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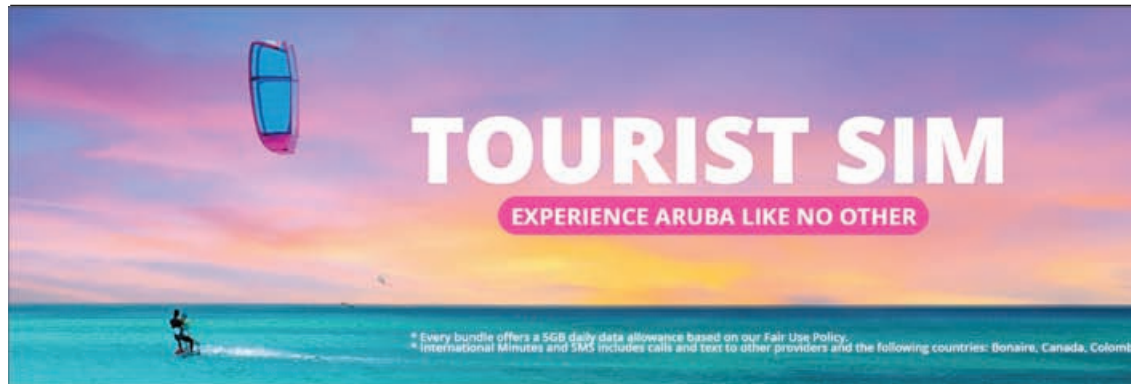
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The ABC Television logo is displayed outside a building at The Walt Disney Studios in Burbank, California on June 2, 2025.

Disney, ABC sue U.S. regulator over threat to broadcast licenses

Washington, United States

Walt Disney-owned ABC sued the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on Tuesday, accusing the U.S. regulatory body of waging a retaliatory campaign against the television network on behalf of the Trump administration. The lawsuit, filed in a federal district court in Washington, comes after the FCC earlier this year asked ABC TV stations to renew their broadcast licenses earlier than scheduled. "Acting through the Federal Communications Commission, the Administration has waged a retaliatory campaign against ABC for a single reason: it disapproves of what ABC broadcasts," the suit says. "Over time, those attacks have escalated into express demands that ABC be stripped of its broadcast licenses because of its speech." President Donald Trump has personally lashed out at ABC particularly the net-

work's late night host Jimmy Kimmel on numerous occasions and suggested revoking the broadcast licenses of stations he claims are "almost 100% negative" towards him. The famously litigious Republican president has filed a number of defamation lawsuits against media outlets, including suing ABC over statements about a civil judgment in a sexual assault case. He took CBS to court for allegedly misleading viewers by airing different clips of the same answer from an interview with 2024 Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris. The cases involving ABC and CBS ended in December 2024 and July 2025 with the broadcasters promising to pay \$15 million and \$16 million, respectively. Other ongoing cases include a \$10 billion lawsuit against the BBC over an allegedly misleading edit of one of his speeches and one against The Wall Street

Journal over publication of a salacious birthday letter he allegedly sent to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

'Government intimidation'

In its lawsuit filed on Tuesday, Disney and ABC said the Trump administration has "steadily increased the pressure on ABC, culminating in the present threat to the broadcasting licenses of the eight ABC Owned Stations. "The Commission has demanded a review of the Stations' licenses extraordinarily early," it says. "That timing underscores the Commission's true purpose: coercing and retaliating against a network that refuses to bow to the Administration's demands." "Facing this existential threat, Plaintiffs have no choice but to seek redress from the judicial branch for the Administration's blatant retaliation for their First Amendment speech," the suit says. □



U.S. President Bill Clinton arrives in Marine One near the Reddish Knob Overlook in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest in Virginia 13 October, 1999 to announce a new U.S. Forest Service rule to provide protection to 40 million acres of roadless forest areas across the US.

U.S. moves to open vast tracts of pristine forests to logging

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump's administration on Tuesday proposed a rule change that would open 44 million acres of wild, undisturbed forest for road construction and logging. The proposal would rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, enacted in the final days of the Clinton administration, which barred development across vast areas of public forests and grasslands designated as "inventoried roadless areas." In a statement announcing the move, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said the rule had prevented the Forest Service from carrying out vital management work that would curb wildfires.

"Across the country, we've watched preventable conditions overgrown stands, insect outbreaks and disease turn healthy landscapes into tinderboxes," she said. "For too long, outdated restrictions have kept tens of millions of forested acres off-limits to the very treatments that improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk to our communities."

An earlier draft of the proposed rule said it was "intended to return decision making for road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvesting in inventoried roadless areas to local officials, in conjunction with Forest-level land management planning." More than 95 percent of inventoried roadless areas run through 10 Western states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The proposed rule does not apply to national forests in Colorado and Idaho because of state-specific roadless regulations. Conservation groups reacted with anger, and legal challenges are expected. "Trump is pushing for the largest evisceration of public lands protection in American history and against what Americans want," said Randi Spivak, public lands policy director at the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD). □

Whales spark joy in New York but face threats from boat traffic

New York, United States

"WHALEATONEO'CLOCK!" Eager cruise passengers zipping around New York's southern shores rush to the starboard bow: a humpback whale is up for air, a breathtaking sighting set against Manhattan's iconic skyline.

Such scenes are no longer uncommon in the city's waterways, sparking excitement for animal lovers but also forcing new policy efforts to protect whales venturing into one of the busiest port regions in the United States.

Once hunted to near extinction, the rebound of humpback whales is considered among the conservation movement's greatest success stories.

And a growing cohort of mostly juvenile humpbacks are thriving off New York's coast, where food is now plentiful.

"People fly to different parts of the world to go on safari, and what I think a lot of people don't realize is that the marine safari is right out here," said Carl LoBue, New York oceans director at The Nature Conservancy.

The marine scientist who grew up on nearby Long Island told AFP that in the past, whale sightings were an "incredibly unusual event."

LoBue now spots the marine mammals basically every time he's out on the water. He generally sees humpbacks but sometimes other species including the still critically endangered North Atlantic Right whale. The new normal is "spectacular," he said.

