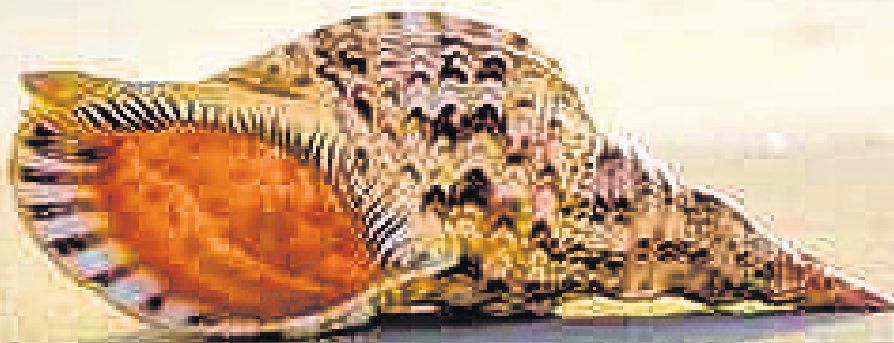




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Page 8



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U.S. Deputy State Department Spokesman Tommy Pigott speaks during a press briefing at the State Department in Washington, DC, on July 31, 2025.

U.S. to revoke visas of up to 200,000 asylum seekers

Washington, United States

The U.S. government plans to revoke the visas of foreigners who came to the country for tourism or business but sought to stay longer by applying for asylum, the State Department said Tuesday.

The crackdown marks another step in the Trump administration's signature drive to reduce immigration into the United States. The administration said it is now working with the Department of Homeland Security to identify and revoke the visas of people who, it said, came to America billing themselves as temporary visitors but then applied for asylum so they could stay permanently.

"Obtaining a visa in order to seek asylum is fraud which is grounds for visa revocation," State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said in a statement that confirmed press reports about the new policy. The White House, in a post

on X, suggested "up to two hundred thousand visas" would be affected and claimed it would be the "largest mass visa revocation in history."

The State Department neither confirmed nor denied that number. Pigott said, "The number of revocations remains dynamic and will be done on a rolling basis."

Early this month the department said that since President Donald Trump returned to power in January 2025, some 175,000 foreigners had seen their U.S. visas revoked on grounds ranging from criminal offenses, including driving under the influence, to praising the killing of the right-wing activist Charlie Kirk.

The administration also recently revoked the visas of Mexican officials, including the son of the former president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. This prompted a complaint from the current

president, Claudia Sheinbaum.

Trump, who won reelection in large part on his promise to fight illegal immigration, has expelled huge numbers of people who were in the country without proper residence papers.

But he has also worked to restrict the entry of foreigners who do go by the rules and has gone after those who overstay their visas after they expire.

Some of these measures have been challenged and curtailed by the courts. Last Friday a federal judge struck down a government ban on visas to nationals from 75 countries who wish to settle in the country indefinitely. These countries included Afghanistan, Brazil, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, Thailand and Yemen.

The Trump administration is also planning to expand vetting of the social media accounts of visa applicants. □



Scaffolding and a large protective tarp is covering part of the facade of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, on August 13, 2026.

Trump raises prospect of demolishing iconic Kennedy Center

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump's administration suggested Tuesday that the Kennedy Center in Washington could be demolished if courts block his plans to overhaul the performing arts landmark.

The extraordinary warning came in a Justice Department filing opposing efforts by Democrats to halt a two-year renovation and to prevent Trump's name being prominently added to the building.

The filing does not say there is a plan to demolish the complex. But it argues that without Trump's restoration and fundraising efforts, it would become increasingly hazardous to visit until it had to be torn down.

"Without those efforts, the center will deteriorate further into an unsafe, decrepit structure that will be required to be taken down," Justice Department attorney Brantley Mayers wrote.

He suggested the site could then house a large outdoor amphitheater overlooking the Potomac River, acknowledging that this would "fail to adequately honor" slain president John F. Kennedy but would be cheaper to build and maintain.

The demolition warning marks an escalation in a bitter battle over one of the best-known cultural institutions in the United States.

The filing described the venue as "structurally unsound, fundamentally unsafe, and embarrassing to the nation's capital" and portrayed Trump as uniquely capable of rescuing it.

Justice Department lawyers said Trump's administration had secured \$258 million from Congress for restoration and attracted a new donor base, arguing that recognition of the president was essential to keeping contributors on board. Trump's handpicked Kennedy Center board recently voted to place the words "Restored and Renovated by President Donald J. Trump" beneath the institution's name and to rename its surrounding site the "President Donald J. Trump Plaza." □

Trump veers from boredom to denial after six months of Iran war

Washington, United States

At an impromptu press conference last week, U.S. President Donald Trump waxed lyrical about his helipad, his ballroom and his granite paving stones. The one thing he barely mentioned? The Iran war. Six months after launching what he expected to be a lightning offensive, Trump appears bored or even in denial about the conflict as it puts a drag on his second presidency.

"Right now, the situation is so good," Trump replied when asked about Iran, after leading reporters on a tour of the White House's South Lawn to show off his latest renovations. During the 36-minute event, Trump used the word "granite" 13 times and the word "Iran" just three.

But the war, in which at least 18 U.S. service members have died and more than 750 were wounded, according to Pentagon figures, has become a millstone around Trump's neck. Thousands more have died in Iran and Lebanon.

U.S. voters are angry about the war's knock-on effect on the cost of living and crucial midterm elections are around the corner. Even his MAGA fans are questioning why the man who vowed to start no new foreign wars has got America into another quagmire with no apparent plan to get out of it.

"Is there a rabbit in the hat? No, I think the hat is empty," William Galston, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, told AFP.

- 'Very boring' -

Trump's public approval ratings have fallen since his return to office in 2025, and the drop accelerated after the United States and Israel went to war with Iran on February 28.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted on August 14-17 found that his approval rating had fallen to 33 percent, the lowest of his current term. Other major surveys also show Trump deep



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks with Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen (L) and Secretary of Education Linda McMahon (R) while giving a tour of the White House helipad construction on the South Lawn of the White House after an event in the Rose Garden of the White House on August 24, 2026 in Washington, DC.

into in negative territory.

For Trump, Iran was meant to be a quick win like the U.S. capture of Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro in January. In an telephone interview with AFP after the announcement of a ceasefire in April, Trump declared "total and complete victory."

But as the truce collapsed and Iran refused to bow to him, Trump has veered from military to economic pressure, just as his justifications for starting the war have changed from regime change to ensuring Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon.

Then as Iran has kept its grip on the Strait of Hormuz a pressure point that only came into play after Trump started the war the 80-year-old has become first frustrated, and then disinterested.

