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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	ANDERSON BAHAMON SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.	RICKY THOMAS GUITAR 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



Happy Hour
12-1 / 4-6 / 9-10

PREMIUM
BRANDS





Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents walk outside the Ventura County Government Center in Ventura, California, on July 27, 2026.

'Shock' gloves for U.S. immigration agents fuel potential abuse fears

Washington, United States

Plans to equip U.S. immigration enforcement agents with gloves capable of delivering debilitating electric shocks have fueled concerns over potential abuses by a force that critics say is already over-zealous and under-trained.

"As if assaulting people and shooting people in the streets wasn't enough," Representative Maxwell Frost, a Democrat from Florida, said on X. "Now, they're spending \$20 million of YOUR taxpayer dollars on painful electric shock gloves for their masked, lawless goons."

"ICE must be stopped," Frost said in a reference to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the agency primarily charged with carrying out President Donald Trump's plan to deport millions of undocumented migrants.

ICE has come in for criticism for a series of fatal shootings during enforcement operations, including those of two American citizens in Minnesota in January who were involved in anti-ICE protests.

Critics have focused on the forceful tactics used by ICE agents in rounding up migrants and on an alleged lowering of the standards of training for new recruits.

The plan to purchase the shock gloves, which was first reported by The Associated Press, calls for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the ICE parent agency, to spend \$10 to \$20 million on what are described as "distraction and de-escalation" devices.

The G.L.O.V.E., or Generated Low Output Voltage Emitter, is made by Compliant Technologies, a company based in Kentucky that bills itself on its website as a supplier of "cutting-edge non-lethal tools to empower and protect those who serve."

The G.L.O.V.E. delivers a shock that is not as strong as that of a Taser, another device used by law enforcement to subdue suspects.

In response to queries about the gloves, DHS said ICE is "constantly assessing the needs of our officers in the field to ensure they have the tools and equipment necessary to safely arrest and remove criminal illegal aliens from our country."

"Every decision is made with careful consideration and appropriately reviewed to ensure that any technology ICE utilizes is consistent with all applicable law enforcement poli-

cies and standards," DHS said in a statement.

- 'Misused' -

John Sandweg, who served as the acting ICE director under Democratic president Barack Obama, said in an interview with MS NOW that ICE agents have an "incredibly difficult job" but expressed concerns about the electric gloves.

"Deploying this admittedly less than lethal technology, in an era when we're really not all that interested in providing training to the officers about how to use that technology, really is alarming," Sandweg said.

"It doesn't take a big stretch of the imagination to seeing this technology being deployed against a mother who's just maybe putting up the most mild resistance because she's being separated from her children," he said. "It's too easy for this to get misused against a population that doesn't pose a threat."

Representative Pramila Jayapal, a Democrat from Washington state, expressed similar concerns.

"ICE has targeted legal observers, protestors, and just ordinary people on their way to work or to drop their kid off at school," Jayapal said on X. □



Colorado Chief Trial Counsel Jason Slothouber (C) and Kentucky Chief of Consumer and Senior Protection Chris Lewis (R) wait to enter Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building & United States Courthouse in Oakland, California, on August 12, 2026 during jury selection as Meta faces trial about alleged harms to children.

U.S. states seek \$200B penalty in blockbuster Meta lawsuit

Oakland, United States

A coalition of U.S. states will seek around \$200 billion in damages against Meta, which they accuse of intentionally designing Facebook and Instagram to be addictive for children, when a landmark trial kicks off on Tuesday.

Meta previously had claimed in court documents that the financial penalties could reach \$1.4 trillion, close to its entire market value which hovers around \$1.5 trillion. With more than three billion users across all of its apps, Meta will defend itself in the six-week-long trial beginning on August 18 when opening statements begin in Oakland, a short drive from San Francisco.

If Meta loses the case, the states will ask a judge to force the world's largest social media to make changes to its two core apps, in addition to slapping the company with a massive financial penalty.

"We have not made a request for \$1.4 trillion" in damages, a lawyer for the states said during a hearing on Thursday, and continued that they believe Meta calculated the massive figure "for shock value."

Rather, the states will ask for damages closer to \$193 billion, the lawyer said.

Representatives for the states did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

A coalition of states sued Meta in 2023 for allegedly designing addictive features for kids in its apps and violating state laws.

Prosecutors representing California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey will now try to prove that Meta violated federal and state laws regarding children's safety and privacy online.

Meta "strongly disagrees with these allegations" and is "confident the evidence will show our longstanding commitment to supporting young people," a spokesperson told AFP.

Meta will also not be allowed to block a key witness, a federal judge said on Thursday.

Last week, the company asked the court to prevent a former employee, Arturo Bejar, from testifying for allegedly destroying evidence.

"I'm not going to exclude him from testifying," Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers said.

Bejar is a former Meta employee who has previously testified against the social media company, including at a trial in New Mexico which Meta recently lost. □

'I shot Mr Thompson': Stunning confession in U.S. health exec's slaying



Luigi Mangione, accused of the murder of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson, appears for a pre-trial hearing at Manhattan Criminal Court in New York, on August 11, 2026.

New York, United States

Luigi Mangione spoke slowly and deliberately as he admitted to shooting US health care executive Brian Thompson, in a stunning confession befitting a crime that has gripped the United States.

"I shot Mr Thompson in Manhattan and he died," Mangione, wearing a yellow prison jumpsuit, told a packed New York courtroom Friday. "I knew what I was doing was illegal."

The 28-year-old, who has

gained cult-like support from people angry over America's for-profit health system, had long denied his role in the 2024 killing.

But on Friday, as he pleaded guilty to federal stalking charges, he delivered an unflinching account to a court that included Thompson's family members.

"After years of enduring severe pain from a broken back and navigating the obstacles of the health insurance system, I learned

that UnitedHealthcare would be holding its annual investor conference in New York City," he said.

Thompson was the CEO of UnitedHealthcare, and U.S. media had previously reported that Mangione suffered a broken back in a 2022 surfing accident.

Mangione explained that he obtained the exact venue a Hilton hotel after emailing UnitedHealthcare posing as a firm with \$50 million in assets.

"Unlike my previous interactions with insurers, I received an immediate response within an hour," he said. The computer science graduate, with his short dark hair and stubble neatly groomed, detailed how he made the weapon with a 3D printer before fitting it with a silencer and magazine.

Then, he added, "I traveled to New York with the intention to shoot Brian Thompson."

- Stalking -

What came next, on December 4, 2024, was caught on haunting surveillance footage: A hooded gunman emerges from shadows to shoot Thompson in the back on a Manhattan street.

The suited executive stumbles, turning to face his attacker, before being shot again and crumbling to the pavement. The shooter then runs from the area.

Five days later, police arrested Mangione at a McDonald's restaurant in Pennsylvania after a staff member recognized his distinctive thick eyebrows from images shared by authorities. Police found a 3D-printed gun and an apparent handwritten manifesto

in his backpack. Prosecutor Dominic Gentile said that and other evidence would have been used if the case had gone to trial.