"I never thought that I would see whales like this off the coast of New York."

- Cleaner water, climate change and more fish -

Humpbacks were once mainly migratory visitors, traversing the New York Bight the marine region that extends off the city, Long Island and New Jersey while traveling between foraging grounds further north and breeding areas in the Caribbean.

But more recently, a confluence of factors has made New York's coast less of a highway and more of a stomping ground.

One is the resurgence of whale populations thanks to government action including the Endangered Species Act, as well as a cleaner habitat supported by air and water protections.

Another is the existence of relatively new statutes that support growing schools of the Atlantic menhaden, an oily fish with a variety of industrial uses like commercial bait and omega-3 supplements.

It is also a staple for whales, dolphins and seabirds.

Humpbacks, which can grow to the size of a large city bus, can feast on some 3,000 pounds (1360 kilograms) of fish a day.

Climate change also plays a role in the surge of New York-area whale sightings. Warming waters are impacting bait fish distributions, encouraging whales to stray from tradition to find food, said Chris St. Lawrence, a naturalist who conducts whale watching tours and also works for Gotham Whale, a marine research organization that tracks whales in the Bight. When Gotham began formally monitoring in 2012, they had just five whales in their catalog.

Today, St. Lawrence said the organization sees 80 to 100 unique whales annually, and just identified its 500th individual whale seen around New York City since tracking began.

Some routinely put on a show: NYC0318, a whale also seen by AFP on a recent outing, often charms whale watchers with sensational lunge-feeds, breaching the water and prompting shrieks of delight.

- Maritime traffic dangers - Gotham is able to distinguish between the animals largely thanks to "flake prints": whales have unique patterns on the underside of their tails, similar to human fingerprints, St. Lawrence explained.



But many whales are also identifiable by their scars, including from collisions with everything from tank-

ers, cargo and cruise ships to fishing boats and recreational vessels.

Because while New York

offers bountiful food, it also hosts heavy maritime traffic, posing fresh threats to the whale population. □

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A Viking longship in 'The Odyssey'? It's a case of history meets Hollywood

Oslo, Norway

The eras of "The Odyssey" and the Vikings happened about 2,000 years apart so how did a Viking longship end up with a starring role in this year's blockbuster movie?

Look to director Christopher Nolan, and his obsession with bringing spectacle to life with real props, real scenes.

But also credit a team of Norwegian shipwrights and sailors who built a vessel that speaks to both history and Hollywood.

With its tar-soaked rigging, creaking oak deck and 50 spruce oars, Draken Harald Harfagre is the largest modern replica of a Viking ship.

It mattered little that it had to drop its Scandinavian roots for Greek mythology the anachronism blended into the service of Nolan's brand of realism.

For the film, though, Draken had to be stripped of the dragon figurehead at its bow typical of the Viking era, from the 8th to 11th centuries as it sailed for the



The Draken Harald Harfagre (the ship used in the movie the Odyssey) is docked outside Oslo Opera in the Norwegian capital on August 14, 2026.

cameras in Greek, Italian and Scottish waters.

"We found a Viking ship that had been built exactly according to those ancient specifications. And it was very much the whole shape and the rig that we needed to do a Bronze Age ship," Nolan told US television last month.

"We took the crew, and we put their crew all in our costumes. They became part of the movie crew, as it were. And Odysseus' guys, the actors, joined in with them, and they figured out how to raise the sail, how to rig it, how to row, all of this stuff."

For months, the longship's

crew of seasoned sailors rubbed shoulders with Hollywood star Matt Damon, who plays Odysseus on-screen, and a host of professional actors.

- 'Doing the real thing' -

"There was one day where one of the actors who was sitting in front of me

got seasick and threw up over the rail. It blew back on me," recalled sailor Trammell Hudson.

"I thought that would be my big scene, because the IMAX camera was very focused on him and me in the background dodging the debris. But I didn't see that particular scene in the film," he told AFP when the Draken and its crew made a recent visit to Oslo.

Based on Homer's epic, Nolan's film retraces the hero Odysseus in a perilous journey to his home on the island of Ithaca after the Trojan War in the 12th century BCE.

Rather than recreating a ship with computer-generated images, Nolan wanted a real one, capable of sailing on the open sea with flesh-and-blood men aboard.

"Most of the scenes would be completely different if it wasn't for us being there, doing the real thing with the real ship and the real crew in the real ocean and real weather," said Emanuel Persson, expedition director for Draken.

"I think the viewers can actually feel the genuine materials. I don't know if you can really smell the tar, but you can tell it's really genuine handicraft instead of being a digital creation," he said.

- All hands on deck -

On board, everyone played their part.

"Matt Damon was very nice and very good. Never complained. Every one of the actors was out for a long time and it was very cold and sometimes rough," recalled the longship captain, Bjorn Ahlander.

"No complaints, nothing, never. So that was fantastic to see."

With such a mixed crew on board, it wasn't always easy to row in perfect sync. "It's very important that the hundred rowers coordinate because the oars are quite long and they will tangle with each other," Trammell Hudson stressed. □

Princess Diana's brother to unveil 'truth' in new book

London, United Kingdom

Charles Spencer, the brother of the late Princess Diana, revealed Tuesday he has penned a book "to tell the truth" about his sister and her life as the 30th anniversary of her death looms. Spencer "tells the astonishing story of his life with Diana and the tragic week of her death," Penguin Random House said in a statement, adding

it marked "the first time that Earl Spencer has spoken openly and at length about his sister".

"Swan Song: Diana, My Sister" will be published in Britain and other countries on September 22 and translated into 12 languages.

"With the 30th anniversary of Diana's tragic death on the skyline, I've been inundated yet again with requests for interviews about

my sister," Spencer said.

"This has convinced me to write down my own thoughts and memories, once and for all," he said, adding many opinions were "based on untruths that have become accepted over time".

"I want to speak on Diana's behalf and do so in an openly positive way," added Spencer.

After Diana was killed in a Paris car crash in August 1997, Spencer gave an emotional eulogy at her funeral in Westminster Abbey, London, vowing to always look out for her two sons, Prince William and Prince Harry.

