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Republicans put Trump center stage in U.S. midterms gamble

Washington, United States U.S. Republicans open an extraordinary midterm convention in Dallas on Wednesday betting that putting Donald Trump at the center of their campaign can rescue a party facing grim election forecasts despite the president's deeply negative approval ratings.

The two-day gathering, dubbed "Trumpapalooza," is designed to persuade the Republican leader's supporters that he is effectively on the ballot on November 3, when Republicans risk losing the House of Representatives and face a fierce fight to retain the Senate.

"So what I really want you to do is pretend, please, that I'm on the ballot," Trump said recently at a rally in South Carolina. "Just come and vote. It's so important."

Decision Desk HQ projects Democrats to win the House 230-205 and the Senate to finish 51-49 in their favor revising its 50-50 prediction as the outlook continues to worsen for Republicans.

Trump, whose approval rat-



Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, candidate for US Senate, takes his seat next to Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick during the first day of the Republican National Midterm Convention at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas on September 9, 2026.

ing stood at just 33 percent in recent polling, will speak on both convention nights at the American Airlines Center. His challenge is to mobilize voters personally loyal to him without further alienating independents already souring on his presidency amid inflation woes, gasoline prices topping \$4 a gallon and the continuing war with Iran.

"Many Trump supporters only vote when he's on the

ballot," Matthew Green, a politics professor at the Catholic University of America, told AFP.

"They're not diehard Republican voters; they're diehard Trump voters. So, in that respect, it makes some sense to feature Trump in the hopes of getting those folks to turn out in November."

But Green was skeptical that asking those supporters

to imagine Trump on their ballots could overcome his broader weakness.

"When you're in the low- to mid-30s, that's traditionally associated with a very bad midterm for your party," he said of the 80-year-old's approval ratings.

- Trump show -

The gathering is the first Republican national convention held specifically for a midterm election, although

no candidates will be nominated and no formal party business is planned. Instead, organizers have constructed what amounts to a two-night television rally touting Trump's record and Republican candidates.

More than 100 House members and candidates are expected, with over 50 speakers or presentations scheduled each night. Trump delivers Wednesday's keynote and returns for Thursday's finale after Vice President JD Vance speaks. Cabinet members, congressional leaders and candidates in closely watched House and Senate races are also on the program.

Republicans plan to highlight tax cuts, immigration enforcement, manufacturing and prescription drug prices, while depicting Democrats as dangerously far to the left.

Some Republicans, however, are privately hoping Trump sticks to that script rather than the personal grievances and off-message subjects that regularly dominate his appearances. □

U.S. says it helped crack Madagascar online scam centers

Washington, United States U.S. judicial authorities said Wednesday they played a key role in smashing online scam centers in Madagascar that were operated by citizens of China.

Late last year the U.S. Justice Department created a unit tasked with fighting online scam networks that use

cryptocurrency, are based in Southeast Asia and operate on behalf of presumed Chinese crime gangs. The unit's latest actions included taking down the Telegram channels of Xinbi Guarantee, a scamming marketplace, and seizing \$52 million in crypto money, Jeanne Pirro, the

U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, told a news conference Wednesday. "Shinbi Marketplace has over 650,000 users. It's housed on Telegram, and it's where vendors market their services to scam ops," Pirro added.

This includes creating custom scam investment and laundering websites, she said.

The U.S. Treasury simultaneously announced sanctions against Shinbi Guarantee, which was already hit by British sanctions, and two entities that support its activities.

"It should be no surprise these networks are spreading across the globe," Pirro said. "They're no longer just centered in Southeast Asia. They now operate in hubs across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Central

America."

She said over the past two weeks U.S. investigators had gone to Madagascar, a country in the Indian Ocean off the east coast of Africa, to help take down 13 scam centers run by Chinese citizens. This led to the arrest of 500 scammers, she said.

The Madagascar justice ministry said this week that "a first wave" of 50 Chinese citizens were sent back home after being convicted in Madagascar of crimes related to online scams.

The ministry insisted these people were not simply freed but rather will serve prison sentences in China ranging from two to 10 years, depending on whether they were lower-level or bosses in the scam

activities.

The Chinese embassy in Madagascar said 50 Chinese citizens were in fact sent home from that African country and it praised what it called judicial cooperation between the two nations.

The U.S. Justice Department said these 50 people were tried and convicted in Madagascar as part of the campaign discussed by Pirro.

Several countries in Southeast Asia, like Myanmar and Cambodia, are known to be home to vast online scam centers using forced labor by people of many nationalities, often citizens of China.

Pirro said revenue taken in by these sprawling facilities is estimated at \$40 billion a year, including \$12 billion from duped Americans. □



U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro speaks during a press conference at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia on September 09, 2026 in Washington, DC.



The twin towers of the World Trade Center billow smoke after hijacked airliners crashed into them early on September 11, 2001.

25 years on, America seeks to keep 9/11 memories alive

New York, United States

A quarter century after the era-defining attacks of September 11, the United States is eager to keep alive the memory of a 2001 trauma that is fading as the proportion of Americans who did not experience it firsthand grows.

President Donald Trump will pay his respects at the Pentagon rather than in New York, where the attacks by hijacked passenger planes on the World Trade Center towers claimed the largest number of the 2,977 total victims recorded on that day.

But Vice President JD Vance and Trump's four living predecessors Democrats Joe Biden, Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, as well as Republican George Bush, who was president at the time of the attacks are all expected at the "Ground Zero" site in lower Manhattan next Friday.

The anniversary commemorates a watershed moment for the U.S. and the world. "Many in my generation remember exactly where we were on that horrific day" in 2001, said Beth Hillman, 59, president of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum and a US Air Force veteran. Yet today, "100 million Americans were not even born or are too young to remember" the tragic events.

- 'More inquisitive' young people -

After placing major emphasis on the duty to remember, her institution is now focusing on outreach, education and engaging younger generations. Trained volunteers, including first responders, connect with audiences who have learned of the disaster solely through their parents or school.

"Even if you were alive but not here or have a connection, it's a lot easier to understand the magnitude of what took place," Logan Miller, a 32-year-old who lost an uncle and a grandfather as a result of the attacks, told AFP.

Making sense of 9/11 is "a little tougher for that next generation," he added.

Miller is one of many volunteers sharing their experiences at the museum, which gets 2.4 million unique visitors per year, or through video clips.

Young people are "more inquisitive" and ask more questions than their elders, who Miller said sometimes hesitate to challenge him for fear of causing offense. "I wasn't born at the time and yet it was important for me to be here, to do this trip," said 22-year-old Ignacio Gaete, a Chilean visiting the museum and me-

morial featuring two large recessed pools within the footprints of the Twin Towers.

Gaete said that while young people don't have visceral memories of 9/11 like his father does, "I think it can transcend generations."

But that transcendence requires preservation and education, according to Holly Kafka, visiting Manhattan from Chicago with her husband.

"Our younger generation... they're always in this little rat race, keeping up with social media," the 61-year-old said. "We have to stop them and say, 'Come here and experience it.'"

- 9,400 more deaths -

As they do every year at Ground Zero starting at 8:40 am (1240 GMT), the time shortly before hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 struck the North Tower, relatives will read the long list of their loved ones' names. In the evening, two beams of light will project skyward from lower Manhattan, symbolic of the towers.