"Frankly, I thought they started to get very boring," Trump said of the sputtering Iran talks as far back as June.

Garret Martin, a foreign policy expert at American University, said Trump "famously has a short attention span."

"He was convinced that he could repeat a little bit what happened with Venezuela, a rapid show of

force," Martin told AFP. "I think now he's in a position where there is no easy exit."

- 'Reckless war' -

While Trump prefers to talk about the \$400 million ballroom he is trying to build and puts his name on public buildings in Washington, voters are still thinking about Iran.

"I think it's completely unnecessary, and that it was a reckless war, and I think it's going very badly," said Joe Plenzler, a U.S. Marine for 20 years.

"The impact on the American consumer has gone up tremendously," he said, adding that there was growing dissatisfaction in the rural, normally Republican area of Virginia where he lives. □

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U.S. country music legend Dolly Parton dies at 80

Washington, United States

Dolly Parton, the American country music singer who rose from poverty in Tennessee to become a US cultural giant with hits like "Jolene" and "9 to 5," has died at 80, her family said Tuesday.

"Dolly has lived in the light and is in the arms of Jesus," her nephew Bryan Seaver said in a video on social media.

He said the multiple award-winning artist had "opened doors for generations of singers, songwriters, musicians, and dreamers from every walk of life."

The family did not give a cause of death, but the singer-songwriter also an actress, philanthropist and powerful businesswoman had spoken about her recent ill health. Her husband Carl Dean died last year.

Tributes quickly poured in for Parton, who won 10 Grammys and 13 Academy of Country Music (ACM) awards during her long career.

The ACM hailed her "un-



U.S. singer Dolly Parton performs onstage during the 61st Annual Grammy Awards on February 10, 2019, in Los Angeles.

mistakable voice, unforgettable songs, generosity and larger-than-life spirit."

"Her music will live on, carrying her voice and her story forward for generations to come," it said.

The news sparked a rare moment of unity in a coun-

try often bitterly at odds over Donald Trump's presidency, the war against Iran and cultural issues.

Trump ordered the lowering of American flags to half-staff across the United States for a week for Parton, calling her passing a "true loss for millions of people."

"There has never been anyone like her, and never will," Trump posted on his Truth Social network.

Democratic Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer wrote simply: "Rest in peace, Dolly Parton a true legend and force for good."

May her memory be a blessing."

Lily Tomlin, Parton's co-star in the 1980 film "9 to 5" posted a black and white picture of the two of them decades earlier, captioning it simply: "No words".

- A world 'less sparkly' -

Parton lived her entire adult life in the heart of Americana, folk and country music. The day after graduating from high school, she struck out for the country music capital Nashville.

By 1967, at age 21, she was among the most recognized figures in American music, having joined Porter Wagoner's syndicated country music television show that broadcast her voice and face into millions of US homes.

During a prolific career that spanned six decades, Parton penned some 3,000 tunes.

They included "Coat of Many Colors," the soundtrack smash hit "9 to 5" and the iconic ballad "I Will Always Love You," which became an international success for Whitney Houston.

Releasing 49 studio albums and more than 100 compilation and collaboration albums, she earned the title of "queen of country music."

"By her example, we believed that anything was possible. She never saw a door she couldn't open, and the doors she opened made and changed history," her nephew said.

Never one to downplay her striking looks, Parton essentially wrote the book on how a woman can rule the airwaves in a male-dominated industry, ultimately becoming an American treasure with songs covered by the likes of Shania Twain, Sinéad O'Connor and the White Stripes.

"Instant Sainthood," White wrote on Instagram. Last year, Parton postponed a series of Las Vegas concerts, citing ongoing health concerns. In May, she canceled them altogether, sparking new fears. □

'Shocking' book about Putin's private life wins French literary prize

Strasbourg, France

A taboo-breaking book about Vladimir Putin's rise to power and private life, written by two exiled Russian journalists, won a newly established French literary prize on Tuesday.

The book, titled "The Tsar in Propria Persona: How Vladimir Putin Deceived Us All", draws on more than two

decades of investigative reporting by journalists Roman Badanin and Mikhail Rubin. The work won a newly established literary award called the Prix Strasbourg awarded by EBRA, France's largest regional newspaper group, and its parent company, Credit Mutuel Alliance Federale. The book is due to be

published in France next month.

It reads "like a spy novel", the jury said, describing the book as a "fascinating and shocking work about a figure who is himself fascinating and shocking".

"It is the result of several hundred interviews with witnesses, some of whom later disappeared under tragic circumstances."

Badanin is the founder and editor-in-chief of Proekt, an investigative media outlet created in 2018.

Both Badanin and Rubin, his deputy at Proekt, live in the United States after coming under pressure in Russia.

Badanin said the authors wanted foreigners to read the book and learn "actual facts" about Putin and the system he had built.

"The message we wanted to convey with this book is as follows: there is no

need to invent anything about Putin. Instead, learn how things really are. That is horrifying enough," he told AFP. "Only a genuine understanding of the facts can help us make sound assessments, respond effectively, and plan for the future of relations between nations."

When the book's Russian edition was published last year, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) said that Badanin and Rubin broke a Kremlin-imposed taboo about Putin's private life "at great personal risk".

The book "contrasts the official image of the Russian president, now in his 26th year in power, as a leading defender of traditional values against Western decadence with the reality of his private life where extramarital affairs, nepotism, and connections to organised crime reign". □



In this pool photograph distributed by the Russian state agency Sputnik, Russia's President Vladimir Putin, accompanied by Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, meets with Indian Foreign Minister in Moscow on August 24, 2026.

Rohingya refugees protest dire conditions in Bangladesh camps



Rohingya refugees take part in the 'Genocide Remembrance Day' rally to mark the anniversary of their mass exodus from Myanmar following a military crackdown, at a refugee camp in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar on August 25, 2026.

Bangladesh

Tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh's sprawling camps protested against dire conditions on Tuesday, as they marked nine years since a military crackdown drove them out of neighbouring Myanmar.

More than 1.2 million Rohingya refugees, many of whom fled Myanmar dur-

ing the brutal crackdown in 2017, live in about 30 overcrowded camps in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, the world's largest refugee settlement.

Refugee group the United Council of Rohingya (UCR) said it organised the rally to "remember the atrocities committed" and highlight the "ongoing humanitarian crisis".

The protesters held placards, some reading "Justice for Rohingya, Hope is Home" and "Timely justice is our right".

Sayed Ullah, president of the UCR, said the refugees were desperate to return home.

"We can't keep waiting for the international community to facilitate our return,"

he told AFP. "We will do whatever it takes to ensure our safe return home."