Thirty years on, Diana remains an iconic figure, but Harry and William, now heir to the UK throne, are no longer speaking amid a major rift in the royal family. And the husband Diana divorced is now the UK's King Charles III and married to

his former mistress, Queen Camilla.

"The aim of this book is to tell the truth about Diana from her brother's perspective," Spencer said.

Spencer, 62, has remained close to the two princes, and Harry, his wife Meghan and their two young children reportedly visited the earl's ancestral home at Althorp, central England, in early July where they were said to have visited Diana's grave.

Spencer added he hoped his book would interest those who "cherish" her memory and appeal to "those too young to remember her in her heyday". He wanted to leave readers with the impression of who she really was "a one-off, dynamic character, full of love, charisma and self-doubt, who gave life a hell of a go, and left the world a far better place". □



Britain's Princess Diana poses during her visit to Footscray Park in a suburb of Melbourne on January 27, 1988.



An aerial view of fortified church in the village of Mosna, Romania, shows a collapsed exterior wall, on August 7, 2026.

Transylvania's fortified churches face fragile future

Mosna, Romania

Built in the Middle Ages to provide shelter from attacks, Transylvania's fortified churches risk crumbling despite efforts to preserve and breathe new life into them.

In a stark reminder, the outer wall of a historic church in the village of Mosna in central Romania visited by Britain's King Charles III in 1998 collapsed one night in June.

Since then, Mariana Rempler, the village's last woman from the German-speaking Saxon minority, lives in fear that the church which attracts 4,000 visitors a year could also lose one of its towers.

"I felt a great pain inside me. It was as if I had collapsed at the same time with that wall," the 74-year-old told AFP, recalling the incident with tears in her eyes inside the church where she herself was baptized and wed.

Mosna is one of the over 160 churches fortified with outer walls in Transylvania, built by the German minority so that the population in the then disputed border territory could take refuge from Tatars and Ottomans. As the Saxons left Romania, many to escape the

communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu, several churches deteriorated with no one left to look after them.

They are among historic monuments and other buildings in the eastern European country one of the continent's poorest to fall victim to neglect and decay.

'New concept for survival'

Even edifices like Mosna, which underwent renovation after the fall of communism in 1989, remain in danger, with funds for more work difficult to find.

Out of the 300,000 Saxons that lived in Transylvania before World War II, only about 10,000 remain today.

About half of all fortified churches around 80, including Mosna have undergone restoration work in the last 35 years or will do over the next five years, Cristian Cismaru, manager at the Fortified Churches Foundation, told AFP.

The foundation works with the Evangelical Church in Romania to preserve the historic monuments with grants and donations. Some 85 percent of the money comes from the European Union.

"I don't think we'll be able to address the other half of

our heritage in our lifetime. That will be left for future generations," Cismaru told AFP at a brunch he organized with the local community for tourists, followed by a tour of the church in the village of Cincsor, 60 kilometers (40 miles) south-east of Mosna.

He explained to participants that a third of the 30-euro (\$35) entry ticket would be donated to a local development project.

"Our role, those of us who live in Transylvania, regardless of nationality, race or religion, is to continue to look after these monuments," he said.

"We want to breathe new life into these fortified churches."

Cismaru added that many of the churches need "a new concept for their survival", since they can no longer function just as places of worship. One proposal is to turn them into cultural spaces.

Earlier this month, fortified churches hosted dozens of events as part of the largest annual festival in Romania, dedicated to promoting the Saxon heritage, which drew a record of almost 10,000 visitors this year, according to organizers. □



The Plenipotentiary Representative and Head of the Negotiating Team of Ecuador for the Yasuni-ITT Initiative, Ivonne Baki, speaks during a press conference at the Carondelet presidential palace in Quito on December 30, 2011.

Ecuadoran diplomat enters race to be next U.N. chief

United Nations, United States

Ecuador's Ivonne A-Baki, a diplomat who represented Quito in the United States, has entered the race to lead the U.N., the head of the General Assembly said in a letter Tuesday.

Nominated by Tonga, the former foreign trade minister joins a growing field of candidates for secretary-general of the international organization, which has been buffeted by global divisions and budget issues.

A-Baki, born to Lebanese parents, was instrumental in brokering dialogue between Ecuador and Peru following their brief 1995 border war.

Five women and three men are so far in the running to succeed Antonio Guterres of Portugal, who will complete his second five-year term on December 31, 2026. Nominations are still open, raising the prospect of further late entrants.

In its nomination, Tonga highlighted A-Baki's roles as a cabinet minister, the first woman ambassador from Ecuador to Washington and ambassador to Qatar.

"I have lived through the ravages of war," she wrote on X.

"As the only candidate whose heritage bridges Latin America and the Middle East, and the only nominee to have helped broker a peace agreement between two sovereign U.N. member states, I stand ready to help renew the U.N. Charter's foundational promise: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war in a world where conflict continues to grow."

A-Baki was the face of a failed plan to prevent oil exploitation in an Amazon reserve in exchange for a hefty international contribution.

The environmental initiative was shelved in 2013 by then-president Rafael Correa, who authorized crude extraction in the Yasuni National Park after acknowledging the plan's economic failure.

The U.N. Security Council met last month for the first so-called "straw poll" to gauge support for the then-seven candidates for the secretary-general role.

United Nations insider Rebeca Grynspan was leading after the first round of the process.

The other nominees are former Guyanese foreign minister Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Argentina's Rafael Grossi, Michelle Bachelet of Chile, Maria Fernanda Espinosa of Ecuador, Olara Otunnu of Uganda and Macky Sall of Senegal.

Although IAEA chief Grossi has arguably the best name recognition, observers say there is no clear favorite in the race that could last several months. □

Lights out, crowds gone: Havana waits for what comes next

Havana, Cuba

Once a byword for joyful excess, Havana has been hollowed by blackouts, departures and deep uncertainty about its future.

There are so few cars in Cuba's capital that it is possible to cross the Malecon, the once bustling seafront promenade, without looking.