He told the court other footage showed Mangione stalking Thompson around Manhattan a day before the executive was killed.

Mangione appeared attentive throughout the hearing, reading paperwork in front of him and occasionally taking notes.

Beyond his prepared statement, Mangione mostly answered "Yes" or "I do" to a long line of questions from the judge verifying his competence to plead guilty.

He sat between his two high-profile lawyers, Karen Friedman Agnifilo and Marc Agnifilo, who represented Sean "Diddy" Combs in his sex trafficking trial.

An online legal fund for Mangione's defense has raised over \$1.5 million, largely driven by people also angry about the private health care system.

Some supporters were at the court on Friday alongside dozens of journalists. Tourists also watched the plea hearing, including one man visiting New York for a wedding. □

Trump asks U.S. Supreme Court to approve White House ballroom project

Washington, United States

The Trump administration asked the U.S. Supreme Court on Friday to allow it to complete construction of a ballroom and secure underground bunker at the White House, saying the project was essential for national security.

Solicitor General John Sauer made the request in an emergency appeal to the conservative-dominated top court, which includes three justices nominated by President Donald Trump. Trump ordered the demolition of the historic East Wing of the White House last year to make way for

a massive ballroom but the project has been tied up in the lower courts.

An appeals court last week upheld a district court order halting work on the ballroom but put its ruling on hold to allow for the administration to appeal to the Supreme Court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit agreed with the lower court that such a sweeping White House overhaul required the explicit consent of Congress.

Trump lashed out after the 2-1 ruling, calling it "horrendous, politically motivated, and unlawful," and said he would appeal to the Su-

preme Court.

The president initially touted the construction of the ballroom as being necessary to host galas and state dinners, but has since repeatedly pointed to the addition of an underground military bunker and other security features.

The solicitor general, in the appeal to the Supreme Court, also emphasized the security aspects of the project.

"This case involves an extraordinary and unlawful injunction that will halt the ongoing construction of the integrated military complex, including a total-



A view of the ongoing construction of a planned ballroom at the White House, as seen from the Washington Monument observation deck in Washington, DC on July 23, 2026.

ly secure ballroom space, at the East Wing of the White House, which is vitally required by national security," Sauer said.

"The President of the United States of America is not a tenant, but rather the sole,

elected head of the Executive Branch, and Congress has authorized him to renovate, secure, and protect the White House and its grounds, as other Presidents have been allowed to do, without exception," he added. □

New AI tools let readers talk to books

New York, United States

Imagine a world where you could ask a book a question as you read it.

That's the pitch from a wave of new AI tools letting readers do exactly that.

"You are dealing with a book as if it is a living object it's totally different," says Ahmed Kamel, CEO of Sinai.ai, a platform now in testing.

With these tools, users get access to an e-book or audiobook alongside an AI chatbot. Confused about a character's motives or the historical setting? Just ask.

Readers can dig into a character's psychology, historical context, or a philosophical concept -- no separate research required.

French startup My Smart Book launched something similar in mid-April. Like Sinai, its chatbot draws only on the actual text of the book no outside information.

Even book-selling behemoth Amazon is in on it. Its audiobook company, Audible, launched a feature



Signage and displays are seen as Audible brings hit audio series "Dungeon Crawler Carl," "Heads Will Roll" and "Bobiverse" to San Diego Comic-Con 2026 with creator panels and fan activation on July 25, 2026 in San Diego, California.

called "Ask a Question" last fall.

Mid-listen, you can tap a button, ask your question, hear the answer, and then pick up the story right where you left off.

"We're excited about the potential for AI-powered features to enhance the customer experience," an Audible spokesperson told

AFP, adding the tool is "designed to answer questions specifically about the audiobook the listener is currently engaged with."

The company thinks it could pull in new fans too, making books "more accessible and appetizing to a broader range of listeners."

Amazon's Kindle has its own

version: "Ask this Book," described as an "expert reading assistant" that answers questions about plot and characters "without disrupting your reading flow." ElevenLabs a rising star in AI voice tech built "Eleven-Reader Voice Chat," which it says "turns any book into a two-way conversation."

- Who gets paid? -

But the question of who gets paid or has permission to develop this new reading superpower is a thorny one.

Sinai.ai says it only offers books that are either in the public domain or ones where the author, their estate, or the publisher signed off first.

Another company, iChat-book, does things differently.

"Our chat book is not a library of books it's a library of concepts and ideas and facts," says founder Brian Yang.

Instead of handing over the actual text, the AI pulls out key ideas and explains them in simpler language something Yang thinks could be huge for students. And since it never quotes the book directly, it sidesteps a lot of copyright headaches.

Not every platform is as careful, though. Some, like Myreader, let users upload any book, whether or not it's under copyright, and then connect it to an AI interface.

Musk's X adds banking in 'everything app' push

Washington, United States

Elon Musk's social media app X on Monday began offering its X Money banking service to all US subscribers of its paid Premium and Premium+ tiers, part of the multi-billionaire's ambition to turn the site into an "everything app."

The rollout widens access to a product that had

been available since late June as a test to a limited group of top-tier subscribers.

X Money lets users hold deposits, send peer-to-peer payments, pay bills, transfer money by wire, and mail checks without leaving the X app.

Deposits are held at Cross

River Bank, a New Jersey-based lender that is used by several financial-technology apps, and are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) up to \$250,000. Musk has said for years that he wants X to resemble China's WeChat.

WeChat, a single app for messaging, shopping and payments, is a pillar of consumer spending in China.

A post by X Money said deposits would earn an annual percentage yield of up to six percent.

This was well above the roughly four to five percent offered by the most competitive US high-yield savings accounts and far above the near-zero rates at large traditional banks. Premium+ subscribers can earn the top rate directly, while Premium users must meet direct-deposit re-

quirements, according to the company.

Cross River described the launch as the first government-insured banking platform in the United States built on a social network.

The launch positions X to compete with established payment apps such as PayPal's Venmo, Block's Cash App and SoFi, drawing on the app's user base of millions.

Ahead of its launch, the service drew scrutiny in Washington.

In an April 14 letter, Senator Elizabeth Warren, the top Democrat on the Senate Banking Committee, pressed Musk on how X Money would "generate revenue sufficient to pay that yield."

She also cited past FDIC enforcement actions against Cross River over lending practices. □

Google's wildly popular NotebookLM recently rebranded as Gemini Notebook doesn't screen for copyright either, and neither does BookWorm AI, a ChatGPT-based tool that calls itself a "book companion."

Sinai.ai says it has built something it calls "AI rights" a system that pays authors and publishers when their work gets used by a chatbot.

The company also claims it's in talks with several of the "Big Five" US publishers: Hachette, Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, and Macmillan.

"I can clearly say at least that we are in active communications with almost four of the top five," Kamel said.