Sabikunnahar, 32, who fled to Bangladesh in 2017, said memories remained painful.

"Beheading our near and dear ones, setting fire to our homes and evicting us from our land the military occupied our land around nine years ago," she said.

"On this day, my heart gets torn apart. Look at my eyes they are still wet with tears for my country."

Conditions in the camps have deteriorated with funding cuts and reduced food rations, aid agencies say. Children make up more than half the population.

"An entire generation of children is growing up in exile," said Golam Mostofa, who heads the charity Save the Children in the camps.

"Yet instead of seeing progress towards safety, rights and a lasting solution, families are facing worsening hunger, fewer opportunities and deepening uncertainty about their future," he added.

One in three refugees is

expected to face "crisis" hunger levels or worse between September and December, according to Save the Children.

- 'No hope' -

Moulovi Abdus Salam, 41, who arrived in Bangladesh last year, said his family fled after gunmen "raped our women, killed my brothers and looted my shop".

Salam said life in Bangladesh has brought new hardships, with food rations covering "a maximum of 20 days".

"We don't want the life of a refugee," he said, questioning whether a proposed repatriation process would guarantee Rohingya rights and safety.

"My request to the international community is to create the conditions for us to return home."

Growing desperation has driven some refugees to attempt dangerous sea journeys.

Sikandar, 75, who arrived in Bangladesh in 2017, said there was "no hope" of a safe return to Myanmar.

"They tortured us, raped our women and killed many of our relatives," he said. □

Facebook, TikTok promoted Colombian armed groups' content to recruit children: HRW

Bogotá, Colombia

Facebook and TikTok failed to prevent the spread of content produced by Colombian armed groups to recruit children and in some cases even "appeared to promote these posts," Human Rights Watch reported on Monday.

HRW said the circulation of social media content by armed groups "glorifies life in armed group ranks" and promotes "deceptive job offers."

Since 2021, around 1,500 children have been recruited by armed groups, according to the non-governmental organization.

Armed groups use children for combat, handling weapons, drones and explosives, and intelligence gathering, the HRW report said.

In some cases, children

without combat training are used as "cannon fodder," it said.

"Digital platforms must recognize that they are being used for the recruitment of children" which means they are being used to commit crimes, "including committing war crimes," HRW Americas director Juanita Goebertus told a press conference in Bogotá. According to the report, almost half of child recruits are Indigenous children, despite Indigenous people only representing around four percent of the population.

Girls account for around 40 percent of child recruits, and are "particularly exposed to sexual violence." In the report, HRW described social media posts showing members of armed groups flaunting

wads of cash and jewelry. In other posts, they appear in training camps or listening to "narcocorridos" a Mexican music genre which celebrates the exploits of infamous drug traffickers.

"What armed groups do really well on social media is to sell a lifestyle," Mathew Charles, founder of the Mi Historia foundation which works with child victims of conflict, told reporters.

They project "tough-guy masculinity" and the possibility of earning "easy money," he said, calling on the state and other NGOs to combat "these lies and create counter-narratives."

HRW said dissident groups that emerged from the now-defunct Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have been



Juanita Goebertus, Director of the Americas Division at Human Rights Watch, speaks during the presentation of 'I thought I would never see my mom again', a report on the recruitment and use of children by armed groups, in Bogotá on August 24, 2026.

responsible for 74 percent of child recruitment cases documented between 2021 and 2025.

HRW said it had informed Meta, Facebook's parent company, and TikTok's owner ByteDance of the

problem. Both said they had removed the specific content mentioned.

Meta said it "constantly strives to refine (its) approach to combating" child recruitment efforts across its platforms. □

Ukrainians seeking beauty in a bomb-scarred city

Izium, Ukraine

The Ukrainian city of Izium has been splintered by Russian bombs but 21-year-old Violetta Dezhyna's job is to find beauty in those broken places and help keep the city alive, even as Russia advances once more.

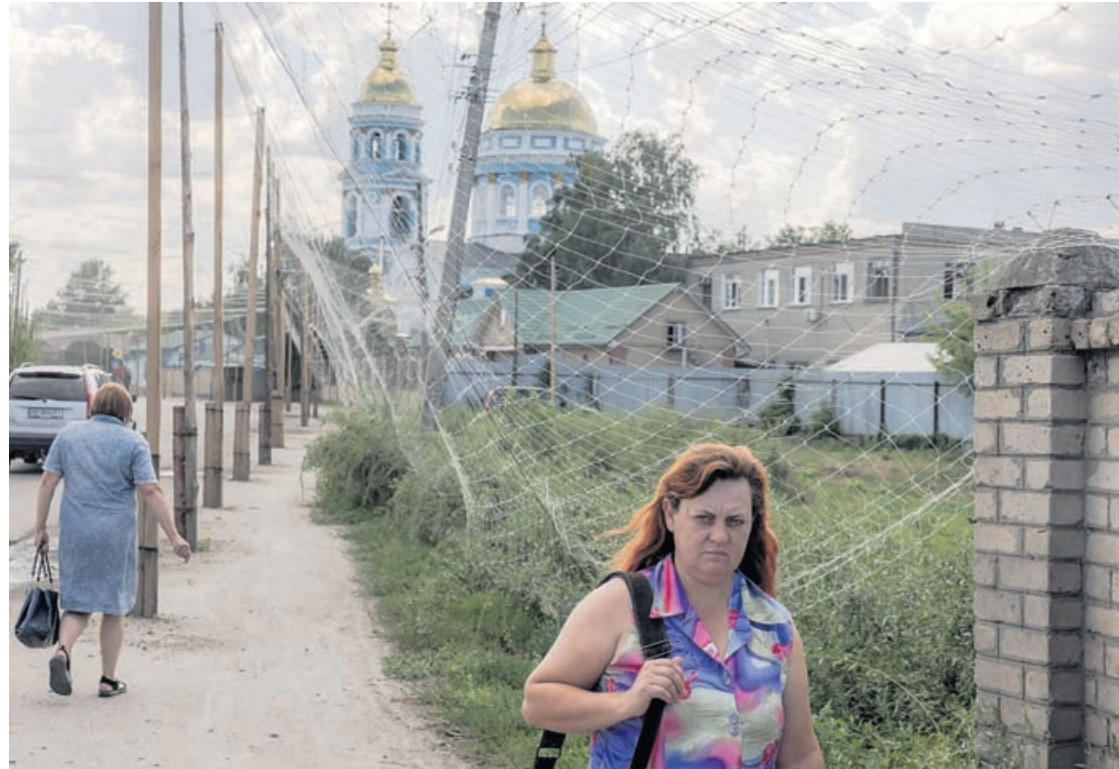
In dusty streets teeming with men in camouflage and scattered with wrecked military vehicles she scours for scenes of normality to post on the city social media pages.