At night, the narrow cobbled streets of Old Havana are enveloped in inky black, devoid of power and virtually deserted.

After a seven-month-long U.S. fuel embargo and rolling power cuts, locals joke that they are sick of seeing the stars.

There are occasional stirrings in the shadows.

Rake-thin men, their shorts made many sizes too big by hunger, pick through mountains of trash for food, plastic or anything they might be able to use or sell.

"We look through the garbage so we can eat without stealing or hurting anyone," said Manuel Sanchez Angeira, 50, who has mouth cancer. "I don't have a home. I don't have a family. I have nothing."

There are sudden explosions of noise. A band of protestors in flip-flops thrash on aluminum pans, registering their anger with the blackouts, moving quickly to avoid the police.

Most Habaneros avoid the old town at night: It is too dangerous.



A person walks through a place traditionally visited by tourists in Old Havana that appears empty due to a lack of visitors in Havana on June 9, 2026.

"There is a lot of violence on the streets," said Sanchez. "Someone stabs you, hits you in the head with a rock, they kill you."

The only real crowds are to be found in the daytime at banks, cheap bakeries and outside the Spanish consulate, where hundreds clutch papers and wait to get off the island.

No one knows for sure how many people have left already. In 2012, the official population was more than 11 million.

Demographer Juan Carlos Albizu-Campos estimates it is now as low as eight million, only slightly more than 67 years ago, when Fidel Castro declared, "The ty-

rant has fled... the revolution has triumphed!"

Cuba has experienced many crises since then: sanctions, hurricanes, a pandemic and the collapse of the Soviet bloc.

But this latest grinding crisis has transformed the sights, sounds and smells of Old Havana entirely.

The invigorating brass or woody bass of salsa, son and cha-cha-cha are all but gone.

Instead, the humid silence is punctuated by the diesel generators, the occasional Bluetooth speaker or the tinny buzzing of a cell phone squeezing out reggaeton, reparto or U.S. pop.

- Missing tourists -

A century ago, Prohibition in the United States made Havana the place to be for mob bosses and vacationers alike.

The tourists left an indelible mark on the city, but now they have vanished.

A few Mexican or Colombian stragglers remain, hunting for restaurants that are open, have light and have food that might have been refrigerated in the not-too-distant past.

Those still open tend to have generators, menus priced in dollars and a clientele of well-connected Cubans, decked in salmon shirts and tassel loafers.

Many of the city's old sto-

ried haunts are closed.

Century-old El Floridita is cloaked with metal shutters. Its most famous patron, Ernest Hemingway, sits in statue form alone at the bar in the musty, sweltering darkness.

A few blocks away, Sloppy Joe's is closed too, despite being extensively restored by the team of Havana's famed historian, Eusebio Leal.

Leal did perhaps more to shape Old Havana than any other person in the last century.

He convinced Castro that Old Havana could bring in desperately needed tourist dollars and was worth restoring. He secured UNESCO Heritage status and launched countless restoration projects.

But many of his projects are again succumbing to time, with chunks of pediment falling to the sidewalk.

Habaneros grumble that the money he spent turning old palaces into stunning hotels now empty was wasted.

- Divining the future -

Irina Aguirre spends her days on the doorstep of one such building, just off the Plaza San Francisco.

Her job is to predict the future in a city that thinks of little else.

For years, she read tarot cards for tourists who poured out of cruise ships eager to learn of new loves or fabulous riches. □

ICC says US sanctions 'undermine the rule of law'

The Hague, Netherlands

U.S. sanctions on top members of the International Criminal Court "undermine the rule of law", the court said in a statement on Tuesday after Washington imposed measures on its president.

"When judicial actors are threatened for applying the law, it is the international legal order itself that is placed at risk," the court said in a statement sent to reporters. Earlier Tuesday, the U.S. imposed sanctions against ICC President Tomoko Akane of Japan as part of its campaign against the body it accuses of being "politicized."

Washington also slapped sanctions on ICC senior trial lawyer Abdoulaye Seye of Senegal in the Trump administration's latest salvo against The Hague-based court. "Measures targeting judges, prosecutors

and staff who work towards the fulfillment of the mandate that was conferred to the ICC by States undermine the rule of law," the ICC retorted.

The court, based in The Hague, said it remained "undeterred" and "stands firmly behind its personnel and behind victims of unimaginable atrocities."

The U.S., which is not a party to the international treaty that established the ICC, has already imposed sanctions against several of the court's officials.

The measures bar them from entering the U.S. and from transactions in the U.S. financial system.

It is largely a response to ICC investigations targeting Israel, a US ally. In 2024, the court issued an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the war in Gaza. □



This general view shows the exterior of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague on March 28, 2026.



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The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

ORANJESTAD—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha
Written by Hubert (Lio Boo)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudaweche, who was an epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudaweche. Upon telling Kudaweche that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aretima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aretima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudaweche was determined to bring back Aretima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head

to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudaweche, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aretima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aretima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aretima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers.

Kudaweche, satisfied to see Aretima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the hut, Aretima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the



father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aretima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Birds of Aruba

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

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

pictures and descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

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

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm.

Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

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

Picture credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation.





Visit the island's popular cave sites!

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

Quadirikiri Cave

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

Woman in Quadirikiri Cave, Arikok National Park, Aruba

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

So, the chief decided to lock her up in the Quadirikiri Cave, in hopes that she would soon calm down and turn away her lover. Her beloved, in turn, was locked away in the Tunnel



of Love (Now known as the Huliba Cave).

Through the pathways underneath the Tunnel of Love running up to the Quadirikiri cave, the two love birds found each other, and refused to let each other go. Because of their stubbornness, they both died in the Quadirikiri Cave, their ascending spirits burning two holes in the ceiling of the cave. This is why the cave has two holes through which sunlight passes through to illuminate the chamber.

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

Fontein Cave

Longer than the Quadirikiri Cave, the Fontein Cave contains pathways that stretch to the limestone walls further down. Here is also where prehistoric drawings can be seen.

Though this cave does not have its own legend, this was speculated to have been occupied—or at least used by prehistoric Arawak settlers on the island for rituals and other spiritual ceremonies.