Nineteen Al-Qaeda operatives hijacked four planes on that nearly cloudless day in 2001. Two jets slammed into the World Trade Center, causing the iconic 110-story buildings to collapse. □



View of the International border on the Gordie Howe International bridge that connects Windsor, Ontario, Canada and Detroit, Michigan on September 6, 2026.

Trump bans some Canada goods as trade war swells

Washington, United States

The White House ramped up its trade dispute with Canada late Tuesday by banning the import of certain products, including alcoholic beverages, and raising tariffs on other goods.

A range of Canadian products, from mattresses to motorboats and golf carts, will be subject to a 50-percent surcharge beginning September 15, stated an executive order by President Donald Trump.

The import ban, which targets various alcoholic beverages as well as some dairy products like whey, will come into effect on September 29, according to other executive orders issued at the same time.

One of the statements of presidential action describes how certain Canadian products will no longer be subject to the 50 percent tariffs that recently came into effect after bilateral trade negotiations collapsed last month. But the list of these products is significantly shorter, with toilet paper among them.

"President Trump is doing this to make sure, again, that we keep a level playing field, deter retaliation, and of course protect American production," a senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters on a call.

The retaliation comes as Ottawa has just imposed new tariffs on U.S. products in response to the duties announced by Washington on August 22.

The senior official said Canadians had been warned that their reaction would escalate the situation.

As justification for the ban on imports of alcohol from Canada, Trump cited what he called "discriminatory" provincial boycotts of U.S. booze.

Since the start of Trump's tariff offensive last year, Canadians have launched a massive boycott of US products: wines and spirits have disappeared from store shelves in most Canadian provinces, which hold a monopoly on their sale.

Earlier Tuesday, Trump had threatened to exclude Canadian products from a government procurement program "unless Canada restores full and fair reciprocity for American Farmers and Companies."

In a social media post, Trump said he was directing officials "to REMOVE Canadian-origin products from GSA's Multiple Award Schedules," referring to a General Services Administration program for long-term contracts. Such schedules account for over \$50 billion a year, Trump added.

U.S. trade lawyer Ryan Majerus said the move could widen the scope of impacted goods beyond those hit by tariffs. □

Workers, migrants focus of documentaries by Oscar winners at Venice

Venice, Italy

Fifty years after Barbara Kopple first tackled the topic of labor rights, workers in the United States are still struggling to get their due, the filmmaker said as her latest film premiered at the Venice Film Festival.

"Union Town," which debuts Wednesday at the festival, is the third in a trilogy about worker struggles by the Oscar-winning U.S. director, following 1976's "Harlan County U.S.A." and 1990's "American Dream."

"People are still fighting for the right to have a union, the union of their choice, the right to have a decent pay, the right to work in a safe place and to be respected," the director, 80, told AFP Tuesday.

"And that has never changed. That's what they're fighting for now." Kopple's latest film centers on New York City union efforts to pressure multinational giants from UPS to



Barbara Kopple speaks onstage during The WMC 2026 Women's Media Awards at Tribeca Rooftop on March 05, 2026 in New York City.

Amazon for better wages and benefits for their employees and part-time workers.

"We shouldn't have to fight them. They have the

money," a leader from the Teamsters union says about UPS in the film.

"But they just choose not to."

- Delivery riders' perils -

The documentary also follows the labour movement's latest underdogs -- riders for delivery apps like GrubHub and DoorDash who remain largely invis-

ible.

Hot warehouses and delivery trucks, heavy lifting, and no time off for family issues are some of the complaints voiced by workers at UPS and Amazon. For riders, dangers encountered on the street range from muggings to hit-and-runs some of them fatal.

One GrubHub rider from Bangladesh describes how he was hit by a car during a delivery, which landed him in the hospital for two days. The company deactivated his account.

"If they get hit by a car, they go to the hospital, they have to pay. They have to buy their clothes, their bikes, everything. And I didn't want them to be silent. I didn't want them to be invisible," Kopple said.

In Venice with Kopple was Antonio Rosario, a Teamster for 31 years seen throughout the film trying to educate often fearful or reluctant workers about their rights. He called labor law in America today "like the wild, wild West".

"People are tired of being treated without dignity, without respect. And these companies are making an obscene amount of money," he said at a press conference Wednesday, before breaking down in tears.

"People are tired of these trillionaires and billionaires making all this money and not sharing that wealth with the working people that make it for them."

- Crackdown -

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) deployment to Minneapolis in January is the subject of another documentary screening at Venice: "They're Here" by Oscar-winning Laura Poitras and Rachel Lauren Mueller.

Besides showing residents' grassroots efforts, such as sophisticated tracking systems to locate ICE teams, it was essential that the 25-minute film also include the "immigrant perspective", Mueller said.□

'A celebration': Amsterdam museum unveils Kusama show weeks after death

Amsterdam, Netherlands

More than 300 works by Japanese contemporary artist Yayoi Kusama go on display in Amsterdam from Friday, an exhibit that has become a tribute to the "polka dot queen" who died last month.

The exhibition at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum features dozens of ceramics, etchings, and drawings from Kusama, one of the world's best-known artists,

as well as her trademark polka dot pumpkins.

Around 50 of the pieces have never been displayed before, said curator Leontine Coelewijn, who pulled together works from several museums in Japan, including in Tokyo and Kusama's birthplace Matsumoto.

"I think the show will be a highlight for people who do not know the work of Kusama, but also people who've seen her work

on several occasions," Coelewijn told AFP in an interview during a press preview on Wednesday.

"I think there will be many surprises," added the 62-year-old curator.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a huge "infinity room" with black walls covered by yellow polka dots, featuring mirrors that give visitors the disorienting impression the dots are never-ending.

Kusama died aged 97 in August, after a career spanning 70 years that saw her work exhibited around the world.

She channeled hallucinations and well-documented battles with mental illness into vibrant art that inevitably featured polka dots how she saw the world.

"What I think is very characteristic of Kusama is that for her making art and drawing what went on in her mind, was a way to deal with the difficult issues

she had," said Coelewijn.

"Art can be like a healing power. And that has been so in her early years, but also continued all through the years," added the curator.

- 'Marvelous tribute' -

After studying art in Japan, Kusama moved to the United States in the late 1950s, becoming a leading figure in New York's avant-garde scene.

On her return to Japan in the 1970s, she checked herself into a Tokyo psychiatric hospital, where she lived and worked right up to her death.

News of her death came as the Amsterdam exhibition was being installed.

"We were very sad when we heard the news... On the other hand, we could say that this exhibition is a great celebration of her work, a tribute to a wonderful life and a wonderful body of work," said Coelewijn.□



This photograph shows an artwork displayed during a press preview of the exhibition dedicated to Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama (1929-2026) at Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam on September 9, 2026.



This photo taken on September 4, 2026 shows people resting beside Christmas decorations at a mall in Quezon City, Metro Manila.

'The ber months': Christmas arrives early in the Philippines

Manila, Philippines

At a city block-sized market in the Philippine capital, a platoon of plastic Santa Claus figures parachute from the ceiling of a shop already stacked high with Christmas decor despite the holiday being fully four months away.

The site is a familiar one in the Philippines, where September 1 means radio stations playing Christmas carols, homeowners putting up lights, and the country's giant shopping malls unleashing their most impressive displays.