Pruned flowerbeds stand in front of gutted and mangled apartment blocks.

"Here the buildings are destroyed, not pretty. Here, it seems, there's a fountain, but on the other side there's a ruined building," said Dezhyna, who works for the local administration.

"I try to find angles where those things aren't visible." Russia's army captured Izium, the gateway to Ukraine's eastern Donbas region a key target for Russian President Vladimir Putin at the start of its 2022 invasion, occupying it for six months before Ukraine retook control.

The majority of Izium's pre-invasion population of 45,000 came back after Russian troops were pushed back some 60 kilometers



Pedestrians walk along a road covered with anti-drone nets with the Holy Ascension Cathedral in the background, in the town of Izium, in the eastern Kharkiv region on July 22, 2026, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

(36 miles) in a lightning Ukrainian counter-offensive in autumn 2022.

Dezhyna, then a teenager, returned with her family to help "rebuild" the wounded city.

But the battles have left deep scars on Izium and its residents both physical and psychological.

Months of grinding advances have brought the Russian troops to within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of

Izium again.

And Dezhyna is watching many of her young friends leave once more.

- Lip gloss and anti-drone nets -

To be around people and feel a sense of community, she frequents the local gym.

Hidden in the basement of a supermarket, the thick smell of sweat hangs heavy in the air as she pushes

weights alongside bearded muscle-men.

In between sets, she chats casually with soldiers and their wives many more than twice her age.

Over the echo of nearby explosions, they sometimes play beach volleyball near the river "the most beautiful place in town".

Back in the office, cracks in the walls and aluminum tape over the windows to stop glass shards flying into

the building in case of an explosion reveal the constant danger faced by those in the city.

Another worker also a young woman took out a small mirror, applied lip gloss then lifted her eyes to the window: taking in the sight of anti-drone nets that engulf the city's buildings and roads.

- Violins and sirens -

In another official building across town, violin notes mixed with air raid sirens.

Tamara Georgina, 58, was preparing the room for an upcoming wedding.

"This is resistance ... to spite the enemy. We work, we live, we show that we're not surrendering. This is our town and we're rebuilding it," she told AFP.

Behind her the groom, a soldier, quickly answered his phone.

An incoming missile.

"It's not heading to us," he muttered.

The ceremony can begin. Residents say many buildings in the city are "marked" a term meaning they are a known target for the Russian army.

They include many places where young people typically gather, like the city's Palace of Culture. □

Liberia received fewer U.S. deportees after some refused to disembark

Monrovia, Liberia

Only 15 out of 20 migrants who were deported from the United States and sent to Liberia last week disembarked, according to gov-

ernment sources in the west African country, which has agreed to accept a large number of deportees.

Liberia is the latest African nation to take in migrants

the United States cannot legally send home, who are being deported under President Donald Trump's contested immigration crackdown.

A week ago, the impoverished west African country said it would receive up to 1,200 foreign nationals deported from the United States, with a first group of 20 slated to land last Thursday.

However, a Liberian government source confirmed to AFP Monday that five passengers refused to disembark from the plane.

Speaking to reporters Tuesday, Liberian Information Minister Jerolinmek Matthew Piah said only that the five "were not given to us; we are not the ones to

explain what happened to them".

According to U.S. media, the five were ultimately sent to Equatorial Guinea. Washington has expelled at least 50 people, mostly Africans, to Equatorial Guinea since November. It and Ghana have become key transit points in the U.S. immigration crackdown even with the authorities there quickly sending people onwards to their home counties.

Liberia said last week the deportees would be "free to depart the country when they so desire" or apply for asylum.

The Liberian government has previously stated it "has not demanded or re-

ceived any compensation or promise of rewards in exchange for its consent to participate" in the deportee transfers, a point which Piah repeated again Tuesday.

However, the New York Times reported that the United States made a \$5 million payment to Liberia, according to documents, approved by the State Department in response to Liberia's commitment to consider accepting the deportees.

Piah said Tuesday that the government of Liberia "will not spend a dime on anything related to the 1,200 persons who are to come" and that "that is being taken care of by the United States government". □



The Eastern Airline plane carrying migrants deported from the US, taxis at the Roberts International Airport in Harbel, some 56 km outside of Liberia's capital of Monrovia, on August 20, 2026.



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The stories of "Compa Nanzi"

(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as "Compa Nanzi". Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, "Compa Nanzi" is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the "new world" by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean.

The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king

One day Nanzi was taking a stroll near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in.

Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice.

Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! "Soldiers, get him!" he commanded.

Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

"Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!" the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?

"Compadre, listen here!" Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. "What is this?"

"Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see," Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. "Let me see!" he said.

"Well if you must insist," Nanzi said, "I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second." The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's



hat and starting walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: "This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago." That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. "Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?"

"I was, Your Majesty," Nanzi replied. But you know what; there are so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones," Nanzi told the king.

"What is that you say?" the king was intrigued. "I want to see it too!"

The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's throne and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king. □

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.



Why You Should Not Miss Aruba's Free City Center Street Car Tour



(Oranjestad)—Aruba's City Center Street Car – or as we call it in Dutch; “Tram van Oranjestad” – is a single track tram line in Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba. It was inaugurated on 22 December 2012, being the first and so far the only passenger rail service on Aruba and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean.

There are two trolleys, a single-deck one with 42 seats and a double-decker with 64 seats. The line was inspired by the popular battery-powered streetcar operation at the Grove in Los Angeles, USA. Aruba's streetcars are powered by hydrogen fuel cells, which are charged by the island's year-round trade winds.

Caya Betico Croes, mostly referred to as our “main street” has been developed into a pollution-free pedestrian mall. The double-decker offers you a 360 degree view of the downtown area with a picture perfect scenery of the island's clear blue skies. Who would not enjoy a ride on this beautiful and naturally air-conditioned vehicle? The tour consists of a total of 9 stops approximately 200 meters apart from each other; all stops are clearly

marked. The tram will bring you close to different museums, historical plazas, monuments, the Protestant church, Aruba's high-end mall, retail shops, and a variety of local and international cuisine restaurants. The “I love Aruba” trademark also belongs to that list. The third stop on the route is close to a 5-minute walk to the famous Renaissance Marina showcasing luxurious yachts and Aruba's blue waters.

The “Tram van Oranjestad” starts from a balloon loop near the Port of Call and serves the downtown area and ends at Plaza Nicky. The first ride starts at 10:00 am sharp with intervals of 25 minutes. The last trolley departs from the cruise port at 5:00 pm. Don't miss this tour of the beautiful Aruba's City Center – it is free for all! □

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

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

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

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

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



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Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book,



The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sa-

cred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed.