"We signed with many publishers in the US, big names in the Middle East. Things are moving very rapidly." □



A picture taken on November 11, 2021 in Moscow shows the logo of mobile messaging service WeChat on a tablet screen.



In this photo taken on July 29, 2026, blind fortune-teller Song Oh-soon speaks at her small practice in the "Mia-ri fortune-telling village" in Seoul.

Outflanked by AI, stars fade for South Korea's blind fortune-tellers

Seoul, South Korea

Clients have drifted away from Song Oh-soon's fortune-telling village on the edge of Seoul, preferring online AI-powered divination to the centuries-old prophesying tradition still practised there.

At 86, Song is one of the last members of a community of visually impaired practitioners that drew generations of South Koreans seeking answers and advice about everything from illness and money to love and fate.

In one of the world's most AI-connected societies, the village's greatest challenge is not fading belief in fortune-telling, but the way it is consumed.

Song remains adamantly offline, relying on the "Four Pillars of Destiny" astrology in braille and on her four decades of experience in careful listening – a skill her automated competition cannot match.

"There were people who came here wanting to die," Song told AFP in northern Seoul's Mia village. "I persuaded them to keep living."

"I also once wanted to die, but I found this work and survived."

Today, silence is often Song's only visitor. The community was once home to

70 or 80 practitioners, but fewer than 20 remain.

Many have died. Their shops down narrow alleys sit dark behind faded signs advertising "traditional fortune-telling houses".

"When I go outside for a walk, it's quiet," Song said in her tiny room that serves as both home and consulting space. "It feels lonely."

- The human factor -

Figures show South Korea's fortune-telling business is growing -- worth 1.4 trillion won (\$986 million) as of 2024, according to startup analysis firm InnoForest.

Many now turn to mobile apps and artificial intelligence chatbots such as ChatGPT and Gemini for readings, a survey by market researcher Embrain said this year.

Occasionally, though, someone still seeks out a human intervention.

University professor Oh Ji-hye for years walked past the village without going inside, opting instead for AI readings during her commute.

Only recently, anxious about her career, did she turn to Song for a phone consultation.

"It felt good that someone rather than AI was concentrating on and listening to my story," the 44-year-old

said.

Mia village emerged in 1966 after the first blind fortune-teller settled there, according to the Seongsu Cultural Centre, which researches the district's history.

As Seoul boomed in the 1970s and 1980s the neighbourhood enjoyed cheap rents and a constant foot traffic of potential customers by the time Song arrived in 1984.

She lost her sight in a childhood illness before the Korean War and by 11 was studying Korean fortune-telling -- predicting subjects' futures based on their birth dates and times.

- Outread by algorithms -

She was a professional by 16, working in an industry where many people with disabilities especially women have been historically confined owing to discrimination.

"Nowadays, if a visually impaired person is musically talented, they can pursue a career in music," she said. "But back when I lost my sight, there was nothing else I could do besides this job."

Over her lifetime, South Korea has witnessed the devastation of the 1950-53 war, periods of military rule and the 1990s financial crisis. □



Alexis Mijan looks at his mobile phone while lying on an improvised bed on the rooftop of a residential building in Old Havana on August 11, 2026.

Cubans find rest on rooftops as blackouts drive them from home

Havana, Cuba

Every night, when summer heat and blackouts make sleep impossible at home, Cubans head for rooftops, porches and public spaces where they can catch a breeze.

Alexis Milan waits with his blind 17-year-old son for the sun to disappear behind the horizon of Central Havana, so they can head to the roof.

Over the months, the rooftop of his three-storey building has become a communal bedroom.

"We started getting a lot of people coming with us, and now almost the entire building has come up here," the 59-year-old tells AFP.

Among the tanks, pipes, and clotheslines, each family has carved out its own space.

His patch is on top of an empty water tank, where he spreads out a sheet and arranges two pillows.

He does not have a mattress, but up here at least some air is moving.

His apartment is baking and it is "impossible to live with all the mosquitoes."

Looking across the city, only a few patches of light survive, scattered in the gloom.

There is the intermittent purr of generators, dogs barking, and, from time to time, the dry clack of domino tiles echoing in the street.

Since January, a U.S. fuel embargo has worsened prolonged power and water cuts.

Now every night, the roofs, parks, and porches of Havana fill with people lying on cardboard, mattresses, or directly on the ground.

Facing the sea, Havana's famous Malecon seawall has ceased to be a promenade for tourists or lovers.

Now dozens of people settle onto the still-warm concrete after sunset.

While some gaze into the darkness of the Florida Strait, others try to sleep, making the most of the breeze coming in from the sea.

Sheets, backpacks, and outstretched bodies transform the emblematic seafront promenade into an open-air dormitory for a few hours.

At dawn on the rooftop, alarms of the few cell phones that still have battery wake the neighbors one by one. "I don't see an end to this," says Milan as he folds up the sheet and the pillows before heading to his job at a warehouse. □

China's viral 'spicy strips' take a bite of global snack market

Pingjiang, China

At a gleaming new factory in China's central hinterland, masked workers in white uniform season and sift through mounds of latiao, a longtime popular snack that has found hungry fans overseas.

Spicy, sweet and curiously chewy, Chinese latiao literally "spicy strips" are made by cooking wheat flour dough at a high temperature and pressure.

Despite their reputation as junk food, the snacks originally developed as emergency supplies have grown into an industry worth more than 60 billion yuan (\$8.9 billion).

The factory that AFP visited in Hunan province's Pingjiang turns out nearly 700 tonnes per day of the spongy, red-coloured strips, which look like squashed French fries covered in oil. The plant's operator Mala Wangzi currently sells all of that domestically, but latiao have acquired new legions of foreign fans spurred by online enthusiasm for Chinese culture, or "Chinamaxxing".

"Latiao are now exported to more than 160 countries worldwide, showing that the market is moving increasingly towards internationalisation," Li Manliang,



This picture taken on June 17, 2026 shows people visiting a spicy strips shop in Changsha, in China's central Hunan province.

Mala Wangzi's vice president, told AFP.

Some brands have expanded into East and Southeast Asia, where they are growing rapidly, while consumers from the United States to Australia are snapping up the snacks in specialist grocery stores, e-commerce platforms and via TikTok.

The country's largest latiao producer, Hong Kong-listed Weilong, made 117 million yuan from overseas sales last year, up nearly 50 per cent from 2024.

TikTok and Instagram are

awash with videos of foreigners trying the fiery snacks.

One influencer gained 1.5 million views by chowing down on a model house made entirely of the glutinous strips.

In another TikTok video with 2.6 million views, an Australian reviewer tucked into a giant latiao.

"If you can handle your spice, I think you would enjoy this," she said. "Highly, highly recommend."

- 'Quite addictive' -

Latiao were created in Pingjiang in 1998 as an

emergency staple food, after devastating floods wiped out the local soybean crop.