Welcome to the "ber months" September, October, November, December a months-long countdown to the most anticipated holiday on the calendar in the deeply Catholic country.

"We can smell it coming," sales clerk Cora Lansangan, 73, said during an AFP visit to a Christmas shop that began stacking its shelves on July 31.

The store was already packed with shoppers buzzing around displays of Christmas trees, ornaments, plastic reindeer, mangers and festive lanterns during a recent AFP visit.

"Even though life is hard, the mere sight of a Christmas tree brings us relief," Manila real estate agent

Kathlene Santidad, 33, told AFP as she hunted for tinsel and baubles for her own tree, armed with a 10,000-peso (\$160) budget.

She said she shopped for decorations early because "I hate crowds" and wanted to take her time picking specific items from shops crammed with everything from tiny 300-peso tinsel to an 8,000-peso Christmas tree. Coming towards the end of a rainy season typically marred by destructive typhoons and floods, the Christmas countdown is a marker of better things ahead, Mark Godwin Villareal, a sociologist at Manila's University of Santo Tomas, told AFP.

"It provides a kind of continuity and stability in our social life despite these economic, political, or even personal challenges that we are facing as a community or society," he said. The "ber months" had a rhythm, Villareal continued. September was for decorating, while October was time to start saving money for gifts and food for reunions with friends and relatives and the all-important midnight meal on Christmas Eve.

More than 100,000 of the country's crucial overseas workforce, dubbed OFWs

(overseas Filipino workers), can typically be counted on to rush home in time for the main event.

'Belonging, hope and joy'

The extended season drives foot traffic and sales for the country's giant shopping malls, many of which AFP journalists saw were already heavily decked out. "For Filipinos, Christmas symbolises belonging, faith, hope and joy," said Christian Mathay, senior assistant vice president for SM Supermalls, a chain of 90 shopping malls that began setting up Christmas ornaments in August.

"Starting early gives shoppers more time to enjoy that experience."

In Pampanga province, north of Manila, weeks of flooding that stranded thousands of commuters failed to dampen the enthusiasm of manufacturers of star-shaped holiday lanterns known as "parol", the single must-have Christmas decoration in a Filipino home.

"Water seeped into the showroom, so we had to clean up instead of working... the thing with lanterns is, they're waterproof," fifth-generation lantern-maker Angelica David, 26, told AFP. □



A group of detained fishermen are transported on a National Police bus to the Community Surveillance Unit (UVC) from the port of Manta, Ecuador, on September 4, 2026.

Ecuadoran fishermen recount trauma of U.S. military ops at sea

Manta, Ecuador

Ecuadoran fisherman Eduardo Holguin was aboard the "Conquista 2" when a joint U.S.-Ecuadoran operation forcibly removed him and his crewmates from the boat before sinking it.

The 41-year-old told AFP he and his crewmates had nothing to do with drug trafficking before they were intercepted at sea September 2.

A speedboat "full of soldiers" pulled up "close to the boat" and "they were aiming at us" with their weapons, Holguin said. "That's when the ordeal began for us."

"They took our boat away, brought us to the patrol boat, and blew it up," said Holguin.

The crew was eventually released without facing any criminal charges.

Joint U.S.-Ecuador counter-narcotics operations in the Pacific have seen the destruction of four Ecuadoran vessels since August 28,

The U.S. military's Southern Command says the boat was used to support drug trafficking by Ecuadoran crime syndicate Los Choneros.

The operations come after publication of a report by Human Rights Watch alleging at least eight people went missing when three Ecuadoran vessels were attacked by U.S. forces between January and March this year. Washington denies any involvement in the disappearances.

- Sleepless days -

Holguin said once he and the crew were detained on the patrol boat, there was an interpreter and "gringos." Then "they put a hood over my head" and "earmuffs," Holguin said.

Holguin said he and his crewmates were given food, but "with everything that was happening, we didn't feel like eating."

The crew members were then handed over to the Ecuadoran navy, which transported them to Manta, the main fishing port in southwestern Ecuador.

Fishermen on other intercepted vessels have had similar experiences.

For Juan Carlos Posligua, a crew member on the "Conquista 2," the last few days have been hard.

"I haven't slept or eaten for three days," said the 44-year-old.

After arriving on land, the crew was taken to a police station, then released a day later without charges.

"We weren't doing anything illegal. We're just ordinary fishermen who went out to work to bring home our daily bread," Posligua said. □

From trenches to catwalk: Ukraine's amputee soldiers hit the runway

Kyiv, Ukraine

In the corner of a vast brick hall, models slipped silently and elegantly into linen dresses, as the chink of a metal prosthetic limb pierced the quiet.

Ukrainian veteran Yaroslav Sharkiy, who lost his leg fighting at the front, was preparing to take to the catwalk at Kyiv Fashion Week.

He is one of anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 Ukrainian soldiers to have lost a limb fighting to fend off the Russian invasion, according to non-governmental organizations.

"I've got one leg in the Donbas, the other on the Fashion Week runway," joked the former combat medic, barely in his thirties. "It's a bit unusual but I've learnt to switch between these realities."

Far from the explosions, he now battles a touch of stage fright and teasing from his former comrades. On the catwalk, he sported the latest line of clothes created specifically by Ukrainian designer Igor Sidletskiy for people with prosthetic limbs.

With four other veterans, he slid his metal leg into a wide pair of black shorts.



Ukrainian veterans walk down the runway during the Sidletskiy fashion show in collaboration with the U+System Military Prosthetics Center during Ukrainian Fashion Week in Kyiv on September 6, 2026, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Amputated below the knee, Sharkiy usually has to remove his trousers completely to adjust the device, which makes him feel "uneasy" in public.

"I can see that people around me are sometimes uncomfortable too," he told AFP.

But Sidletskiy's designs are loose and easy to put on.

"It's comfortable, while still being stylish," Sharkiy said confidently.

As the designer's voice cut the silence "Be ready in 10

minutes" he tuned his collar up and added some black sunglasses.

"Loud and clear," Sharkiy barked back in an army-style call-and-response.

- Destruction and creation - In the forest of endless slender legs, Mykola Kovalyov's metal limbs moved briskly around the changing room.

The young man put on a flowy shirt, brushed his long black hair back and struck a few playful poses, laugh-

ing.

"I'm not an actor, I'm not a star, I'm not a dancer. But we're trying," he insisted.

The former soldier lost both his legs in a fight in the northeastern Sumy region four years after he enlisted to join the Ukrainian army right after Russia invaded. Since then, the 22-year-old has felt lost.

"I still don't know who I am or what I want to do," he said.

He did not hesitate when the opportunity arose to

present inclusive fashion on the catwalk.

"It's art something that can give us a resource, while war has taken that away from us," he said.

"Over there, we had to destroy. Here we create."

After some final adjustments, he frantically searched for his sunglasses nerves before his first-ever show.

Behind him, a murmur rose as the first guests took their seats.

Under dresses and trousers, a few prosthetic limbs could also be spotted in the audience.

Then laughter erupted, extravagant outfits were ready, there was a burst of flashes. The show had begun.

- 'With style' -

Before the usual parading, there was a solemn minute of silence commemorating the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers killed since Russia invaded in 2022.

To a few piano notes, the first models then started to step forward.