It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

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.

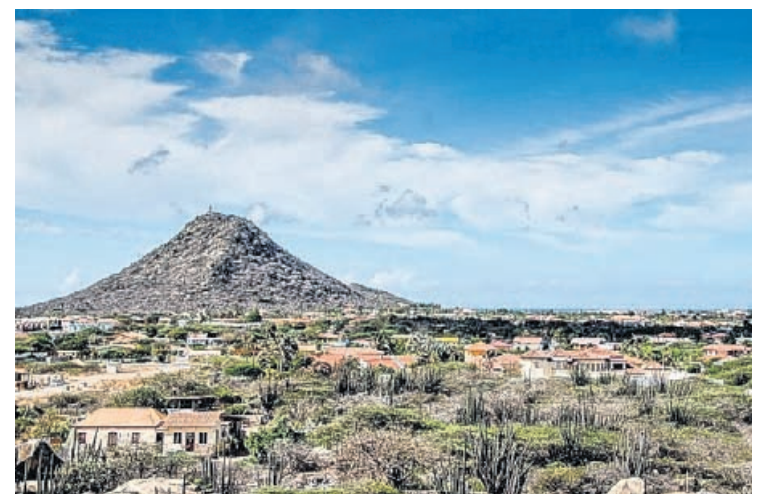
The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase

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. □





Article by Etnia Nativa

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Episode CCCLXVII- (367)

Aruba: From a Mud Track to the World – Part I

Through its cultural column, Island Insight, Etnia Nativa invites readers to discover Aruba from a perspective through a different periscope exploring and discover the island's rich intangible cultural heritage—historical traditions, knowledge, and practices passed down from generation to generation. In this episode, we begin the story of Aruba's air connections to the outside world and recounts how the island's trail from a modest mud track led to its connection with the world air traffic of today.

Before the roar of modern jet engines became part of Aruba's daily soundscape, and before thousands of visitors passed through Queen Beatrix International Airport each day, air travel on the island began with something far more modest: a rough stretch of ground, small aircrafts, and a vision that Aruba could be connected to the outside world by air.

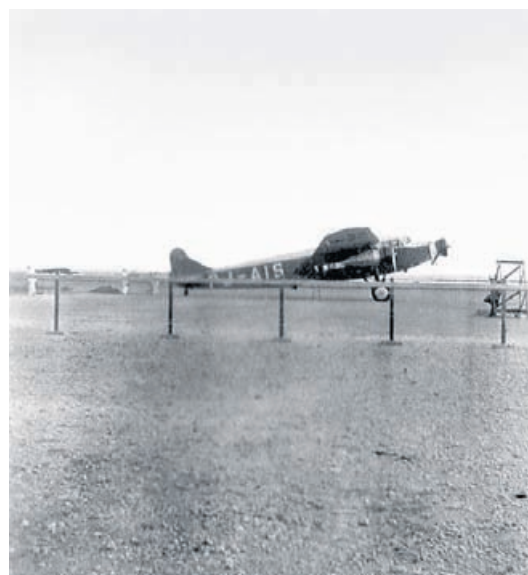
Today, it is easy to take Aruba's international air connections for granted. Aircraft arrive from North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe, carrying tourists, business travelers, families, and residents. But Aruba's aviation story began nearly a century ago, when the idea of an airport was still a bold proposition.

In the early 1930s, Lieutenant Governor Wagemaker recognized the importance of establishing an airfield on Aruba. Plans were developed for an airport in the Dakota area, on government land that had previously been used for aloe cultivation. Older maps identify the area as Baca Morto, a name that translates roughly as "dead cow."

What followed would change Aruba forever.

In 1934, businessman Manuel Viana and the Caribbean Flying Service launched a weekly air service between Aruba and Curaçao. The aircraft carried both passengers and mail, linking the island by air at a time when aviation was still in its infancy.

Then came a name that would become deeply inter-



KLM Fokker XVIII
on tarmac at Dakota Field Aruba
early 1930's

twined with Aruba's aviation history: KLM.

On December 24, 1934, KLM's famous Fokker F.XVIII Snip landed in Aruba. The aircraft had already made aviation history with its pioneering transatlantic journey from Amsterdam to the Caribbean. Its arrival marked the beginning of a new chapter in the island's aviation history.

Regular KLM service between Aruba and Curaçao began in January 1935. The airline later moved from the primitive mudflat landing area to a graded runway called KLM Field, at the site that would become associated with Dakota Airport. For a small Caribbean island, this marked the beginning of a new connection with the world. In 1937, an air-traffic radio station was established, along with the island's first passenger-handling building, reflecting aviation's rapid growth in Aruban life.

But history soon gave the airport a far more serious role.

When the Second World War reached the Caribbean, German U-boats threatened shipping routes and attacked regional oil supply tankers. Aruba's strategic importance grew because of its large oil industry stationed near vital Caribbean shipping lanes.

In 1942, the United States Army Air Forces began using the airfield to defend Caribbean shipping and the Panama Canal against German submarines. The island population contributed and the government bought



two war planes and constructed a 5,100-foot airstrip and the facilities, while the installation became known as Dakota Airport. The U.S. Sixth Air Force remained until the military presence ended in 1945.

Thus, an airport that began with mail and a handful of passengers became part of the defense of the Western Hemisphere.

After the war, aviation returned to civilian use, but the airport was no longer simply a landing field.

A new terminal opened on March 18, 1950. Major runway and taxiway improvements followed in the early 1950s. By 1954, a new 6,445-foot lighted runway and parallel taxiway had significantly improved the airport's capabilities.

Then came a royal connection. On October 22, 1955, Dakota Airport was officially dedicated to Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands during a royal visit. Prince Bernhard conducted the opening ceremony. When Beatrix became Queen of the Netherlands in 1980, the airport's name evolved into the Queen Beatrix International Airport as known today.