They became ubiquitous in supermarkets across China, but gained a reputation as unhealthy and unsanitary an image latiao brands have spent years trying to counter.

"When I was young, my parents believed they contained too many additives," 22-year-old Beijing resident Wang Jingfei told AFP.

"But as the industry has developed and more brands have emerged, food safe-

ty has drawn a lot of attention... so I don't think it's a big problem to eat it now and then."

At the Mala Wangzi facility, an employee livestreamed the factory floor to showcase its hygienic conditions.

Li, the company's vice president, claimed these were based on standards used in the pharmaceutical industry.

And the recipe has changed to make the snack healthier, he said. "We're reducing the use of oil, salt, sugar and additives, and using more natural raw ingredients."

The company has made other concerted efforts to appeal to younger buyers, its main consumer base.

Mala Wangzi has opened pop-up museums around the country, held more than 4,000 latiao-themed weddings for superfan couples, and sponsored e-sport events, music festivals, and animation conventions.

"I find latiao is quite addictive and also stress-relieving," said 24-year-old Yang Xuhao.

"When I don't feel like having a proper meal, I'll just eat latiao instead. I also like to snack on them while watching TV shows."

But not everyone is sold on the snack's rehabilitation. □

Bones of medieval kings saved from Spanish wildfire

Madrid, Spain

Firefighters raced to save a 1,000-year-old monastery in northeastern Spain on

Friday as a growing wildfire prompted the hasty removal of the bones of the medieval monarchs buried

there.

The blaze broke out earlier this week and on Thursday bore down on two monasteries of San Juan de la Pena, a symbol of the Aragon region, perched in mountainous, rugged terrain.

The oldest monastery, linked by legend to the Holy Grail, has origins in the 10th century and holds the remains of the first kings of the medieval kingdom of Aragon.

The army's emergencies unit (UME) released footage of its officers rushing to remove the monastery's priceless treasures on Thursday, including transparent boxes full of skulls and bones, artwork and a

chalice, as flames licked the surrounding hills.

"At the last minute, we were able to rescue assets with an extraordinary historical value for this region and for all of Spain," UME chief Javier Marcos told reporters.

"I'm not confident about how the fire will develop, for that reason we still have personnel defending both monasteries," he said.

The heritage site lies close to one of the world-famous Saint James pilgrimage routes to the northwestern city of Santiago de Compostela and attracts around 100,000 visitors a year.

- 'Incalculable symbolic value' -

Felix Longas, a member of a religious brotherhood that cares for the monastery, told public broadcaster RTVE that the site "has an incalculable symbolic value".

"It's our roots, our history lies there," he explained, saying a change in wind helped keep the flames at bay from the columns, which had been wrapped in fireproof material.

"But what gives us hope is that it looks like the temperatures will drop this evening, that it will rain tomorrow and this could make it possible to finally achieve the complete extinction." □



This screen grab of a handout video taken and released by Spain's Military Emergencies Unit (UME) shows firefighters taking away the bones of the first Aragonese kings, founders of the Kingdom of Aragon, amid a wildfire threatening San Juan de la Pena Monastery in Penas de Riglos in the Spanish southwestern province of Aragon, on August 13, 2026.



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

Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

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.

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol

This neighborhood can be seen on Van Raders map and Werbata as Anna Boei. Anna Boei is a name of which there isn't much information about its origin.

The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were



living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and Iboa; the juice of a cassava, which together would mean "the best juice of a cassava".

If one assumes that the actual word heard was Ana-boio instead, consisting of Ana meaning the best and Boio (bohio); house, the iteration of Anabui would mean "the best house." This is the origin that has been more or less speculated

and assumed for the word Anabui and its meaning.

During the Second World War and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and later on Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which lead to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that

took place. It is hoped that the original and 'old' name of Anabui is never lost and now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi

This name can be seen on the Werbata map with little and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in

the 19th century where Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explain and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

However, it seems to come from combining A(n), which is a generalizing prefix and Goeiza, which means 'the spirit of a living man'. Angochi remains more of a guess.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An. □



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Sun catchers: The different lizards in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Colorful or camouflaged, you're bound to encounter a variety of lizards basking in the sun or scurrying on their way in our island. From the charming, friendly iguanas to the good-luck gecko Pega-Pega, you're bound to meet a few of these special residents during your visit.

Aruba, as a desert island, is home to an incredible variety of unique and colorful species. Among them we can find different lizards, most of which have South American origins. But there are a few exceptions.

Iguanas

Iguanas are easy to spot, as they are larger than most other lizards and when young, have a bright green color that makes them stand out.

The iguanas usually found in Aruba are the Iguana, known as the green iguana, or locally as Yuwana. The Yuwana are a mostly herbivorous species, and can grow up to 2 meters in size, including the tail, making them one of the largest in the iguana family. As you will see, despite their name, as they reach adulthood, the iguanas can take on a grey or blue tone instead of the bright green displayed by the young ones. In Aruba – as in the rest of the Kingdom of the Netherlands – the most usual color varies from green to lavender, black and sometimes a reddish brown.

Yuwana is a protected species, as it is listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), meaning that international trade is regulated through the CITES permit system. In the past, Arubans used to eat a popular Yuwana soup, as it was believed to give strength and help restore health – probably due to the protein boost it delivered.



However, it is now illegal to catch, kill, buy or sell Yuwanas in Aruba, and this includes eating them!

Turnip-tailed gecko

The turnip-tailed gecko is known locally as the Pega-Pega, meaning sticky-sticky, due to the way it sticks to walls using the suction in its little fingers. They are found inside houses, and are mostly a nocturnal animal.

According to Etnia Nativa, the local Pega Pega is immediately recognizable by its large size, with a body length of up to 12 cm, and its large, swollen tail, approximately the same length or slightly shorter than its body; females are larger and more robust than males. It has short, robust legs with flattened toes and extensive basal webbing.

The undersides of its toes are covered in lamellae, which are used as friction pads to cling to smooth vertical surfaces. Some can even walk around completely upside down. Its toes are covered with ridges, which are peppered with millions of microscopic bristle-like structures called setae that attach and detach when the animal wills them to, and they never get gunked up.

They are variable in coloration, from a mottled dark gray to orange-brown, and are capable of changing color depending on their mood and surroundings. Mottled

and banded markings aid in camouflage against tree bark. They are harmless and fragile; you can hold one in your hands as long as you are VERY gentle.

Never put pressure on its tail because it will surely drop as a measure to try to distract the predator, and they are different from other lizards because they're long-lived, talkative, lack eyelids, and their small scales are situated next to each other like cobblestones rather than overlapping as is the case in most other lizards.

Turnip-tailed Geckos are insectivorous and feed on cockroaches, grasshoppers, beetles, flies, mosquitoes, and spiders, which makes them the best pest control to have at home! They spend their days concealed in dark tree grooves and cavities, in narrow crevices in the walls, or behind paintings, which provide the perfect shelter for them. Pega pega is a gecko endemic to our island, but in time, some 4–5 intrusive gecko species have been observed, some of which do not cease to amaze us with the racket they make, especially during the hours of the night.