The Huliba Cave/ Tunnel of Love

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

However, the Huliba Cave has been permanently closed for a few years now, as a way to preserve the bat population that lives in the cave. These Long Tongue Fruit Bats and Insect Eater Bats are very im-

portant to the ecosystem of the island. Though this cave is no longer accessible to the public, it surely is interesting to learn more about the history of these caves and the Arawak tribes that resided or utilized them.

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



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Beaches for the whole family to enjoy!



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

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of Pos Chiquito. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big and small families to set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach

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

Boca Catalina in Malmok

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

PSA for off-roaders: Be careful when driving on rough terrains!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today recently received a message from a reader about the rough terrains and dirt roads on the northern side of the island, worried about how they may damage your car.

We at Aruba Today pride ourselves in enhancing your Aruba experience through informative articles about our history, culture and places you can visit. With this, we also want to make sure you take care of yourself and your loved ones.

You may encounter some dirt roads that have deep holes or cracks that can be damaging if you are traveling by (regular) car. These holes often occur after heavy rain or during the raining season, primarily because Aruba is a hilly island with a lot of downward streams, so rain water travels downward creating cracks and holes along the way.

For your own safety, please be advised to not drive on potentially dangerous terrains or dirt roads with deep holes if you are traveling by regular car. We advise you to rent a 4x4 vehicle instead or better yet, plan your off-roading trip with a tour guide who can provide proper vehicles and assistance. □





Article by Etnia Nativa

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Episode CCCLXIV - 366

Pandellis: From Lago Colony to Canvas

Long before Aruba became famous for tourism, the island was already inspiring artists. During the Lago refinery years, Aruba became a meeting place for different cultures and ideas, helping art grow on the island.

One important artist was Greek painter John Pandellis (1896–1965). Inspired by Aruba's landscapes, colors, light, and peaceful lifestyle, he created evocative paintings of the island.

In the 1950s, Pandellis settled with his family in San Nicolas. Inspired by his surroundings, he began offering art lessons to local residents.

The community responded with great enthusiasm.

The Lago Colony, home to many refinery employees and their families, became an important space where these lessons could take place. By opening its doors to art classes, the Colony provided something more than a physical location: it created an opportunity for residents to encounter painting, develop their talents, and discover a form of expression that would remain with some of them for the rest of their lives. For many students, these were their first steps into the world of art.

They gathered around Pandellis, watching carefully as he demonstrated his techniques and translated Aruba's landscapes onto canvas. His students were captivated by his ability to transform familiar places into poetic scenes filled with color, atmosphere, and emotion.

Some of those students would eventually become artists themselves.

The significance of Pandellis' classes went far beyond the lessons themselves. He introduced people who had never painted before to the discipline and pleasure of artistic creation. Some students developed



their own careers, while others built private collections that remain treasured family possessions today.

These paintings are more than beautiful objects. They are fragments of a particular Aruba—a time when oil arrived from Lake Maracaibo, the Lago refinery dominated the landscape of San Nicolas, and a diverse community of workers and families created a unique social environment on the island.

Through Pandellis, a new generation of Arubans discovered the world of art.

And then something remarkable happened: the inspiration was passed from one generation to another. Students who had learned from Pandellis inspired members of their own families. Children and grandchildren encountered the same passion for painting, allowing an artistic tradition that began with one visiting teacher to continue evolving long after his departure.

Pandellis' paintings remain particularly evocative because they capture more than scenery. His work conveys the feeling of Aruba itself—the Caribbean Sea in constant motion, the distinctive island light, the quietness of earlier decades, and the pastel colors that evoke a sense of memory and longing.

His paintings offer a window into an Aruba that can no longer be experienced in quite the same way.

Today, original works by John Pandellis continue to be sought after by collectors, and several of his paintings form part of the private collection of Etnia Nativa Aruba. Each work carries its own story, connecting artistic ex-

pression with the memories and experiences of the people who lived through that period.

The story of John Pandellis reminds us that Aruba's artistic history was shaped not only by professional artists, but also by ordinary residents who were given the opportunity to discover their own creativity.

The Lago Colony played an important role in Aruba's artistic history by providing space for Pandellis' art classes, where local residents discovered their talent and passion for painting. From those lessons grew paintings, private collections, family traditions, and an artistic legacy that continues across generations.

At Etnia Nativa Aruba, we believe that understanding Aruba means looking beyond its beaches to discover the people, traditions, encounters, and artistic influences that shaped the island. Our mission is to preserve, present, and celebrate Aruba's autochthonous Indigenous artistic and cultural heritage, while honoring the many influences that became part of its cultural story.

From Lago Colony to the canvas, from teacher to student, and from one generation to the next, Pandellis' influence remains part of Aruba's living cultural memory. □

Don't just visit Aruba—discover its soul. Follow Island-Insight for stories that reveal the island's deeper heritage, and reserve your mystical cultural experience with Etnia Nativa to connect with Aruba's ancestral spirit before your journey ends.

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etnianativa03@gmail.com



Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost

Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel



This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa

strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these

berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system.

Concomber chiquito



This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Concomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease

feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruba is Sopi di Pompuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 43 Staggering
1 Dominant
6 Crime outing
11 Illustrator Edward
12 Texas mission
13 Outcast
14 Prepares leftovers

DOWN

- 1 Candle count
2 Bagel topper
3 Straight-laced
4 Daughter of Leda
5 Pro votes
6 Cornfield cry
7 Nome native
8 Completely
9 Austen book
10 Optimistic
16 Holly-wood's Holbrook
18 Fork feature
19 Dupe
21 Orderly
23 Field yield
24 "Trinity" author
25 Quick look
27 Went by
30 "— not for me to say"
33 Craze
34 Work the checkout
35 Shredded
37 Pathetically small
39 City trains
41 Congress creation
42 Pod item

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38				39		40			41	42
43						44				
45						46				

A XYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

4-28

CRYPTOQUOTE

PXQ RDB BOCON WOI D RQH

XZ IOD TDNWO OBXQWA XN D

E X X M T X B W O B X Q W A I X

VQSI UO. — R.V. TOFSV

Cryptoquote: HARD TIMES
REQUIRE FURIOUS DANCING. EACH OF US IS
THE PROOF. — ALICE WALKER

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★

8/19

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★

8/18

Scientists discover how narwhals grow nature's only straight tusk

Paris, France

Narwhals have nature's only straight tusk, a single tooth up to three metres long so strange they were sold as magical unicorn horns during the Middle Ages.