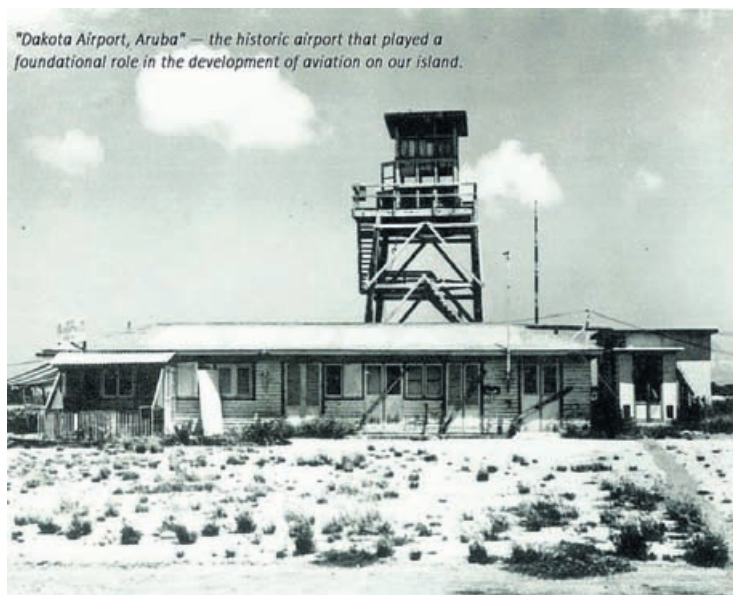
The name change symbolized something much larger: Aruba itself was changing.

Part II of our look at Aruba's air connections is coming in our next weekly post. Stay tune!

Don't just visit Aruba—discover its soul. Journey into the island's ancestral heritage with Etnia Nativa and experience the stories, culture, and spirit that make Aruba truly unique

Book your visit today:

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"Dakota Airport, Aruba" — the historic airport that played a foundational role in the development of aviation on our island.

Aruban snacks and where to find them



ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a “kroket,” which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the “bitterbal”.

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks,

which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find them at local bakeries all over the island. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing “batido”? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batidos along the flea market downtown.

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

- Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
- Along the main road next to the airport field.
- At the California Light House.



- At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert “cocada” or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can



always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them! □

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



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

Pineapple

Pineapple has more uses than topping it on your Christmas ham. According



to elders, the skin of a pineapple is great to use to refresh your body. Clean the skin thoroughly and make tea or warapa* with it. It is said that this tea can also be drank after an operation on the ovaries or uterus. This gets rid of irritation and inflammation.

Arrowroot

Arrowroot is native to tropical America and can be sold as a powder or whole. It is said that you can take arrowroot powder and make a “shalup” (porridge)

for stomach pain or when you're feeling weak. You can make it with milk too, but it is advised to best use just water. You can also add prunes for a bit of sweetness. Arrowroot shalup is also good to treat an unhealthy gut or for diarrhea.

To make arrowroot shalup, boil a bit of water and add one tablespoon of arrowroot powder and stir continuously until you reach porridge consistency. If you make a shalup with milk, add a pinch of salt. Raw

arrowroot powder can be used to powder babies.

Eggplant/Aubergine

Eggplants, or aubergines, are easy to find in supermarkets around the world and can be grown all year round on the island. Related to potato and tomato, eggplants are good to calm nerves. It can also be used to lower blood pressure, by steeping its leaves in boiled water and drinking it. You can also make eggplant juice to help purify your blood. However, do make



sure to drink slowly; let it mix with your spit and then swallow.

Eggplant kataplan* can also be used to treat skin tumors, abscesses and hemorrhoids. Eggplant kataplan can also be used externally to treat arthritis. □

*warapa: term referring to a water and sugar solution, a.k.a simple syrup.

*kataplan: porridge-like mixture used externally for wounds or parts of the body that are painful or swollen.

CROSSWORD

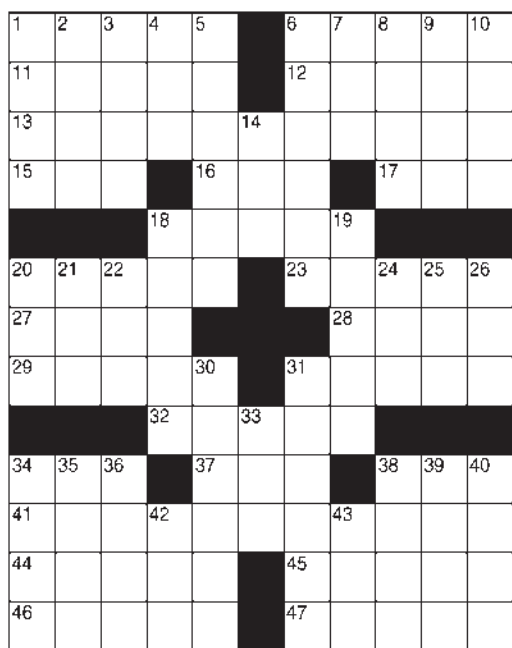
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Puts in the oven
6 Exams
11 River bend
12 Snow house
13 Led to opportunities
15 Morse bit
16 Calendar box
17 Court
18 Disgusted
20 Kyoto setting
23 Plumbing conduits
27 Full range
28 Battery unit
29 Yard plus a bit
31 Snug
32 Express stop
34 Cart puller
37 Taxi
38 Debt note
41 United in the face of a challenge
44 Less
45 Find charming
46 Borders
47 Sub sounder

DOWN

- 1 Car part
2 Trade fair
3 Aid illegally
4 Shipping weight
5 Stockholm setting
6 Neaten the room
7 Sense of self
8 Leisurely
9 Matador's foe
10 Mediocre
14 Pop
18 Disconcerted
19 Turning point
20 Traffic snarl
21 Had lunch
22 Cook's need
24 Small dog, for short
25 Middle-earth resident
26 Pig's digs
30 School break
31 Hooded snakes
33 Spot to jot
34 Peak
35 Glided
36 Musical number
38 Privy to
39 Gumbo vegetable
40 Manipulative one
42 Take to court
43 Foofaraw



5-9

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.

