wunderfix meanwhile offers repair services

linking retailers, customers and shops via an application that allows cyclists to diagnose and, where possible, repair their bicycles themselves.

Some 3,000 service requests have already been recorded this year, the company says.

The rise of AI-enabled and smart bikes has fuelled hopes of a rebound for the business.

The European bicycle market shrunk in 2025 for the third year in a row, with sales dropping four percent to 15.2 million units, according to consultants EY-Parthenon.

"After the boom during the Covid-19 pandemic, the sector has been going through a painful consolidation since 2023: lower sales, high inventories and strong pricing pressure have weighed heavily on many players," EY-Parthenon analyst Constantin Gall said.

The market is nevertheless expected to stabilize this year before slowly recovering, with revenue forecast at 21.2 billion euros for 2031 on a par with the record-breaking sales of 2022.

Alongside infrastructure investment, "digital and data-driven offerings" will be a growth-driver, the consultancy said. □

Movie theaters are allies for streamers like us, Apple exec says

Los Angeles, United States

Tech giant Apple views movie theaters as allies in its fight to carve out a space for its platform in

the competitive streaming sector, a top company executive told AFP.

The firm, which launched Apple TV+ in 2019 without

any third-party content, has won over critics in recent years, and is so far the only streaming platform to win the best picture Oscar, with "CODA" in 2022.

films for both platforms, allowing them to play out their theatrical runs based on audience demand rather than adhering to rigid release windows.

Cinema and streaming are "very complementary. I think they can both work together," Cue said.

The company, headquartered in California, is gearing up to produce a sequel to "F1," with Cue saying the plot and script are currently in development. It "was the biggest sports movie of all time. It was Brad Pitt's biggest movie of all time, and I do think that people want to see another one," he said.

Cue, who has been credited with revolutionizing Apple's services sector, was recognized this week as the Entertainment Person of the Year at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. □



Eddy Cue speaks during Autosport Business Exchange New York, a Motorsport Network event at Classic Car Club Manhattan on October 15, 2025 in New York City.

It also shook up the box office with "F1: The Movie," the high-octane motor racing drama starring Brad Pitt, which grossed \$634.1 million worldwide and earned the company another Academy Award this year, this time for best sound.

After years of wariness between movie theaters and streaming services, Eddy Cue, the company's senior vice president of services and health, said Apple is committed to producing

"If a movie like 'F1' was on theatrical longer than 45 days (it was) because people wanted to watch it theatrically, they wanted to watch it in an IMAX theater," he told AFP.

"Theatrical is a great experience, it's here to stay, and I think it's growing." While viewers might initially want to see a blockbuster on a big screen, they love the chance to rewatch it when it turns up on the streaming service, now rebranded as Apple TV.

Martinelli scores in 95th minute to send Brazil into World Cup last 16

Houston, United States

Substitute Gabriel Martinelli scored deep in injury time as Brazil beat a stubborn Japan 2-1 on Monday to roll into the World Cup last 16.

Arsenal winger Martinelli struck in the 95th minute in Houston to break Japanese hearts in the most dramatic fashion.

The five-time champions will face either the Ivory Coast or Norway in New Jersey on Sunday after edging a captivating knockout encounter.

Japan midfielder Kaishu Sano scored a classy solo goal after 29 minutes following a Brazil mistake to stun the huge numbers of fans decked out in yellow.

Carlo Ancelotti's men hit back 11 minutes after half-time with a header from veteran Casemiro as Brazil dominated the second period.

Then up popped Martinelli right at the death to settle it and send the Brazil fans wild.

History was against Japan: they had never won a knockout game at the World Cup while Brazil were record five-time champions.

But this is not a vintage Brazil side, even with Ancelotti at the helm, while Japan



Gabriel Martinelli #22 of Brazil scores his team's second goal during the FIFA World Cup 2026 Round Of 32 match between Brazil and Japan at Houston Stadium on June 29, 2026 in Houston, Texas.

have been talked of as dark horses.