The Pega-pega Phyllodactylus Julieni is also a protected species in Aruba, by law. It is illegal to kill them!

Blue Cododo

These are one of the most striking lizards in Aruba, recognizable by the male's bright blue color. The Aruban whiptail lizard, Cnemidophorus arubensis, is a species endemic to Aruba, meaning you can only find it here on our One Happy Island! They are also recognized as the most common and populous lizard on the island. While the male is blue with white dots, the female is brown with blue dots.

These charming lizards eat mostly

plants, such as flowers, nectar, leaves and fruits, and occasionally enjoy some insects. They are selective in which plants they eat, because of the toxins present in many available plants species. The Cododo help take care of Aruba's vegetation by playing a significant role in the dispersal of seeds for certain plants: when they eat fruit, they excrete the seeds in diverse locations, contributing to the reproduction cycle of our local plants.

Striped anole

The striped anole (Anolis lineatus) that lives in Aruba is known locally as Waltaka or Toteki. This is a species of lizard in the family Dactyloidae, and they are native to Aruba and Curaçao. It is usually found in dry areas, commonly where there are not large trees; rather they enjoy rocks, walls or tree trunks, as they prefer to stay close to the ground.

These lizards are about 7cm in length, have a brown color with a stripe on each side and typically, several stripes on the body and tail that are lighter in color. It has a dewlap which is orange-yellow – and what's unique about this species is that it is the only known species of anole where the dewlap is asymmetrically colored, with one side being a deeper orange and the other side a lighter yellow. Mostly this is seen in the males, as it is almost imperceptible in the females. If the Toteki shows you his dewlap, retreat! This is not a friendly greeting!

Lizards are wonderful creatures that are precious to our fragile, local ecosystem. Please be mindful of these residents as you enjoy your stay.

Images: Some images are from Aruba Birdlife Conservation.

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

(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

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

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Edu-

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



The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before

sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □

Create museum memories with the entire family!

Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you to these locations.

Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas. This museum presents the history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments fund in 2003 so it could be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruban Museum Foundation (FMA), which is a foundation

that maintains, preserves, and protects the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information check out their Facebook page: Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

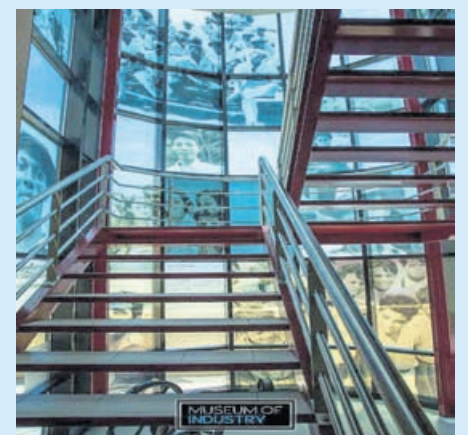
The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in downtown Oranjestad has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1,700 m2.

In 1997 the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004 a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006 restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the new to build exhibition space. In December 2007 the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location the National Archaeological Museum Aruba uses approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit showcases



archaeological objects and conveys modern exhibition techniques information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum regularly hosts public seminars, special exhibitions and workshop for visitors to enjoy.

The museum is open daily from 9 am till 5 pm.

For more information check out the Facebook page National Archaeological Museum Aruba or website: www.manaruba.org □

Editor's note: Pictures are property of the respective museums.

It's Tern season, and ACF is calling for their protection

(ORANJESTAD)—Aruba has begun to see terns arriving along its coast to start their breeding season once again. An event that happens every year, the migration of terns to our island normally begins in March, but this year it was observed that they were already present as early as January.

In Aruba, there are ten different species of terns that normally breed from March to September every year. However, ACF has noted that this year their arrival came earlier, and by the end of January a presence of terns was already being seen in their breeding areas. During this season, ten different species breed at different times. This is the reason why the season lasts for more than half a year.

The terns breed mainly in the Baby Beach area and along the north coast of Aruba. Baby Beach is a particularly special site for terns, since this is where they carry out their reproduction rituals. Referred



to as a "discotheque" by Natasha Silva, the point of Baby Beach near the open water is where a large group of terns spends the season searching for their partner—for life—to reproduce.

Terns are very fragile and easily disturbed, especially during their reproduction rituals.

Their nests are divided into two specific sites on our island. The first is the reefs

near the refinery in San Nicolas. These reefs become home to the terns, where they lay their nests either on the sand or in the small bushes around the reefs. These reefs are "off-limits" to the public; one of the only areas in Aruba that is completely protected by law.

The terns also lay eggs along the north coast of our island, between cliffs and rocks throughout the area. This is where they

are vulnerable to greater danger, according to ACF. Among these cliffs, everything is well camouflaged and cannot easily be seen, even by people who are walking or driving vehicles over the rocks.

The chicks have a natural behavior to "freeze" in place when they sense danger. This puts them at risk of being stepped on. For this reason, ACF is making a call to the community and authorities to help pro-

tect our historic birds.

As general advice, ACF says to keep distance and be cautious when passing through areas where terns are breeding. "If a tern starts screaming at you, that is a sign that you are too close to their nest and eggs," Silva explained. These are the types of signals the Aruba community needs to be aware of.

So once again, a call goes out to the entire community of Aruba: Let's protect our terns during an important season for them. Educate yourself and others about the birds, stay alert to harmful activities near nests, and share information with ACF if you notice anything unusual in nature. Together we can care for and strengthen our nature, and that begins with education.

Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF) can be reached by phone at 585-1234 or by email at info@acf.aw.

The Aruban way of life: Creating community with Cas di Torto

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban people understand that a happy life is spent in great ambience with your loved ones. Passed down from one generation to the other, building community has been a key aspect in forging our traditions and customs. The Cas di Torto (mud house) played a big role in cultivating community, bridging families together and forming close bonds with your neighbors—something we highly value today.

Cas di Torto: History and construction

The origin of the Cas di

Torto is said to date back to the early 19th century in the Paraguaná Peninsula in Venezuela. Refugees who sought sanctuary on Aruba introduced this building method to the island.

The uprights of the walls were made with sturdy and straight wayaca or kwihi wood, or from thin mangrove struts. Then, the wattle walls were weaved in using branches and twigs from the warero and sisal plant, daubed with a mixture of grass and mud. Finally, the walls got a coat of white plaster to seal everything in.

For roofing, corn stalks, palm fronds and straws were used, allowing air to flow freely through the house. This method of roofing was known throughout the ABC islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), but the use of cornstalks in Aruba eventually got replaced with use of mud and white plaster for the roofs. The white plaster all around made the houses look like cake, hence the name "Torto" (Spanish for "cake").