5-9 CRYPTOQUOTE

ANN SYPF XZKS, DB AYJU
RUUDR AYSU NPU ANPF
NXRMZKAU TZKU, CYMW DU ZR
MWU K WYUJ NXRMZKAU.
— LZKS OZZT

Cryptoquote: TO DESCRIBE MY MOTHER WOULD BE TO WRITE ABOUT A HURRICANE IN ITS PERFECT POWER. — MAYA ANGELOU

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through

Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★

8/26

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★

8/25

Scientists discover how narwhals grow nature's only straight tusk



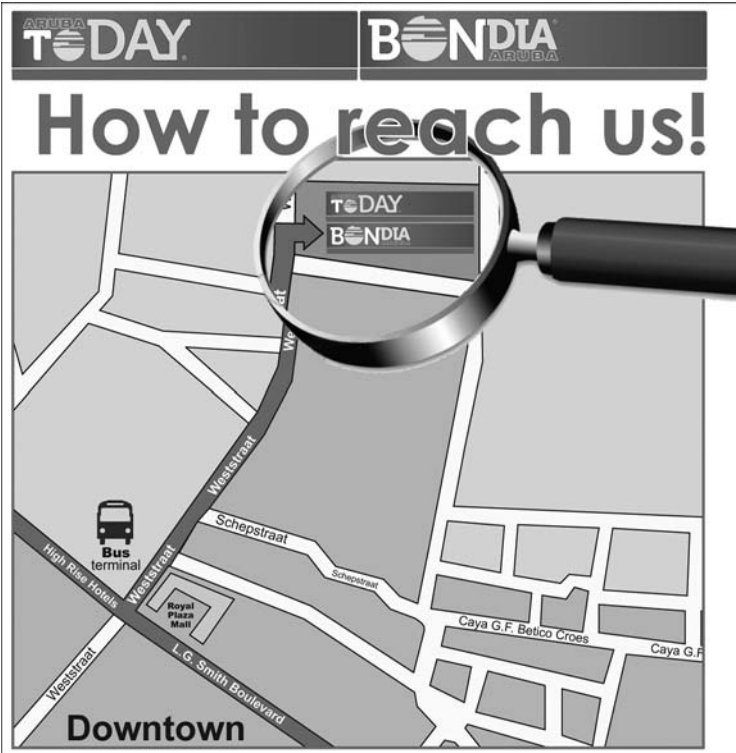
This handout photograph taken in August 2016 and obtained on August 18, 2026 from Greenland Institute of Natural Resources shows the tusk of a narwhal in Scoresby Sound fjord system near Ittoqqortoormiit, East Greenland.

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 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. □



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San Nicolas IMSAN
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PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Sta. Cruz
Tel. 585 8028

San Nicolas: Centro Medico
Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

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

EMERGENCY

Police 100
Police Oranjestad 527 3140
Police Noord 527 3200
Police Sta. Cruz 527 2900
Police San Nicolas 584 5000
Police Tipline 11141
Ambulance 911
Fire Dept. 115
Red Cross 582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas 587 5900
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Narcotics Anonymous
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Against Domestic Violence(FCVR)
Tel. 583 5400
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Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

France readies high school phone ban for next month

Paris, France

The French government said Monday it would press ahead with a ban on mobile phones in high schools from next month, but trade unions warned that the measure might be hard to implement quickly.

In July, France's parliament approved legislation banning both social media access for children under 15 and mobile phone use in high schools.

It is part of a push by President Emmanuel Macron for children to spend less time in front of screens, which the government fears is arresting their development. But earlier this month, the country's top court struck down the social media provision, dealing a blow to Macron.

However the Constitutional Council did not rule on the separate provision banning mobile phone use in high schools.

On Monday, government spokesperson Maud Bregeon said Macron "has decided to promulgate the law" containing the ban on phones, despite the Constitutional Council striking down its flagship provision.



A teacher collects a student's mobile phone, set aside during classes at the Jean Mermoz vocational high school in Montsoult, in the northern suburbs of Paris, on January 14, 2026.

"As a result, the ban on mobile phones in high schools can take effect from the start of the new school year, with a stable, consolidated and statutory legal framework," she said after a cabinet meeting.

France's school year starts in September.

France has already banned children from using mobile

phones in colleges the schools attended between the ages of 11 and 15 and in primary schools.

In early July, high schools had been instructed to prepare for the measure's implementation in September, ahead of its adoption by parliament later that month.

In order to enforce the ban, schools must amend their

internal regulations.

- 'Not ready' -

But many schools may struggle to implement the measure because they have had little time to prepare.

Francois Resnais, national secretary of SNPDEN-Unsa, France's top union of school principals, criticized the timing as "bad".

"Schools are not ready," Resnais told AFP.

"Schools are starting the year with a rule that is not written into their internal regulations, except perhaps for those that tried to anticipate something, but that remains very limited." Christelle Kauffmann, the union's deputy secretary-general, is among the minority of school leaders who anticipated the measure.

At her high school, phones will be banned in corridors and school buildings from the start of term, but allowed outdoors.

She said it could take nearly a year before the ban could be fully implemented across all high schools.

"It is very difficult for a school community to impose a new rule on young people. Even if the law is supposed to apply automatically, it is not that simple," she said. "You cannot put a supervisor behind every student."

Kamel Chibli, vice president of the Occitanie regional council in southern France, said digital pouches and lockers used to store smart-

phones cost the regional authorities around 40,000 euros for a high school with 1,500 students.

High school students regularly use their smartphones to check timetable changes, room assignments and other school information. Some teachers also rely on phones in class for research, exercises and document sharing.

In its guidance, the education ministry allows exemptions from the ban for "educational uses" or for purposes "necessary for the proper functioning of the school".

Macron's office has said the president has no plans to give up on his push to bar children from apps such as TikTok and the government would work on a new draft law.

"The president's objective is to have a stable legal framework in place by next spring to protect our children and young people," said Bregeon. □

Norway to crack down on use of smart glasses

Oslo, Norway

Norway said Tuesday it planned to regulate the use of smart glasses and similar devices and was considering a ban on features that enable facial recognition in public spaces.

Smart glasses allow the wearer to shoot photos and videos, listen to music,

take phone calls, translate signs in a foreign language, project text or maps into your field of view, or interact with an integrated AI assistant.

"We can see that people's private lives and privacy are coming under pressure from new technology, and I therefore want to regulate smart glasses and

similar devices more strictly than today," Digitalisation Minister Karianne Tung said in a statement.

"This could, for example, mean banning features such as facial recognition of other people in public spaces," she said.

She said she planned to appoint an expert group to advise the government on how to better protect consumers from the new technologies, and urged the public and private sectors to consider their own guidelines.

"There is a clear trend that artificial intelligence is being combined with cameras and microphones that are built into things like glasses, earbuds, caps, and other items we use in everyday life. We must avoid this equipment being used to monitor other

people in public spaces," Tung said.

The Norwegian Consumer Council's head of digital policy, Finn Lutzow-Holm Myrstad, hailed the government's move, and urged retailers to stop the sale of smart glasses until there was legal clarity on the issue.

Meta has reportedly developed a facial recognition feature ready to be integrated into its smart glasses.

"Meta already has this technology ready to go, and it is only a matter of time before it is rolled out in the glasses," Myrstad said.

He warned that a ban on facial recognition features on such devices would not prevent wearers from filming people covertly.

"The potential for abuse is enormous." □



Smartglasses secretly capture a woman in a bikini on the beach.



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Xavi Hernandez, head coach of the Netherlands national football team, speaks during a press conference at the KNVB Campus in Zeist, the Netherlands, on August 25, 2026.