With the Brazil fans' drums providing a constant rhythmic backdrop, Ancelotti's side were on top early on in front of a crowd of 68,777.

Images of Neymar on the bench popped up on the big screens, the noise from the Brazil fans going up another notch.

Defensive midfielder Sano was booked for crunching in on Vinicius Junior, then Brazilian attacker Matheus

Cunha forced goalkeeper Zion Suzuki to turn the ball wide.

Japan, who beat Brazil 3-2 in October in a home friendly for their first victory over the South Americans, then enjoyed a spell in the ascendancy.

Just before the half-hour mark Hajime Moriyasu's team took the lead, and it stemmed from an error by Danilo as he gave the ball away with a sloppy pass.

Sano, one of four changes from Japan's 1-1 draw with

Sweden at the end of the group phase, picked the ball up in the centre circle and got away from the 34-year-old Casemiro who was on a booking with ease.

Sano, who plays for Mainz in Germany, drove upfield before sweeping the ball past goalkeeper Alisson. It was his first goal for his country.

Now the Brazil supporters were edgy, groaning when a move broke down or a

pass went backwards. Brazil, whose last World Cup triumph was in 2002, looked unconvincing at the back and ineffective in attack.

Ancelotti was forced into a change at the break, an emotional Lucas Paqueta limping off in distress with the attacking midfielder replaced by 19-year-old striker Endrick.

Japan, who thrashed Tunisia and held the Netherlands and Sweden to reach the last 32, had Brazil where they wanted them.

Brazil ramped up the pressure to start the second half and Japan defender Takehiro Tomiyasu twice kept the ball off the line, not that he knew much about it.

Brazil were soon level, Arsenal defender Gabriel sending in an inviting cross for midfielder Casemiro to head in unmarked at the back post.

The danger man Vinicius, well stifled up until then, turned the Japan defence inside out and stabbed the ball towards Suzuki, who directed it onto the post.

It was all Brazil as they pushed for a late winner, with Vinicius who scored four times in the group stage increasingly in the thick of it.

Then came Martinelli's late intervention. □

Hovland beats Scheffler in playoff for PGA Travelers title

New York, United States

Viktor Hovland defeated top-ranked Scottie Scheffler with a birdie on the first extra hole to win a sudden-death playoff on Monday and capture the Travelers Championship.

It was the eighth career PGA Tour triumph for the 28-year-old Norwegian, who sank a birdie putt from just outside nine feet at the 18th hole.

Scheffler then missed from just beyond two feet to seal Hovland's victory at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Connecticut.

"It has been stressful, but yeah, it's unbelievable, especially after Scottie hits it so close there," Hovland said.

"I knew I had to bring in my best to have a chance to beat him and he certainly brought it out of me. Couldn't be happier."

Scheffler, a 30-year-old American and four-time major winner, settled for his fourth runner-up result of the year.

"I played solid over the course of four days," Scheffler said. "A little bit disappointed with the finish but overall I think my game is in a good spot."

Hovland took the \$3.6 million top prize from the \$20 million PGA signature series tournament.

It was the eighth career PGA Tour title for Hovland and his first since last year's

Valspar Championship. He won his only other playoff to capture the 2023 Memorial.

Scheffler sank a clutch par putt from just inside nine feet on the 18th hole Sunday to force the playoff after both completed 72 holes on 21-under par 259. Scheffler fired a two-under 68 in the final round while Hovland shot 69 after a late-afternoon storm halted play for 83 minutes, leading to play being suspended for darkness before the playoff could begin.

The playoff began with both players finding the fairway.

A Scheffler 8-iron approach landed just outside two feet from the hole while

Hovland dropped a 9-iron shot to just outside six feet. Hovland's pressure birdie putt dropped in on the right side and Scheffler's putt lipped out off the left edge.

"I hit it on my line. I think it was just a little bit firm," said Scheffler. "It was one of those putts you had to make and I hit it firm. Was a bit disappointing. □"



Viktor Hovland of Norway poses with the trophy after winning the Travelers Championship 2026 in a playoff at TPC River Highlands on June 29, 2026 in Cromwell, Connecticut.