Building community

Building Torto houses was often a community effort. Young couples who were about to get married had to have their house built before they could tie the knot and start their own family. This is where the help of the community comes into play.

Neighbors, extended family and friends would all help in the construction of a Torto

House. And everyone had a role: The men oversaw the building of the house, and the women were tasked with collecting wood and straws, cooking and taking care of the little ones.

The couple's family were primarily responsible for feeding everyone who helped build the house. Before construction, someone usually had the task to prepare the meal; going fishing or slaughter farm animals like goats, chicken or sheep. Even the older kids had their tasks; the older children of the family usually helped with collecting water and mixing the mud.

The average duration of constructing a Cas di Torto was 4 months.

At the end of a long day of work, everyone would gather around and enjoy a feast of hearty food. This type of help from friends and family became a tradition and

was called "paga lomba": You help me today; I'll help you tomorrow.

Nowadays, traditional Cas di Torto are rare, especially those that are still inhabited. Houses that do exist probably date back more than a century.

Picture credits: Aruba National Library (BNA) and the Monumentbureau archive on Coleccion.aw.



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 Lighthouse 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 transported 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. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Torture device
5 Carell of movies
10 Lotion additive
11 Broadway's Bernadette
13 Gaunt
14 Bored by routine
15 Stuck, so to speak
17 Wedding words
18 Signifies
19 Light metal
20 Farm animal
21 Blanchett of "Tár"
22 Like ghost stories
25 Finishes last
26 Chuck of "Meet the Press"
27 "2001" computer
28 Hosp. parts
29 Gets rid of
33 Cut off
34 Fretting
35 Confused
37 Past due
38 Century division

DOWN

- 39 Resting on
40 Heads, to Henri
41 Departed
1 Overly eager
2 Without aid
3 Movie barbarian
4 Computer need
5 Book parts
6 Watches over
7 Greek vowel
8 Harvard motto
9 Learned
12 Boulders
16 Tiny parts
21 Diner side dish
22 Un-emotional
23 Tiara's kin
24 News-paper revenue source
25 Hot flow
27 Door
29 Electronics component
30 Country division
31 Wyoming's Range
32 Used a broom
36 Diet no-no

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.

4-24 CRYPTOQUOTE

B CMD NYJ IY PGMJQP IRCI
RJZCGBIN BM MPQEPU LN
TPCKIR CGU GYI QJKPU LN BI.

— VYVP AQCGOBM

Cryptoquote: WHAT I HEAR WHEN I'M BEING YELLED AT IS PEOPLE CARING REALLY LOUDLY AT ME. — LESLIE KNOPE, "PARKS AND RECREATION"



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.

CRUISE SHIP	
AUGUST SCHEDULE	
16 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
18 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
19 WED	FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E
23 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
25 TUE	CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
26 WED	FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E
30 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

8/15

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

8/14

New trend of injecting banned peptides to 'optimize' body

Paris, France

Thomas's phone alarm buzzes at 9:30 pm it's time for the aspiring bodybuilder to start injecting himself in the stomach with several banned peptides.

He takes vials from his refrigerator of GHK-Cu, which he tells AFP will give him "beautiful skin", and Retatrutide, which will help him "feel less hungry".

After adding a liquid to reconstitute the synthetic peptides, he disinfects the syringes and shoots both into his lower abdomen.

Thomas, whose name has been changed, takes GHK-Cu daily and Retatrutide three times a week. "It takes a little organization, but it's become a routine," said Thomas, who goes to the gym almost every day.

He is one of a growing number of people attempting to "optimize" themselves by using peptides, a class of substances being widely promoted online by influencers, celebrities and the wellness industry.

Viral social media posts claim peptides can offer a range of seemingly miraculous benefits including glowing skin, stronger muscles, deeper sleep, a more alert mind and even provide an avenue to prevent ageing.

However experts warn there is little evidence to support these claims, and that because these peptides have not been studied properly, they can pose serious health risks.

That is why these peptides remain banned in many countries, including in France where Thomas lives. In the United States, however, a panel recommended loosening restrictions on a range of peptides last month.

The decision outraged many medical experts, who accused Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. an avowed fan and user of peptides of packing the panel with people who have strong ties to the



Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., appears before the Senate Finance Committee, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Sept. 4, 2025.

peptide industry.

- 'Very real health risks' -

Peptides are short chains of amino acids that assemble to form proteins, which are the body's building blocks.

They occur naturally in the body, helping dictate processes such as repairing tissue.

Peptides reproduced in a lab are the active ingredients in many common medications including insulin and GLP-1 weight-loss drugs.

However unauthorized forms of synthetic peptides sold online have increas-

ingly been promoted by influencers and gyms promising a more effective workout.

Thomas was already using steroids when he was introduced to peptides six months ago.

Along with GHK-Cu and Retatrutide, he sometimes injects himself with Selank for help with anxiety and BPC-157, which promises to more quickly repair soft tissue such as ligaments.

Because these peptides are not authorized for sale in France, there are no official guidelines for how to use them.

In online discussion forums

such as Reddit and Discord, communities of mostly men exchange advice on how much and how often they should inject themselves. □

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Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
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HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad Hospital
7:00 pm/10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Oduber
Tel. 582 1680

San Nicolas: Aloe
Tel. 584 4606

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

Cables and cooling bring AI windfall to Indian suppliers

Mumbai, India

At a bustling factory in western India, technicians work around the clock to turn glass into hair-thin fibre-optic strands destined for data centers powering the global artificial intelligence boom.

Indian manufacturers are cashing in on the AI infrastructure build-out by supplying cables, power systems and cooling equipment even as investors worry the country is falling behind in the race to develop the technology.

Analysts at Nomura describe it as a classic "picks and shovels" trade, a riff on how selling tools during a gold rush can earn people more than searching for the precious metal.

For Ankit Agarwal, managing director of Sterlite Technologies, serving the world's biggest tech companies is a dramatic shift for his firm, once known mainly as a supplier to telecoms networks.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity," Agarwal told AFP in Mumbai. "This is a kind of entire new network." India has enthusiastically adopted AI but has yet to produce globally competitive models and remains dependent on imported advanced semiconductors.

Investors also fear that generative AI could disrupt the country's \$315-billion IT services industry by automating tasks long outsourced to India, such as customer



This photograph taken on July 9, 2026 shows a staff monitoring optical fibres being loaded onto spools at Sterlite Technologies Limited (STL) manufacturing facility in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar.

service and app maintenance.

These worries have weighed on markets, with the benchmark Nifty 50 down around seven per cent this year and foreign investors pulling over \$27 billion from Indian equities.

- 'Tsunami' -

The data centre boom is generating windfall gains for companies largely overlooked by investors, offering a bright spot in a market rattled by concerns over AI's impact on India's export-oriented tech sector.

"India doesn't need to make the chip or train the model to benefit," Prateek Nigudkar, a fund manager

at Shriram AMC, told AFP. "Every data centre needs switchgear, transformers, cables, cooling systems and grid connectivity, and Indian manufacturers are already in that supply chain."