Between the cascades of painstakingly curled hair, the shaven head of a broad-shouldered soldier stood out.□

Space agency chief calls on Europe to invest in independence

Paris, France

The chief of the European Space Agency (ESA), Josef Aschbacher, on Wednesday called for a 10-billion-euro (\$11.6-billion) investment over 10 years for Eu-

rope to achieve independence in the space sector. Aschbacher made the call during an international space summit held in Paris this week, which was ditched by several

U.S. companies including SpaceX and Blue Origin.

"Will we be passengers or pilots?" Aschbacher asked European ministers during a closed meeting Wednesday evening.

He pointed to the rapid development in space technology by countries around the world from satellite development to the exploration of the Moon and Mars.

"In this emerging context, Europe must position itself as an indispensable partner, with its own capabilities," he said, according to a copy of his speech given to AFP.

If Europe commits to the path of furthering space

exploration, Aschbacher estimated it would require an investment of around one billion euros per year for the next decade.

Without it, Europe would remain dependent on other players in the space industry, which also comes at a cost.

"Buying flights for European astronauts from foreign providers would cost 5 billion euro over 10 years, with the majority of that money going into foreign industry and will require permission to fly beyond Europe's control," he explained.

"Alternatively, we can invest in capabilities that remain in Europe, create European jobs, strengthen

European autonomy, inspire our youth and future workforce, and secure a stronger hand in international negotiations," he said.

Earlier at the summit, French astronaut Thomas Pesquet told AFP that Europe cannot stay on the sidelines in the space industry.

"We're leaders in technology, we have universities, labs, companies, space agencies we need to take matters into our own hands," he said.

ESA member states could decide on how to move forward on Aschbacher's call for greater autonomy in the sector at a ministerial meeting in December.□



French European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Thomas Pesquet speaks during the International Space Summit at the Grand Palais in Paris on September 9, 2026.

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 typi-

cally 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 some-



thing 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



Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the “Picuda”, a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? This is an informative article that illustrate some fish and their names in Papiamentu, which the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, known as “Santa Rosa”, wants to share and also obtain information from the public.

Picuda, Sphyraena barracuda, Greater Barracuda

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is Sphyraena barracuda. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a so-called “ambush predator” that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white flesh in fish soup. In fishing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names vary according to size.

Description

The Picuda is a long fish, with a round body like a torpedo and silver in color with shiny black stripes. Below, the belly, is whiter, while the top part is darker. Its snout is very pointed, and the lower jaw is longer than the upper one. Its peduncle, where the body meets the tail, is thick, while the tail also forms a crescent but in this case one more “full” than that of mullet or cone-fish. This reflects the hunting style of the Picuda. It needs to be able to accelerate quickly when the prey gets close.

In Aruba:

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island



throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is edible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore

with a line or rod, or by jigging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions. □

Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Santa Rosa).

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Experience a taste of Belgium in Aruba – Only at L'Avenue, Palm Beach



Nestled in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba, L'Avenue brings a fresh breeze of Belgian charm to the Caribbean. Just over a year since its grand opening, this intimate bistro has quickly made its mark with its warm hospitality, authentic cuisine, and elegant yet approachable ambiance.

Whether you're strolling through Palm Beach after a morning at the beach or looking for a special dinner spot, L'Avenue welcomes you with an inviting terrace, stylish décor, and the comforting aroma of Belgian classics crafted to perfection. It's a place where locals, travelers, food lovers, and beer connoisseurs come together — united by a love for great food, heartfelt service, and that unmistakable European flair.

At L'Avenue, every dish tells a story — one of tradition, seasonality, and bold yet balanced flavors. From crispy croquettes and perfectly poured Belgian beers

to steaming pots of fresh mussels flown in weekly, the menu offers something both comforting and surprising.

Lunch includes a variety of sandwiches—with a healthy selection of bread options—if you're going for a light meal, but just like their dinner selection, also includes steak, chicken, fish, and even rabbit if you're craving a bit more of L'Avenue's exquisite menu. And let's not forget their wide selection of Belgian beer and European wine to complete the tasty experience! But that's not all! L'Avenue is offering their guests their Early Bird Special, available every day from 4pm to 7pm. Enjoy this affordable and delectable 3-course meal special at a comfortable



price of \$29.50 per guest, which includes a selection of their fine in-house wine.

More Than a Bistro A Culinary Destination

L'Avenue is more than just a place to eat — it's a culinary destination. A thoughtfully curated menu, an extensive selection of premium Belgian beers, and an atmosphere that balances European elegance with island ease make it one of the most talked-about dining spots in Aruba.

Whether you're looking for a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or a celebratory evening with friends, L'Avenue delivers a dining experience that's as memorable as it is delicious.

Open daily for lunch and dinner

Located in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba
Come discover Belgium's best — right here at L'Avenue. ☐

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

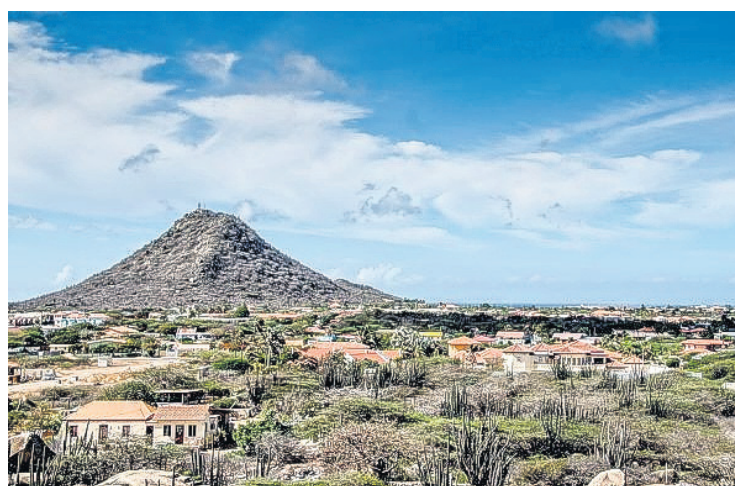
(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session,

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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. ☐

Bucuti & Tara Unveils Expanded Wellness Experiences for Aruba Community

The new wellness program offers 1–6 experiences daily, from Beach Pilates and Tai Chi to meditation, sound healing and wellness rituals

EAGLE BEACH — A new way to experience wellness has arrived on Eagle Beach, and Aruba residents are invited to be part of it. Starting this week, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort unveils its most extensive wellness program yet, from 1 to 6 guided wellness experiences offered every day. The expanded schedule gives locals even more opportunities to prioritize their wellbeing, with experiences ranging from Restorative Yoga and Aromatherapy Workshop to Dance Yoga Flow, mindful ceremonies, Chakra Alignment and interactive wellness sessions.

Bucuti & Tara is also continuing its special Dollar-to-Florin promotion for Aruba residents, making it even more accessible for the local community to experience the resort's expanding wellness program and incorporate more intentional moments of movement, mindfulness, and wellbeing into everyday life.

"We have always believed wellness is much more than visiting a spa or joining a yoga class," said Crescenzia Biemans, Managing Director of Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort. "True wellness is regenerative. It restores not only the individual, but also our connection with each other, with nature, with the local community, and with ourselves. As we expand our wellness program, it is important to us that our local community can be part of this journey and experience these moments of movement, restoration and connection right here in Aruba."