The tusks have fascinated scientists ever since, but they have proven extremely difficult to study because these odd-looking, blubbery whales spend most of their lives under the Arctic ice. But on Tuesday, a large international team of researchers announced they had solved a long-running mystery about the tusks: how they get their uniquely spiralled yet arrow-straight form.

The left canine tooth of male narwhals grow through their jaw and upper lip, jutting out into the animal kingdom's only single tusk. Their right canine stays buried in their head. "Imagine that you had to ride on a bicycle with a broom strapped to your head," said Henrik Birkedal, the senior author of a study in Nature Communications describing the new discovery.

That is how it must feel for male narwhals to dive deep underwater, the chemist at Aarhus University in Denmark told AFP. Yet despite this huge "Monty Pythonesque" protuberance, the animals seem to get about just fine, he added.

To solve what they called the "narwhal tusk puzzle," the team of biologists, chemists and physicists used advanced 3D X-ray technology, including three European particle accelerators called synchrotrons.

The tusks are made out of two kinds of dental tissue: dentin on the inside, cementum on the outside. On a molecular level, the inner dentin forms a right-handed spiral while the outer cementum forms a left-handed spiral, the powerful X-ray scans revealed.

These two counter-acting forces give the tusks the



This handout photograph taken in August 2016 and obtained on August 18, 2026 from Greenland Institute of Natural Resources shows the tusk of a narwhal in Scoresby Sound fjord system near Iltoqqortoormiit, East Greenland.

straight structure that is so different to the curved tusks of other animals such as elephants.

"Imagine you turn a screw into a piece of wood, and with each turn, the screw penetrates deeper," Birkedal explained. Narwhal tusks are similar except the screw is pushing further out from the animal's head.

The scientists were also surprised to find growth layers similar to tree rings inside the tusks, which offer a glimpse into their lives that can last up to 80 years.

To conduct the research, they used tusks from museums as well as those collected by Greenland's indigenous Inuit people, who

hunt narwhals for food.

- But what are they for? -

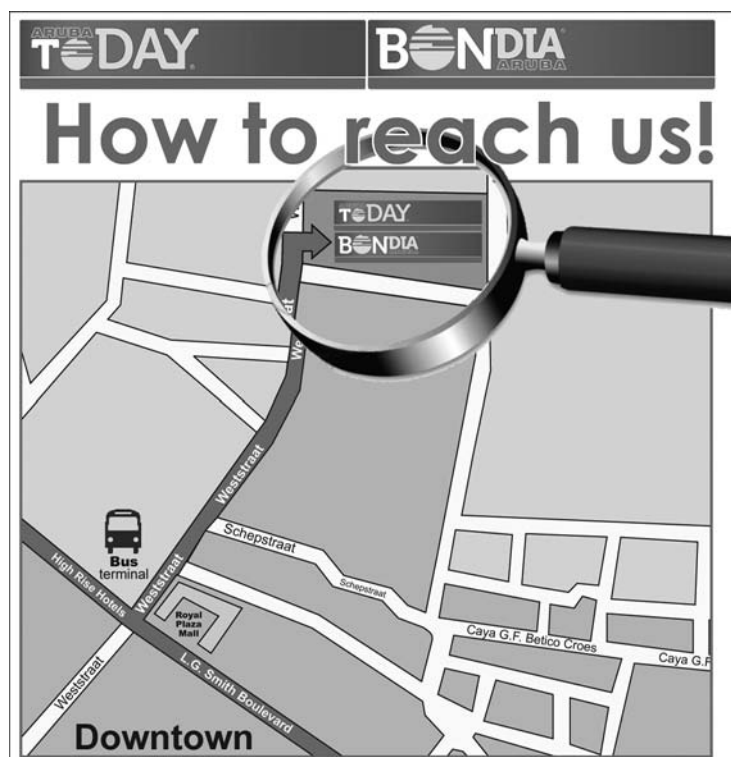
This was not the only lingering mystery about narwhal tusks. There has also been great debate between scientists about the exact purpose of the world's weirdest tooth.

There are several hypotheses, including that the whales use their tusks for hunting or to sense temperature and salinity in the water.

But the team behind the new paper believes these options are unlikely because tusks are almost exclusively grown by male narwhals and females would have needed them

also for these purposes.

Two males have been observed engaging in what appeared to be a tusk-measuring contest in front of a female, suggesting they could be used to establish dominance and impress a potential mate. □



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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

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Police	100
Police Oranjestad	527 3140
Police Noord	527 3200
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Police San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
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Child Abuse Prevention Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Meta hooked children and misled public: prosecutors

Oakland, United States

Meta hooked and exploited children, a federal court heard Tuesday in the trial of the social media giant on charges that it deliberately made Instagram and Facebook addictive to young users.

In what many experts have called social media's "big tobacco moment," a coalition of states are demanding Meta pay \$200 billion in penalties for using technology specifically designed to foster addiction among children in a similar fashion to cigarettes.

"Meta's business model can be summed up with four simple parts: hook the users, hold them for as long as they can, harvest their data, and then hide the truth from the public," California Deputy Attorney General Megan O'Neill told the court in opening arguments.

Meta "exploited how kids' brains work," she said.

The company has denied all the allegations, insisting it had worked with parents, experts and law enforcement to incorporate protective safeguards for chil-



From R, Lori Schott, Erin Popolo and Julianna Arnold speak to the press outside the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building & United States Courthouse in Oakland, California, on August 18, 2026, as opening arguments begin in the Meta trial over a lawsuit brought by U.S. states about social media addiction.

dren.