Fibre-optic cable producers have been among the biggest beneficiaries.

Strong demand for networks linking data centers has helped manufacturers secure contracts once considered out of reach. Sterlite earlier this year announced a \$1.1-billion multi-year order from a U.S. hyperscaler a term meaning a large-scale cloud service provider helping drive its shares up 400 percent this year.

Telecom equipment maker HFCL reported its strongest-ever April-June quarter, with revenue more than doubling on AI demand.

Founder Mahendra Nahata said he was going all out to scale up production.

"We used to increase capacity probably once in three years, once in five years. Nowadays, it's become a daily routine," he told AFP, comparing the build-out to a "tsunami". The gains extend beyond fiber cables.

Shares in TD Power Systems have jumped 68 percent on expectations of rising demand from AI facilities, while MTAR Technologies has benefited from demand for power units used

in fuel-cell systems serving big-tech operators.

- 'Big investments' -

Analysts, however, warn valuations have become stretched, while growing opposition to energy-guzzling data-centre projects also poses a risk.

Data Center Watch, a tracker run by AI intelligence firm 10a Labs, says at least 75 US projects worth some \$130 billion were delayed or blocked in the first quarter of 2026.

Indian executives acknowledge the risks could hurt near-term sentiment but argue domestic demand would eventually offset any slowdown abroad.

India hosts nearly a fifth of the world's data, but accounts for less than five per cent of global data-centre capacity leaving much room for growth.

An AFP review of funding announcements shows U.S. hyperscalers have committed some \$57 billion in new Indian capacity over the past year, while conglomerates Adani and Reliance have pledged \$100 billion towards digital and infrastructure projects.

Unlike in parts of the United States and Europe, data centre development in India has faced limited resistance so far.

"Opposition is probably in a very nascent stage," said Sharad Agarwal, chief executive of data centre operator Sify Infinet Spaces.

He said operators had adopted technologies such as closed-loop water cooling systems to reduce pressure on local resources.

Sify, which operates 16 data centers and has nearly a dozen more under development, is considering an IPO that would make it India's first listed data-centre operator.

"We are talking about big investments. If I need to be a one-gigawatt company, I need \$5 billion," Agarwal said. A computing power capacity of one gigawatt is often referred to as "hyperscale".

"Then only we can go and grow." □

Singapore criminalizes AI-generated abuse images

Singapore, Singapore

Singapore authorities prepare to enforce legislation that goes into effect on Monday, protecting citizens from online sexual abuse including banning the use of artificial intelligence to create explicit images without consent. The laws will also allow authorities to prosecute offenders suspected of grooming minors abroad and then sexually abusing them, if either the perpetrator or the victim travelled from the city-state before the offence was committed.

The changes include "a new offence of producing intimate images, including AI-generated materials, without consent", Singapore's home affairs department said on Friday.

Offenders face a jail sentence of up to two years, a fine, or both.

If the material in question depicts a minor younger than 14, "the offence is punishable with mandatory imprisonment of up to two years, and the offender shall also

be liable to a fine or caning", the department said in a statement.

Those found guilty of grooming minors overseas and committing sexual offences will now face stricter punishment including a jail sentence of up to seven years if the victim is younger than 14.

Singapore's Home Affairs Minister Sim Ann told parliament last year that the legislation aimed "both to reduce the roadblocks to enforcement and to reduce the supply of such (AI-generated) materials, which contributes to a vicious cycle of abuse."

Singapore still allows judicial caning, including for certain serious sexual offences such as rape and aggravated molestation.

However, revised legislation which also comes into force on Monday will remove mandatory corporal punishment for crimes including piracy, attempted robbery and carrying an illegal weapon, and will now be applied on a "discretionary" basis. □

'I want to be Eala': Philippine sensation sparks tennis boom at home

Manila, Philippines

On a Manila court made of crushed seashells, an earnest four-year-old sends a forehand sailing wideone of dozens of kids aiming to follow in the footsteps of the Philippines' first home-grown tennis sensation, Alexandra Eala.

The 21-year-old's rise has sparked a rush of interest in a sport typically seen as the preserve of the elite in a country best known for its love of basketball, boxing and cockfighting.

Racquet sales are up and scoring one of the few available playing venues has become next to impossible as parents cram their pre-schoolers onto practice courts.

"Apart from just bringing in people to watch, she's actually (got) people to play," Philippine Tennis Association (PhilTA) executive director Tonette Mendoza told AFP.

"Maybe the parents of these kids, they're thinking: Hey, if we do this, maybe they can be the next Alex," she said.

A now-famous photo of Eala diving flat out for a ball at Wimbledon's Centre Court was all it took to convince nine-year-old Mayumi Stevens.

"I felt like, wow, that's going to be me," Stevens told AFP as she waited to train



This photo taken on August 7, 2026, shows children taking part in a training session at Alabang Tennis Academy in Muntinlupa, Metro Manila.

alongside older pre-teens at the Alabang Tennis Academy in an exclusive Manila suburb.

"I want to be Eala when I grow up."

- 'Onto the bandwagon' -

French sporting goods retailer Decathlon is among the companies riding the Eala wave in the Philippines, busily reworking its store displays and social media after seeing sales of beginner racquets spike 66 percent in the past year.

"We really had to jump onto the bandwagon... creating content that's very relatable, that's very timely for

whatever's happening with Alex right now," partnerships and communications manager Vince Roque told AFP.

PhilTA estimates there are fewer than 1,000 tennis courts in the sprawling archipelago.

Many are shell courts unique to the Philippines a mix of crushed seashells, sand and clay that cost less to build and maintain than red clay.

"It's super crazy to book tennis courts nowadays," said under-14 and under-12 national girls' team coach Czarina Arevalo, adding she never imagined she

would see a Filipino in the world top 20.

Eala, a former U.S. Open girls champion, made the leap to 20th in the WTA rankings just over a year after reaching her first Grand Slam tournament, the 2025 French Open.

The unexpected rise has spawned an army of loyal Filipino fans.

Many of the nation's 10 million-strong diaspora, forced overseas in search of better-paying jobs, are now paying hundreds of dollars for centre court seats and leaving traditional notions of prim tennis etiquette at

the door.

"People were screaming like in a basketball match," PhilTA's Mendoza said of Eala's appearance at the Australian Open earlier this year.

Some "had never watched a tennis match in their entire lives", Mendoza said, adding the level of excitement was understandable. "She's our first who's gone this far".

After reaching the fourth round of Wimbledon in July, Eala won her first WTA title earlier this month, sweeping aside former world number one Naomi Osaka and Jessica Pegula in Washington.

- Lonely at the top -

Outside of Eala, the Philippines is glaringly absent from the sport's upper echelons with just four men ranked by the ATP and none in the top 1,000. Eala is the sole ranked Filipina.