More Ways to Prioritize Well-being, Every Day

With 1 to 6 wellness experiences available daily, the expanded schedule makes



it possible to choose an experience that suits different interests, energy levels and wellness goals.

The program brings together Bucuti & Tara's wellness specialists and local instructors for a diverse collection of experiences.

Some experiences energize the body through movement, mobility and strength. Others create space for stillness, mindfulness and connection through meditation, sound, ceremonies and small-group gatherings. Together, the expanded schedule allows participants to make wellness their own, whether that means starting the morning moving on Eagle Beach, improving strength and mobility, discovering a new mindfulness practice or simply creating time to slow down and reset.

More Than a Class: A Complete Wellness Experience

The transformation goes beyond adding more classes to the schedule.

Bucuti & Tara has reimagined each session as a more complete wellness experience, beginning from the moment participants arrive.

Each experience opens with a thoughtfully selected beverage designed to complement the session ahead. Following the experience,

refreshing cold towels and locally sourced herbal teas create a gentle transition from movement or mindfulness into restoration.

These added touches turn a traditional one-hour class into an opportunity to disconnect from the day's routine, reconnect with oneself and enjoy the peaceful natural surroundings of Eagle Beach.

A Broader Vision of Wellness

The expanded classes are part of a much larger wellness vision taking shape at Bucuti & Tara.

Also launching this September are new private wellness retreats tailored to different life moments and individual

wellbeing aspirations. Expecting parents can celebrate a babymoon through floating meditation, mindful rituals and restorative treatments, while couples can reconnect through private breathwork, couples yoga and bespoke wellness experiences.

Across the resort, this same philosophy extends to Purun Spa, the 24-hour Fitness Center and health-conscious dining at Elements Restaurant. It can also be found in the locally inspired cuisine of Terra by Jeremy Ford, wellness and lifestyle products at Seráfina Boutique, and access to specialized medical wellness services through carefully selected local partners.

Connecting Wellness with Aruba's Natural Environment

This new chapter is only the beginning.

Future developments will continue expanding the resort's wellness facilities, spa experiences and immersive, regenerative nature-based programming centered around the Bucuti Tara – GMC Nature Preserve, the resort's 32-acre conserva-

tion area.

Planned experiences include guided meditation in nature, contemplative nature walks and sound healing surrounded by native landscapes, along with opportunities that deepen participants' connection with Aruba's unique flora, fauna and natural environment.

"This launch is only the beginning," added Biemans. "Our vision is to become one of the world's leading wellness destinations by continually creating experiences that restore people, celebrate Aruba's unique character, and leave a lasting positive impact on the destination we call home."

With wellness, romance and sustainability forming the three pillars of the Bucuti & Tara experience, the resort continues expanding the ways both visitors and the local community can experience meaningful wellbeing in Aruba.

To explore the wellness schedule and learn more, visit Bucuti.com.





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Meet an Aruban trailblazer: Padu Lampe



(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassastraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin

and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician.

In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from August 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world.

One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi.

In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth, he made several paintings using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he



won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs).

Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on

the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976.

Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □

Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

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

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

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol

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



The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and Iboa; the juice of a cassava, which

together would mean "the best juice of a cassava".

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

word Anabui and its meaning.

During the Second World War and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and later on Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which led to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that took place. It is hoped that the original and 'old' name of Anabui is never lost and now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi

This name can be seen on the Werbata map with lit-

tle and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in the 19th century where Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explained and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

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

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An.

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 sec-

ond.” 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.

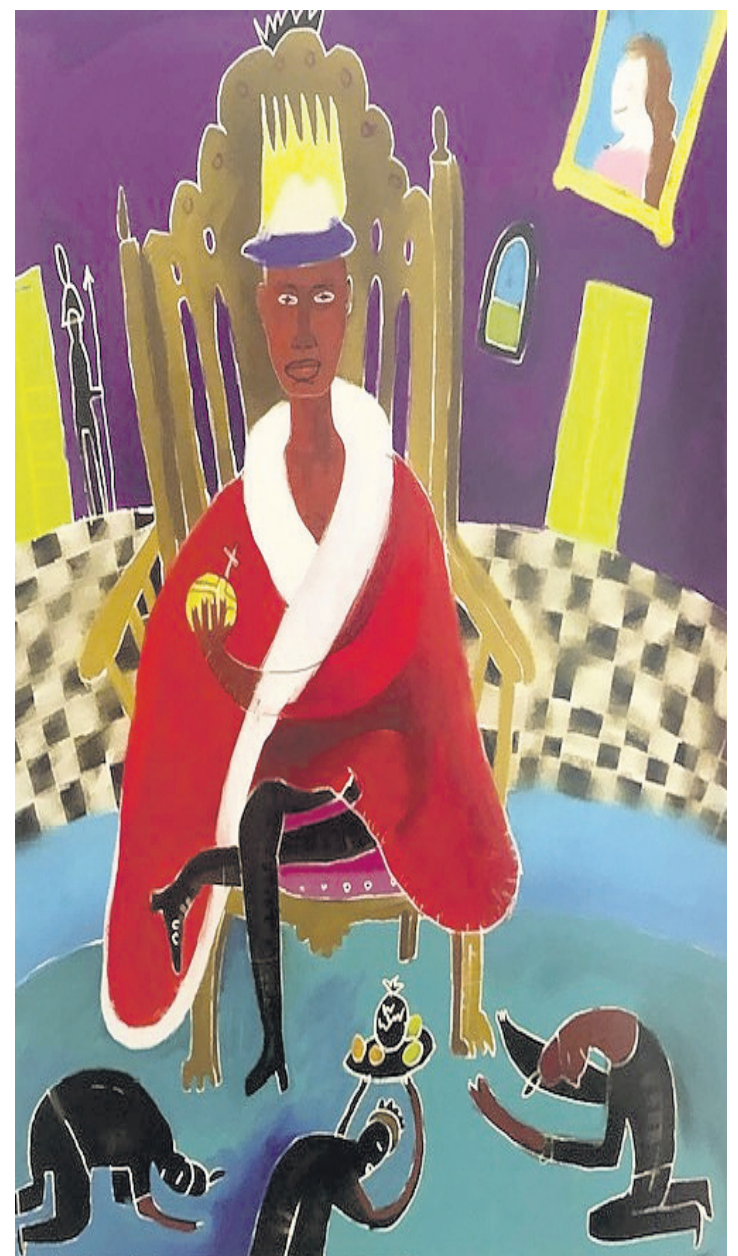
Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and started walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started 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. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 38 "Olympia"

- 1 "Waterloo" painter
group
5 Robe
feature
9 Fixes, as holey socks

11 Mercutio's friend

12 Deceive

13 Cheering loudly

14 — bind

15 Players at the plate

17 Improves

19 Small worker

20 Brief

21 Young fellow

22 Con- cerning

24 Passing craze

26 Left on a liner

29 Middle- earth baddie

30 Old- fashioned ingredient

32 Tops, as toast

34 Boar's mate

35 Old market

36 Blown away

DOWN

1 Make up lines

2 Johnson's middle

3 Exhalation name

4 Small worker

5 Classify

6 One- celled organism

7 Blackened

8 Neigh sayer

10 Gets serious

11 "Dog- gone!"