‘Here to win’: Xavi vows to restore pride in Dutch football

Zeist, Netherlands

New Netherlands coach Xavi Hernandez vowed on Tuesday to bring back the attacking footballing philosophy that the Oranje are famous for, believing that this will bring the team out of the doldrums in terms of results. “If we play good football... taking the initiative, dominating the game, playing in an offensive way... we will be closer to winning and to getting results,” the 46-year-old former midfielder told reporters at his first news conference since being appointed. The Netherlands were disappointing at the most recent World Cup, topping their group without really convincing and then crashing out to Morocco on penalties in the last-32. “I remember when I was a kid watching the Netherlands, you could watch good football. And this is my target to play good football in order to be proud,” said Xavi. Asked which was more important, attractive football or results, Xavi replied:

“Both.”

“We are here to compete, we are here to enjoy and we are here to win. I insist, we are here to win.” In replacing Ronald Koeman on a four-year deal, Xavi becomes the first foreign boss of the Oranje in 48 years.

The Barcelona great, who won the 2010 World Cup with Spain as a player, beating the Netherlands in the final, had not held a head coaching job since leaving the Camp Nou in 2024. Xavi, whose first coaching role was with Qatari club Al-Sadd, won the 2023 La Liga title with Barca but was sacked at the end of the following season and replaced by Hansi Flick. Dutch Director of Football Nigel de Jong, who was on the losing side during the 2010 World Cup final, revealed that they had approached former Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola and ex-Liverpool manager Arne Slot before settling on Xavi.

“Well, it’s not a bad posi-

tion after Guardiola and after Slot, no?” joked Xavi. “I don’t care if I’m the third or I’m the 10th one.” Xavi’s first match at the helm will be a home Nations League clash with Germany on September 24.

Facing him on the sidelines will be another national management rookie, Liverpool legend Jurgen Klopp. “I feel excited, I feel motivated because we are playing against Germany, one of the best teams in Europe, and one of the best coaches in recent years, Jurgen Klopp,” he said.

‘Passion, ambition, desire’

The Netherlands are still attempting to shed their nearly men tag in international football.

They have lost three World Cup finals, the most of any nation in history to have never lifted the trophy. A Euro 1988 triumph remains the Netherlands’ only major title, and they have since lost four Euros semi-finals, including two years ago to England. □



Swiss former tennis player Roger Federer attends a match in the Centre Court’s Royal Box on the eighth day of the 2026 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon, southwest London, on July 6, 2026.

Federer looks forward to brief return to Arthur Ashe stadium

New York, United States

Roger Federer said Monday he is looking forward to this week’s celebratory return to Arthur Ashe Stadium to play for the first time since his final U.S. Open in 2019. The exhibition Tuesday night during “fan week” ahead of Sunday’s start of the tournament features doubles with former rivals Andy Roddick and Andre Agassi, along with John McEnroe, another giant of the sport. The group collectively has won a dozen mens’ singles titles at the U.S. Open.

“It really gives me a true opportunity to say thank you,” Federer said at a news conference Monday previewing the match and his upcoming induction to the International Tennis Hall of Fame later this week in Newport. New York fans of Federer were deprived of a true send-off for the 20-time Grand Slam champion as marked by Agassi, Serena Williams and some other champions.

When Federer lost in the 2019 quarterfinals to Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria, he had planned to keep playing. And while he did continue to compete, injuries prevented participation in the U.S. Open in either 2020 or 2021 ahead of his last match at the Laver Cup in September 2022.

While Federer has played some other exhibitions since retiring, he said Monday that the time had only seemed to fall into place for a New York match this year ahead of the Newport ceremony.

“The kids are getting older,” he said of his four children, two sets of twins now 12 and 17. “So they can also maybe enjoy a little bit seeing, their dad play.” Federer expects a “respectful” match with a not-too-intense level of competition.

“We’re not playing best of five,” he said “I hope it’s going to be a lot of fun for us and the same for the fans to just see us back out playing.” □

At least a quarter of NFL players may get brain disease: study



Jatavis Brown #57 of the Los Angeles Chargers loses his helmet while tackling Austin Walter #33 of the San Francisco 49ers during the first quarter of an NFL football game at Levi's Stadium on August 29, 2019 in Santa Clara, California.

Washington, United States

At least a quarter of National Football League players may end up with a degenerative brain disease, according to a new study published Tuesday that lays bare the extreme toll of America's favorite sport.

Chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) is caused by repeated head impacts and its symptoms include trouble with thinking and memory loss, difficulty walking, emotional instability and suicidal thoughts.

It has previously been linked to contact sports including American football and boxing, and found in military members exposed to explosive blasts.

But since CTE can only be confirmed in a post-mortem brain exam, the true extent among NFL players has remained unclear.

In the new study, led by Daniel Daneshvar, a professor at Harvard Medical School, and published in the British Medical Journal, researchers looked at the brains of dead players who had played at least one NFL game in the mandatory plastic helmet era that began in 1949.

The main finding comes from players who died between 2016-2021, when brain donations were most frequent. Of the 878 deaths during this period, 235 had their brains donated and examined, and 215 had confirmed CTE. That means, at minimum, the rate of CTE was 24.5 percent if none of the brains that weren't examined would have shown CTE. The maximum estimate was 97.7 percent, and the true figure likely lies somewhere in the middle.

The researchers also assessed severity of CTE and found a connection between high grade CTE and dementia before death, with the latter ascertained by the players' medical notes and interviews with family members.

"Together, these findings indicate that NFL players have a higher prevalence of CTE at death than has been previously shown in multiple community based studies," wrote the authors.

- 'Sobering reminder' of risks -

"These data indicate that CTE severity at death is significantly associated with dementia in NFL player brain donors, and that dementia is common in these donors." But they also acknowledge several limitations, including that not all former NFL players who died during the study window were included, and that some family members may have inaccurately recalled or over-stated symptoms.

Writing in an editorial, professors Tobias Kurth of the University Medical Center Berlin and Richard Riley of the National Institute for Health and Care Research in Birmingham praised the study design.

No single study can fully define the rate of CTE among NFL players, but "Daneshvar and colleagues provide one of the most informative estimates to date," they said.

Above all, they argued, it is essential to regularly communicate the scientific evidence to past, present and prospective NFL players.

The players' union, the NFL Players Association (NFLPA), said the study was a "sobering reminder that football carries real risks, and those risks can have lasting consequences for players and their families."

The NFL, which in 2016 announced a \$1 billion legal settlement to provide financial assistance to players suffering from dementia and other neurological conditions linked to concussions, said it had taken steps to reduce concussions and head impacts.

"The NFL remains committed to ensuring that the NFL community has access to a robust and expanding set of resources to enhance their physical and mental well-being," the league added in a statement to US media. □

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