Meta founder and chief Mark Zuckerberg is among the star witnesses expected to testify, along with Instagram head Adam Mosseri. Outside the court, mothers of children who they say were driven to taking their own lives as a direct result of social media usage

called for Meta to be held to account.

"I have a message for Meta, Mark Zuckerberg and Adam Mosseri: You built one of those most powerful and richest companies in the world," said one mother, Lori Schott.

"But power does not excuse harm. Profits does not erase the responsibility of

big tech, and no company, no matter how wealthy, no matter how influential, no matter how untouchable it feels it is, should get to stand above the truth, the law, and our children," Schott said.

This is the first federal trial in what is expected to be a tidal wave of lawsuits also targeting Tiktok, Snapchat

and YouTube as families, educators and state governments charge them with harming the mental health of young people.

Meta, which has more than three billion users around the world, is on trial by itself in this case.

Meta "strongly disagrees" with the allegations in the trial, a spokesperson told AFP.

In addition to financial penalties, the states are demanding changes to Meta's apps to protect young users including limits to screen time.

Four states California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey are representing a coalition of 29 states that first sued Meta in 2023.

The charges are three-fold: that Meta lied to the public about how dangerous its apps are for minors; designed some features specifically to get them hooked and stay online, including screen time-limiting ones that are easy to get around; and gathered data on children under age 13 without parental

consent, in violation of federal law.

The trial is expected to last six weeks, with a verdict expected by October.

- 'Broader reckoning' -

While not the first case seeking to hold tech companies accountable for these types of issues, it could become one of the most consequential.

The case could be "the beginning of a broader reckoning" for Meta, Stanford law professor Nora Freeman Engstrom told AFP, especially if the company has to overhaul its two enormously popular products.

"The huge issue here is reputational harm" and being forced to make major changes, Vincent Joralemon, a director at Berkeley's Life Sciences Law and Policy Center, told AFP.

Experts see parallels with a three-decade-old settlement between dozens of US states and tobacco companies.□

OpenAI introduces 'ChatGPT for Teens' amid legal pressure

San Francisco, United States

OpenAI introduced a new version of its marquee ChatGPT chatbot Tuesday designed exclusively for teens, with stronger safeguards and monitoring, after facing criticism and legal complaints that it drove some users to suicide.

Dubbed "ChatGPT for Teens," the modified parameters automatically deploy for any user who registers as aged 13 to 17 or is detected to be underage by the company through usage patterns or account age.

Most of the safeguards utilized in the ChatGPT for

Teens model already existed for ChatGPT accounts belonging to minors, such as restrictions when dealing with content related to self-harm, violence, eating disorders and graphic sexuality.

The program also offers more frequent break reminders, blackout "quiet hours" and Study Mode, which responds to users with guiding questions instead of popping out direct answers "to help teens understand the material," according to OpenAI.

Other restrictions in the ChatGPT for Teens model include preventing the chatbot from suggesting it has personal feelings for the user or that it possesses its own consciousness, and some modalities such as voice mode are disabled.

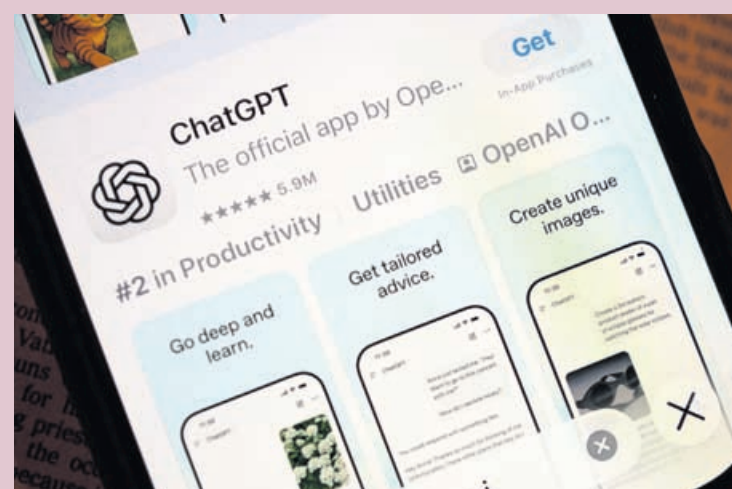
Parents are offered the

choice to link accounts with those of their teens, and to be alerted if there is discussion of some high-risk situations, such as self-harm or suicide.

Parental alerts are reviewed by human moderators, and specific details from chat logs are removed to protect privacy. The new teen mode comes amid mounting legal and regulatory pressure.

OpenAI faces several wrongful death lawsuits, including the parents of 16-year-old Adam Raine, a teenager who committed suicide allegedly using methods advised by ChatGPT.

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission has also launched an inquiry into AI chatbots that act as digital companions, focusing on potential risks to children and teenagers.□



The ChatGPT app by OpenAI is shown on March 03, 2026 in Chicago, Illinois.

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Jeanie Buss to fight siblings over sale of 17.8% stake in Lakers: reports

Los Angeles, United States

An attorney for Jeanie Buss says she will fight her siblings' plan to sell their 17.8% stake in the Los Angeles Lakers to former Disney chief executive Bob Iger's new majority ownership group, according to multiple media reports on Monday. The tale began with reports from The Athletic, ESPN, USA Today and Los Angeles outlets citing a Buss family statement after Iger and Joshua Kushner paid a record \$12.5 billion for the team last week from prior majority owner Mark Walter.

"We have decided as a family to sell the remaining Buss Family Trust shares to the Bob Iger group as part of the ongoing transaction," the family statement said.

"We love the Lakers, Laker fans and will continue to support Los Angeles; but it is time to use this opportunity to move on and exit gracefully while we still can."

But that was not the end of the story as a lawyer for



U.S. executive Jeanie Buss attends the premiere of Netflix's "Running Point," Season 2, at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood on April 15, 2026.

Jeanie Buss, a co-trustee in the family trust that holds the Lakers interest, wrote a letter to her siblings that was obtained by CNBC and ESPN.

Attorney Adam Streisand, representing Jeanie Buss, said in the letter to her five siblings that she has not agreed to sell the team

and any vote suggesting a sale "would be and is void" because her approval as one of three co-trustees, along with Joey and Janie Buss, is needed for such a move.