16 Craft show's cousin

18 Warty critter

21 Easy run

23 Chooses to partici- pate

24 Thrifty

25 Play opener

27 Make a backup copy, say

28 Mason's tool

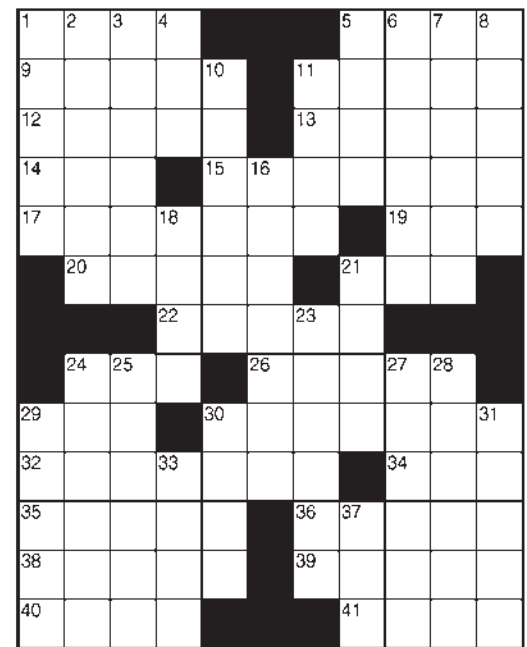
29 44th president

30 Trounce

31 Expand

33 "— bien!"

37 At present



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.

1-11

CRYPTOQUOTE

X R F S Q H I J L Q E Q H

W B O W F S S Q R I Q F

Y H B Y Q M O . — S Q D D E Y W B I Q F

Cryptoquote: YOU KNOW HOW I ALWAYS DREAD THE WHOLE YEAR? WELL, THIS TIME I'M ONLY GOING TO DREAD ONE DAY AT A TIME. — CHARLIE BROWN

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 SCHEDULE	
SEPTEMBER	
01 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
08 TUE	CELEBRITY REFLECTION Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 11:30 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
09 WED	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B MARGARITAVILLE ISLANDER Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: C ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 14:00 Berth: I
15 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C CELEBRITY REFLECTION Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★

9/10

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

9/9

'Alarm bells ringing': U.S. summer heat shatters record

Washington, United States

The contiguous United States has endured its hottest summer on record, a new peak that scientists said should send alarm bells ringing over the increasingly dire impacts of climate change.

Among the Lower-48 states, average temperature for the June-to-August period was 74.4F (23.6C), exceeding the previous record, set in 1936 and 2021, by 0.4F, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Wednesday.

That means that four of the hottest summers on record occurred within the past five years, with 2022 and 2024 taking fourth and fifth place respectively, with human-caused climate change due mainly to the burning of fossil fuels looming large over the trend. This year also saw the warmest August since records began in 1895, with average temperatures of 75.6F.

NOAA had previously announced that July 2026 was the hottest of all months ever recorded in the United States.

"It is now time to stop acting surprised that our warming planet keeps getting warmer," Andrew Dessler, a climate scientist at Texas A&M University told AFP.

"This is occurring exactly as forecast by scientists literally decades ago. The interesting question is not whether we will keep breaking heat records (we will), but whether we're going to do anything about it or just stand there while the climate train runs us over." The so-called "Dust Bowl summers" of the 1930s especially that of 1936 were fueled by drought and extreme heat combining with overplowing across the Great Plains.

- Heat stress and increased energy demand -

"The record summer is certainly in line with what we expect from human-caused climate change; as the US and the planet



People walk in Times Square during a summer heat wave in Manhattan, New York City, on June 24, 2025.

as a whole warms, heat waves become both more frequent and more intense," climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of Berkeley Earth told AFP.

"It should absolutely send alarm bells ringing, as these hotter summers lead to increased heat stress, higher energy demand for cooling, and strain on infrastructure and public health systems."

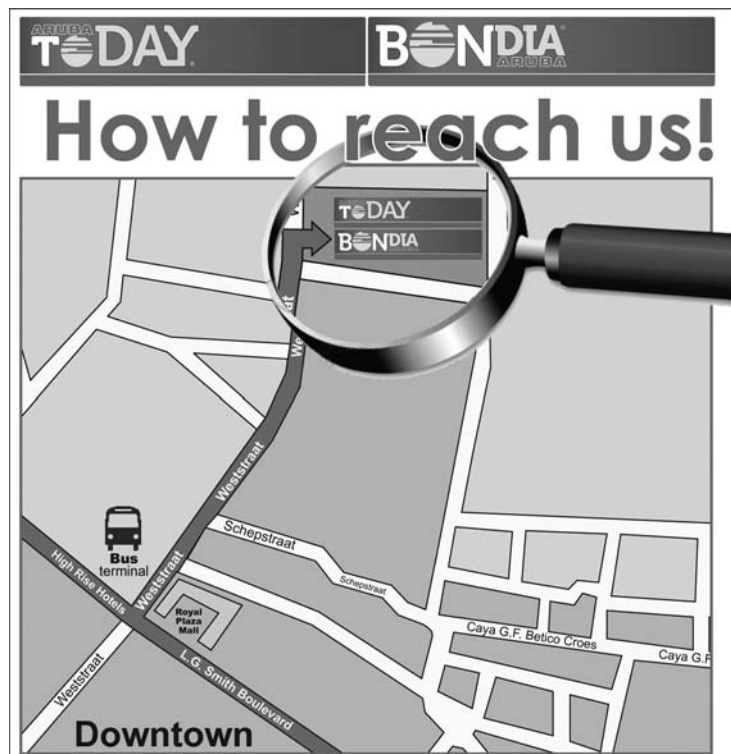
Most states experienced above- to much-above-average August temperatures, with near-average conditions seen only in parts of the northern Plains and Midwest, NOAA said. Precipitation was below average, ranking in the driest third on record for both August and for the June-August period.

Drought covered nearly 60 percent of the contiguous US not including Alaska and Hawaii by September 1, said NOAA.

Notable events included Lake Mead, America's largest reservoir, dropping to its lowest level on record, falling 1.5 feet below its previous low in July 2022.

Elsewhere, severe storms brought heavy rain, including in central Indiana, where 11 inches fell from August 11 and 17.

Alaska's average temperature during August and average summer temperature ranked in the warmest third among records, while Hawaii saw its third warmest August and a summer that fell into the warmest third. □



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Marriott Surf club

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3 BR 3 bath Ocean view
Gold season
Price :\$25,000
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Marriott Surf club

Palm beach
2 BR 2 bath ocean side
Gold season
Price :\$ 15,000
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Marriott surf club

Palm beach
2 BR 2 bath ocean view
Gold season
Price :\$14,000
Call :011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

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Hospital
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San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Eagle
Tel. 587 9011

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

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Prof. Taxi 588 0035
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

AI data centers are less thirsty now, tech giants say

New York, United States

Data centers are running into a wall of public anger in the United States over their thirst for water and power.