Public courts are few and far between in the nation of 116 million and a good racquet can be a month's wages for many Filipinos.

Eala's bid for tennis greatness required leaving home at 13 for a scholarship at Rafael Nadal's tennis academy in Spain.

Mendoza said most of the top Filipino players end up going to school in the United States and later into coaching, some "out of necessity". □

T'Wolves set Garnett celebration for Celtics clash

Los Angeles, United States

The Minnesota Timberwolves will retire Kevin Garnett's number 21 jersey on February 28 when they face another of his former NBA sides, the Boston Celtics, the team said Friday. Hall of Famer Garnett will become just the second player in Timberwolves history to have his number retired. Malik Sealy's No. 2 was retired after his death in a road accident in 2000. The Timberwolves said in a statement that the ceremony "will serve as the centerpiece of a season-long celebration honoring Garnett's extraordinary im-

pact on the Timberwolves, the state of Minnesota and an entire generation of basketball fans."

Garnett is the Timberwolves' all-time leader in points, rebounds, assists, steals and blocks and is the only player to lead an NBA club in all of those five categories.

He's the only Minnesota player to earn Most Valuable Player honors, bagging the award in the 2003-04 season.

Garnett led the Timberwolves to eight straight playoff appearances between 1997 and 2004. They

were eliminated in the first round in the first seven of those appearances before reaching the Western Conference finals in 2004.

Friday's announcement also marks a thawing of relations between Garnett and the Timberwolves, which had soured due to a falling out between the player and former owner Glen Taylor.

"Bringing Kevin back to the organization as Team Ambassador has allowed us to celebrate his legacy in a new and meaningful way, and retiring No. 21 is the ultimate recognition of everything he has meant



Kevin Garnett attends the All The Smoke x Netflix Court of Gold live podcast taping during All Star Weekend on February 13, 2025 in San Francisco, California.

to this franchise and our fans," current owners Marc

Lore and Alex Rodriguez said in a statement. □

Liverpool deal with Bezos consortium raises stakes in U.S. battle for Premier League power

London, United Kingdom

Liverpool's decision to sell a minority stake to a consortium of financial heavy hitters including Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is the latest move in the battle for supremacy between the American owners in the Premier League.

Just four months after Arsenal won the Premier League under the ownership of US billionaire Stan Kroenke, Liverpool's hierarchy have opted for outside investment in a bid to regain the crown.

Armed with the cash generated by selling around a third of the club to Bezos and company, Liverpool will seek to dethrone Arsenal and claim a record 21st English title.

Joining the fight for Premier League bragging rights are Manchester United, majority-owned by U.S. family the Glazers and Chelsea, whose ownership group is headed by American Todd Boehly.

Aston Villa, last season's Europa League winners, are among six other Premier League clubs in which Americans hold ownership stakes.

The U.S.-inspired Premier League arms race has led to a substantial spike in the valuations of England's top clubs, giving their owners a handsome return on their initial investment.

Boston-based Fenway Sports Group bought Liverpool for £300 million (\$405



U.S. founder of Amazon, Jeff Bezos waves as he leaves the Aman Hotel in Venice on June 25, 2025.

million) in 2010.

Liverpool, who last won the Premier League in 2025, are now reportedly valued at between £5 billion and £6 billion after Friday's deal with the star-studded consortium.

American tycoon Bezos is the fourth-richest person in the world, with an estimated net worth of \$256 billion. Facebook co-founder Eduardo Saverin, reportedly worth \$32 billion, is also a member of the consortium, while the group's frontman Amit Bhatia is the son-in-law of Indian billionaire Lakshmi Mittal.

It is Bezos's involvement that makes the deal so intriguing and will trigger speculation about the future plans of Liverpool's owners.

Bezos was reportedly interested in two NFL franchises the Seattle Seahawks, who were sold for £7.3 billion recently, and the Washington Commanders, sold for £4.6 billion in 2023.

Buying the stake in Liverpool gives the 62-year-old a potential route to eventually take over at Anfield despite reports he will be a 'silent partner'.

- 'Potential to grow' -

Will John W. Henry and his FSG cohorts stick to their plan to retain "majority ownership and operational control of Liverpool"? Or could they be tempted by the huge profit to be made if they sell the rest of their stake to Bezos's group?

Although Liverpool are rebuilding under new manager Andoni Iraola after sacking Arne Slot following last season's disappointing fifth place finish in the Premier League, they remain one of the world's most iconic sports brands and their value is growing by the year.

The Reds became the top-earning Premier League club for the first time this year, according to sports finance experts Deloitte, announcing record revenues of £703 million for the 2024-25 financial year.

Against that healthy financial backdrop, Bezos and his fellow investors have been given a cautious reception on Merseyside, with fans concerned about

their motivation for buying into the six-time European champions

Supporters group Spirit of Shankly have asked the club for clarity, warning that previous changes in the running of the club have led to "decisions and behaviours that many would not want to see at Liverpool".

But Dan Plumley, senior lecturer in sport finance at Loughborough University in the U.K., believes FSG have no immediate plans to cede complete control.

"If Liverpool remain competitive in the Premier League and Europe, then their revenue and valuation have the potential to grow further hence probably why FSG don't want to sell up fully just yet," he told AFP.

However, Plumley acknowledged the true reasons for the investment will be a concern for Anfield devotees.

"The question the other way from fans is 'what do these investors want out of my club'? There is normally some sort of return on investment for them, particularly with the way US investors operate," he said.

"Of course, they could just be interested in owning a trophy asset, too. In contrast it may also be tough to them to break into the American sport market in terms of owning franchises.□

World champ McIntosh crashes out of Pan Pacs 400m free

Los Angeles, United States

World record-holder Summer McIntosh failed to qualify for the 400m freestyle final at the Pan Pacific Championships in Irvine, California, on Friday, slumping to the ninth-quickest time in the heats.

The 19-year-old Canadian sensation, who won three gold medals at the Paris Olympics, clocked 4min 08.56sec more than 14 seconds outside the world record she set last year before going on to win the world title in Singapore.

McIntosh had been expected to figure in a three-way battle for the Pan Pacs crown with US freestyle great Katie Ledecky and Australian Lani Pallister.

Ledecky led the way into Friday night's fi-

nal with a time of 4:03.48 and Pallister, who won the 200m free and took silver behind Ledecky in the 1,500m on Wednesday, was fourth-quickest.

The competition that brings together top swimmers from non-European countries has been a mixed bag for McIntosh.

After dropping one of her signature events, the 200m butterfly, to focus on the 200m free she finished runner-up to Pallister. She went on to win the 400m individual medley on Thursday, shattering the championship record but saying she was disappointed in her time of 4:28.01, which was more than four seconds slower than her world mark.□



Summer McIntosh of Team Canada competes in the Women's 400m IM Final on Day 2 of the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships at William Woollett, Jr. Aquatics Center on August 13, 2026 in Irvine, California.