"Co-trustees are bound to vote to ensure that the minimum 15% ownership requirement is maintained in

order to ensure that Jeanie Buss may remain controlling owner," the letter said.

"Any attempt by the co-trustees to aid or abet the co-trustees as such, would constitute a breach of trust, breach of fiduciary duty and be in contempt of court." Jeanie Buss has been the Lakers' NBA gov-

ernor since 2013, taking over after the death of her father, Jerry Buss, and ESPN reported she was the only family member not to vote for the sale. She had a deal with Walter to remain as the team governor but after the sale of the family interest, she would not have the 15% stake needed to remain in that position.

"On behalf of Jeanie Buss, I demand that your clients make clear publicly that Jeanie Buss is the controlling owner of the Los Angeles Lakers and that your clients shall take no action on this supposed 'vote' to sell the 17.8% stake," the letter said. The Buss family sold a majority stake in the Lakers to Walter last year for \$10 billion, which was then the record for the largest sale of a US sports team.

Iger and Kushner would own about 83% of the Lakers provided the deal is approved by NBA club owners, a decision expected at an NBA board of governors meeting next month in New York. □

Vieira appointed Senegal head coach after World Cup disappointment

Dakar, Senegal

Senegal have appointed France's 1998 World Cup winner Patrick Vieira as head coach, the country's football federation announced Tuesday, succeeding Pape Thiaw who was dismissed after the World Cup.

The appointment of Vieira, who was born in Senegal, is a "strategic move", the federation said in a social media post, aiming to "establish a high-level technical staff, in line with our country's sporting ambitions". His main mission will be to revitalise the team after Senegal's bruising loss to Belgium in the last 32 of the World Cup.

Thiaw was sacked less than two weeks later. The 45-year-old former Senegal international had taken over as national team

boss in 2024.

The Senegalese Football Federation (FSF) president said at the time that toxicity had surrounded the team at the World Cup after Thiaw demanded a pay rise.

The Lions of Teranga had also suffered two defeats in the World Cup group stage, against France and Norway, before a 5-0 victory over Iraq secured their place in the knockout rounds.

The appointment of Vieira, who grew up in France starting at age eight, was ratified Monday, the FSF said.

The FSF's announcement on Facebook was accompanied by an image of Vieira smiling and the message "Welcome to Senegal, coach". □



Strasbourg's French head coach Patrick Vieira watches his players from the touchline during the French L1 football match between Olympique de Marseille (OM) and RC Strasbourg at the Velodrome stadium in Marseille, on January 12, 2024.

Williams sisters fall at Cincinnati while Zverev advances



Serena Williams and Venus Williams of the United States cool down after their match against Marta Kostyuk of Czechia and Peyton Stearns of the United States during day seven of the Cincinnati Open at the Lindner Family Tennis Center on August 17, 2026 in Mason, Ohio.

Cincinnati, United States

Serena and Venus Williams lost in their first doubles match together since 2022 while men's top seed Alexander Zverev battled into the fourth round on Monday at the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters.

The Williams sisters, with 14 Grand Slam titles and three Olympic gold medals together, were side-by-side for the first time since the 2022 U.S. Open but lost to American Peyton Stearns and Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-2, 1-6, 10-8.

"It was fun and special. We kicked off a little rust," Serena Williams said. "I didn't come here to win this tournament. It's about having fun and I did want to do the best I could."

German star Zverev, the reigning French Open champion, won his ATP season-best 46th match of the campaign by defeating Terrance Atmane 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (8/6).

Zverev finished the Frenchman, a 2025 Cincinnati semi-finalist, with a sizzling backhand down the line.

"He was playing incredibly aggressively, hitting forehands all over the court," Zverev said. "He made it difficult for you to play aggressive yourself."

Serena, 44, and Venus, 46, each lost serve once in the first set, dropping six of the final seven games, but dominated the second set and rallied from 8-2 down in the 10-point tie-breaker third set only to lose on a Venus double fault. "It was weird to be in a full stadium. This is not my usual Monday night," said Serena, who noted with the U.S. Open approaching that their reunion is a limited-time attraction.

"This is not forever. It's... not long," she said. "We don't have to play every week. It's a bit different."

Alexandra Eala, the 17th-seeded Filipina, lost to US ninth seed Amanda Anisimova, who recovered after losing a 65-minute opening set for a 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 victory.

The opener featured a 20-minute fifth game, with Eala, 21, coming back from a break down before Anisimova battled back.

Men's fifth seed Alex de Minaur battled through multiple rain interruptions to defeat Arthur Fery 7-5, 7-6 (7/3).

The Australian was up a set and 5-1 after a 30-minute stoppage before Wimbledon semi-finalist Fery caught fire, but he took the tie-break to advance despite 29 unforced errors.

"You never want to go into a rain delay leading 5-1," he said. "It was a tough day with all the interruptions. I can't remember a match that started and stopped so many times. I'm happy with how I found a way."

He next faces France's Arthur Fils, who dumped Czech ninth seed Jiri Lehecka 6-1, 6-7 (7/9), 6-3.

Spanish teen 12th seed Rafael Jodar dominated Alejandro Tabilo of Chile 6-2, 6-1 and next faces Roland Garros finalist Flavio Cobolli of Italy.

"A Masters 1000 is something I dreamed of as a kid," Jodar said. "I'm grateful for the position I'm in now."

Argentine Thiago Tirante, who ousted Novak Djokovic in the second round, defeated Spain's Martin Landaluce 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4).

Brazil's Joao Fonseca withdrew from the event with an abdominal injury.

- 'A crazy day' -

Two-time Grand Slam champion Elena Rybakina shook off two one-hour rain stoppages to beat Magdalena Frech 6-4, 7-6 (7/2).

"It was a crazy day, to be honest, coming out every time into clouds and humidity," Rybakina said. "I was on top of the ball in the tie-break but it was a difficult one."

There were also wins for Iga Swiatek and U.S. third seed Jessica Pegula. □

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