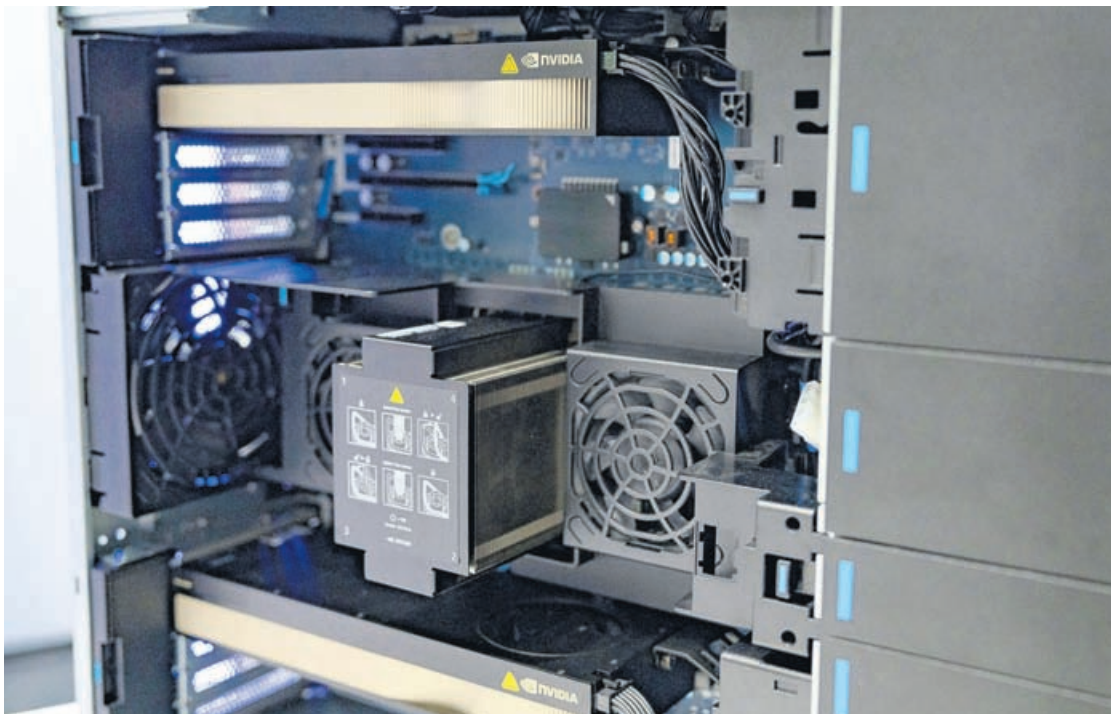
The tech giants spending billions of dollars on them say the water part, at least, is solvable.

Data centers are the warehouses full of computer servers that run the internet and increasingly artificial intelligence.

The computers get hot, and keeping them cool takes water.

American chip giant Nvidia said in a June report that it can eliminate water consumption almost entirely at some facilities when deploying DSX, its newest system for designing and managing AI data centers. It's a bold claim, and one the industry is under mounting pressure to make good on.

In 2025, data centers consumed 222 billion liters (59 billion gallons) of water worldwide for cooling, according to consultancy Rys-



A server hardware setup equipped with NVIDIA acceleration units is displayed during the AI Summit Seoul & Expo 2026 at COEX in Seoul, South Korea, August 19, 2026.

tad Energy.

Without adaptive measures, the figure could nearly triple to 644 billion liters by 2030, Rystad estimates. Steps to limit the growth could keep it under double.

Nvidia's new method uses a closed-loop cooling system in which liquid flows directly through the servers, as close as possible to the chips, whose temperature can rise above 80C (176F).

The problem is that "there's a pretty direct trade-off between how much water is

used and how much energy is used" for temperature control, said Andy Masley, an independent researcher who covers AI and data centers.

Cutting back on water use usually means more power as the liquid in those sealed pipes still has to be cooled down somehow, usually by blowing air over it and that takes electricity.

Nvidia gets around some of this by letting the liquid enter the servers warmer than usual, at 45C.

Most other closed-loop systems ran at about 32C in

2024, according to the Uptime Institute, which certifies data centers.

By starting with warmer water, Nvidia does not need to pump in cooled air year-round.

"Simple fans circulating the air" are often enough, though sometimes a mix of methods is needed, said Josh Parker, Nvidia's head of sustainability.

At sites in extreme climates, or during a heat wave, chill airflow or water evaporation is still necessary.

- Public relations -

Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Meta told AFP that they also use closed-loop systems, which they said involve no net water loss.

The two cloud computing giants, which have been expanding their already huge data center footprints, used more water overall between 2022 and 2025, but their water use efficiency improved by 25 percent at Microsoft and 37 percent at AWS, according to their most recent sustainability reports.

There is no industry-wide consistency, however, in how companies report data on so-called environmental, social and governance (ESG) efforts.

Elon Musk's SpaceX, now a major player in data centers after it acquired his artificial intelligence company xAI, has never published an ESG report.

In June, ratings agency MSCI gave SpaceX its lowest ESG score.

"Because water is generally much cheaper than electricity," companies have less incentive to cut water use on cost grounds alone, said Shaolei Ren, an engineering professor at the University of California, Riverside. □

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Meta share price surges after personal AI agent release

New York, United States

Meta shares surged more than six percent on Wednesday, a day after the company unveiled a

personal AI agent that it says can book travel, send emails and make purchases on users' behalf. The company behind



A close-up of a human finger pressing the Muse app icon inside a folder containing Meta apps on a smartphone screen in Creteil, France, on September 9, 2026, after Meta launched Muse, an autonomous personal artificial intelligence agent.

Facebook and Instagram said Muse was built for users with no technical background and is designed to work the way people already message each other, either in a dedicated app or inside WhatsApp. Available only to those aged 18 and over, Muse comes with a free tier or monthly subscription plans of \$20 or \$100, depending on usage.

The release is part of Meta boss Mark Zuckerberg's ambition to pursue "personal superintelligence" as the company scrambles to keep pace in the AI race with OpenAI, Anthropic and Google -- the makers of ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini, respectively.

Meta has poured billions of dollars into its AI division, known as Meta Superintelligence Labs, and expects to spend up to \$145 billion this year, nearly double its 2025 outlay.

Agents AI programs that work on their own, without a person guiding each step have recently unsettled users, with reports from OpenAI and other companies of models going against instructions and safety guardrails.

Muse's launch comes shortly after Meta agreed to pay a coalition of U.S. states as much as \$16.7 billion and to impose sweeping new limits on how teenagers use Facebook and Instagram. □

LIV Golf files for bankruptcy protection



LIV Golf CEO Scott O'Neil looks on during day four of LIV Golf New York at Trump National Golf Club on August 09, 2026 in Bedminster, New Jersey.

Los Angeles, United States

LIV Golf, the breakaway tour that spent billions of dollars luring top players away from the PGA and triggered bitter divisions within the sport, filed Tuesday for bankruptcy protection.

The filing at a New Jersey court indicates LIV, which abruptly lost its deep-pocketed Saudi investors earlier this year, intends to restructure and return in a new form.

But documents show LIV owes between \$500 million and \$1 billion in estimated liabilities to at least 1,000 creditors, including

star players like Bryson DeChambeau and Jon Rahm. And the future of those popular players remains deeply unclear. The likes of DeChambeau are now faced with deciding whether to remain with the tour in its new guise, or leave and attempt to pursue the millions of dollars they are owed in court.

"This process gives us the structure and time to pursue a landmark transaction and begin the next chapter of LIV Golf," said CEO Scott O'Neil, in a statement.