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Italy's Jannik Sinner returns the ball to Serbia's Miomir Kecmanovic during their men's singles first round tennis match on the first day of the 2026 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon, southwest London, on June 29, 2026.

Bloodied but unbowed: Sinner avoids shock exit at start of Wimbledon title defense

London, United Kingdom

Jannik Sinner survived a major scare and a bloodied foot to open his Wimbledon title defense with a five-set victory over Miomir Kecmanovic, while Aryna Sabalenka made a blistering start to her bid for a maiden All England Club crown.

Sinner was pushed to the brink of becoming only the third male defending champion to lose in the Wimbledon first round before battling back to win 4-6, 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2, 6-3 on Monday.

Trailing by two sets to one, the Italian world number one dug deep to win his first five-set match in his last six attempts.

Sinner's gutsy victory in three hours and 28 minutes was all the more commendable after he injured his right foot in an awkward fall that left his shoe covered in blood.

He let out a shriek of pain and was motionless for several moments before gingerly resuming play.

With two-time Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz still sidelined by a wrist injury sustained in Barcelona in April, Sinner is the clear favorite to become the 10th man in the Open era to retain the trophy.

He is bidding for his fifth Grand Slam title and his first since his maiden victory at the All England Club last year.

But the 24-year-old hasn't reached a Grand Slam final this year and crashed out of the French Open in the second round, blowing a two-set lead against Juan Manuel Cerundolo as he wilted in the stifling Paris heat.

Ahead of Wednesday's second-round clash with

Portugal's Nuno Borges, the Italian insisted he would not be affected by his latest fitness concern.

"I'm good. It just seems much worse than it is. I'm actually very surprised that they let me keep playing because my all white outfit turned into a little red! It is just a nail," he said.

Women's world number one Sabalenka needed only 65 minutes to rout Serbian qualifier Teodora Kostovic 6-2, 6-3.

Sabalenka is a four-time Grand Slam winner but the Belarusian has never reached the Wimbledon final.

In the second round, the 28-year-old meets American McCartney Kessler, who crushed Ukraine's Oleksandra Oliynykova 6-0, 6-0 in just 40 minutes.

"Super, super excited to be back. It's a special place, to play on this beautiful court," Sabalenka said. □



Decathlon CMA CGM Team's French rider Paul Seixas dismounts his bicycle as he withdraws from the race on the 8th and final stage of the Tour Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes cycling race (formerly known as the Criterium du Dauphine), 120,1km between Beaufort and Plateau de Solaison, in the French Alps on June 14, 2026.

Tour de France 'ready to adapt' amid extreme heatwave

Paris, France

Tour de France organisers said Monday they were ready to adapt amid scorching conditions days before the world's most famous cycling race rolls out of Barcelona. The most severe heatwave ever recorded in Europe is currently gripping the continent with concern for riders and the public during the three-week race which finishes on the Champs-Élysées in Paris on July 26.

"We will obviously experience high temperatures during the Tour de France. Protecting the riders and the public is paramount for us. The watchword is adaptation," race director Christian Prudhomme told AFP.

"For the riders, there is an extreme temperature protocol established by the International Cycling Union (UCI) that applies based on temperature, humidity levels, wind, and rider speed," he said.

"It is possible to have additional refreshment zones. Time limits for elimination can be relaxed significantly to prevent riders who have fallen behind from having to exert excessive effort."

Prudhomme pointed out that "riders are used to intense heat" with temperatures hitting up to 42 Celsius in The Tour Down Under in Australia in early January.

"That said, I am not talking about ten consecutive days at 40 degrees, of course," he added.

Regarding the spectators lining the route Prudhomme said they are "in constant contact" with officials in the regions the race passes through.

"The Tour caravan distributes 2.5 million hats and 550,000 cans, and we also carry 400,000 litres of bottled water.

"Naturally, prevention and common-sense advice are crucial, and we will repeat them tirelessly: people should come with a hat, have water with them, and pay special attention to children and the elderly." □