LIV still intends to return next year in a new form including "an innovative, player-

first ownership model," he said.

"No definitive decisions regarding the 2027 schedule or individual events are being announced at this time," the LIV statement added.

The bankruptcy filing was widely expected, after LIV axed the majority of its staff earlier this month, and scrapped its season-ending team championship in August after losing the backing of Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF).

Since LIV's launch in 2022, the Middle Eastern fund had poured an estimated

\$5 billion into the tour, before abruptly pulling the plug.

The PIF will now provide a loan worth nearly \$50 million for the bankruptcy and reorganization process, the LIV statement showed.

LIV's star players Rahm, DeChambeau and Dustin Johnson hold the largest unsecured claims against the tour, totaling more than \$5 million each in immediate past-due payments, per the bankruptcy filing.

But even those amounts do not reflect the future remaining contract values of some golfers, that can range into tens of millions of dollars each, the Financial Times reported, citing a person familiar with the matter.

Tuesday's statement said "the Company remains in advanced discussions with" players, including on "creating an ownership structure aligning players' interests with the League's long-term success."

"Players will have the opportunity to share directly in the value they help create," said O'Neil, in an open letter to fans.

LIV did not immediately respond to AFP request for comment on the matter.

- 'LIV 2.0' -

Tour officials have previously pledged that a "2.0" version of the tour will re-

emerge under new investors next season, with a shorter schedule and reduced prize money.

Further details emerged for the proposals on Tuesday. LIV intends to host tournaments across five continents, in locations including Australia, South Africa, Mexico, England, Hong Kong and the US.

"We intend to expand our fields to 75 players, introduce a cut, and create additional pathways for players to earn their way into LIV Golf, including Monday qualifiers," it said.

The emphasis would remain on courting young fans, with live music, and team competitions which will "embrace national identities, building on the passion and momentum of World Cup-style competition."

But much will depend on whether top stars including DeChambeau and Rahm remain.

Widespread reports have linked several LIV stars with potential returns to the PGA Tour and other series, though the PGA said it currently has no plans to offer LIV players a pathway back.

Five-time major winner Brooks Koepka who did return to the PGA this year is still listed as a creditor owed \$1.7 million on the LIV bankruptcy filing. □

Vuelta debutant Brennan claims fifth victory on stage 17

Seville, Spain

Sprint king Matthew Brennan claimed a fifth Vuelta a Espana stage victory on Wednesday as he edged a bunch sprint in Seville to win the 17th stage.

The 21-year-old Grand Tour debutant crossed the finish line ahead of Jordi Meeus and Magnus Cort Nielsen. General classification leader Enric Mas moved one step closer to claiming a first Grand Tour victory as he maintained his 2min 6sec lead on Felix Gall, with four-time Vuelta winner Primož Roglič a further four seconds behind.

The stage was set up for the bunch sprint finale, without a single climb on

the long, flat, 185 kilometre ride from Dos Hermanas to the Andalusian capital.

Sinuhe Fernandez and Enzo Paleni formed a two-man break early on, whipping up a gap of more than four minutes on the peloton, who were moving at a leisurely pace on another hot day with temperatures over 30C.

The gap extended to over five minutes around the halfway point, with Visma then working hard to reduce it.

Groupama FDJ-United rider Paleni dropped Fernandez but was absorbed by the peloton with just three kilometres remaining after

a monumental effort.

Young star Brennan came around Danish rider Cort to claim the sprint victory, holding off Belgium's Meeus who crossed the line second.

As with his other stage victories, the Briton raised his hand to the air, this time with all of his fingers up to represent his five victories. Brennan's victory puts him in a small bracket of riders, including Tadej Pogacar who was overwhelming favourite to win this year's Vuelta before he suffered a season-ending injury in a crash in stage eight to claim five or more stages at a single Grand Tour.

On Thursday, riders take on

a 32.1km individual time-trial from El Puerto de Santa Maria to Jerez de la Frontera in stage 18, which is

one of the last chances for Mas's general classification contenders to cut down the gap on the Spaniard. □



Team Visma-Lease a bike's British rider Matthew Brennan celebrates winning the 17th stage of the Vuelta a Espana 2026 cycling tour, a 185 km race between Dos Hermanas and Seville, on September 9, 2026.

Rybakina ensures rise to No.1 by reaching US Open semis

New York, United States

Elena Rybakina ensured a rise to the world number one ranking for the first time in her career by defeating Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen in Wednesday's US Open quarter-finals.

The 27-year-old Kazakh star rallied to defeat China's Zheng 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 after two hours and 14 minutes at Arthur Ashe Stadium, ensuring she will replace Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus atop next week's rankings.

"It's just a number right now," Rybakina said after the match. "Of course I'm in the semis. It's an amazing achievement (but) during the match I feel like I just need to focus on my game."

Rybakina advanced to a Thursday semi-final against



Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina hits a return against China's Zheng Qinwen during their women's singles quarter-final tennis match on day eleven of the U.S. Open tennis tournament at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York City on September 9, 2026.

the later winner between fourth-ranked American Coco Gauff, twice a major champion, and Russian 19-year-old Mirra Andre-eva, the fifth-ranked reigning French Open champi-

on from Russia.

In becoming the first Kazakh player to reach number one, Rybakina becomes the 30th woman to reach the world number one spot.

"It's something for which you're going to be very proud when you finish at the end of the year," Rybakina said. "No matter how long you're going to stay it's an achievement and I feel very proud."

Rybakina, who had been 0-6 in prior US Open matches after dropping the first set, seeks her third Grand Slam title after winning at Wimbledon in 2022 and at this year's Australian Open. "It's tough to find words. It was a difficult match... I didn't start that well, I was too much negative," said Rybakina, who had played all of her prior matches at night. "It has been an early match. In my head I was complaining about the shadow ... I'm glad I pushed all the negative

thoughts away. I just kept telling myself: 'Keep fighting'." Rybakina, the second seed, was among four women with a chance to leave Flushing Meadows as world number one, but her victory ended the top spot hopes of Sabalenka, Gauff and third-ranked American Jessica Pegula. Sabalenka and Pegula will meet in Thursday's other semi-final.

- 'Positive things' -

Reigning Olympic champion Zheng, 23, missed out on her first US Open semi-final. She lost at the 2024 Australian Open in her only Grand Slam final appearance.

"Maybe when she serve second serve, I could be more aggressive sometimes and make a bit less mistake in the return," Zheng said. "Today is just few points makes the difference."

Rybakina, who has shown no sign of the foot injury that hindered her US Open preparations, improved to 5-1 all-time over Zheng with her third triumph of the year.

Zheng, ranked 121 after missing about eight months due to elbow surgery, went through qualifying and won seven matches in New York, ensuring her a top-60 ranking next week.

"I got a lot of chances in the third set, but I didn't take them," Zheng said. "That was a bit pity for me to lose this match, but obviously I can take positive things from the US Open this year."

Zheng grabbed the first break chances of the match in the eighth game and seized a 5-3 lead when Rybakina netted a forehand.

The ninth game was a 14-minute fight with Zheng saving five break points, firing an ace, backhand winner down the line and service winner then taking the others on errant Rybakina backhand service returns. Zheng capitalized on her fourth set point when Rybakina sent a forehand service return long. □



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