



Historic water tanks at Kibaima becomes another monument site of Aruba



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'In our lane': Fed's Warsh defies Trump but still fighting for credibility

Washington, United States

U.S. Federal Reserve chair Kevin Warsh delivered the interest rate hike this week that many economists think surging inflation required, defying President Donald Trump -- but questions about the central bank chief's credibility linger.

The Fed on Wednesday raised rates in the world's largest economy by 25 basis points to between 3.75 and 4.00 percent, with policymakers signalling at least one more rate hike before year-end.

Trump has launched an unprecedented assault on the Fed's independence to set monetary policy since taking office, initiating a criminal probe into Warsh's predecessor and attempting to fire another Fed governor in his quest for lower rates to spur economic activity.

He frequently insulted and berated former chair Jerome Powell, but delivered a muted if still extraordinary response to Warsh's announcement of the rate hike.

Trump told reporters he spoke with Warsh before the Fed's meeting, telling him to "do what you want" and ascribing the decision to raise rates which the Fed chair voted for and stood by to a "hostile board."

Asked by a reporter if he had spoken to the president, Warsh was tight-



U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh speaks during a news conference at the William McChesney Martin Jr. Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington, DC, on September 16, 2026.

lipped. And queried on the Fed's independence, he again offered a tepid defence.

"Part of the independence of the Federal Reserve is we stay in our lane. Independence is a two-way street," he said, responding to a question about Trump's threat to cut trade ties with some countries if the Fed raised rates.

"We let people that do trade policy and fiscal policy stay in their lane, too," Warsh said.

For Pao-Lin Tien, economics professor at George Washington University, Trump's version of his conversa-

tion with Warsh will fuel the skepticism of those who question the latter's independence.

"That kind of meddling really makes people question a little bit whether the Fed chair is really completely independent," she said. "Personally, I'm not very convinced."

- 'Not a reliable narrator' -

For others, however, Warsh has been put in a difficult spot. With inflation surging to three-year highs amid the Iran war, and an aggressive president who has made it clear he will channel his anger at friends and

foes alike if he does not get what he wants.

David Wessel, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, thought Warsh managed the situation well.

"He got a unanimous vote from the FOMC to raise interest rates and, apparently based on a conversation between the two men, the president doesn't seem to blame Warsh personally for the rate hike," he said, referring to the Fed's interest-rate setting committee.

Still, the president's assertion that he gave Warsh permission to vote for the hike was "very Trump-like," he added.

"We don't know what was really said in that conversation. Warsh isn't talking and Trump isn't a reliable narrator," said Wessel. "I doubt he asked Trump for permission, but maybe Trump believes he gave it."

- 'Steel in his spine' -

What is clear to many economists is that a rate hike was needed.

Inflation has been above the Federal Reserve's two-percent target for more than five years, with US households and businesses battered by high prices since the pandemic.

Inflation had been on a downward trajectory, but prices have surged in the wake of Trump's war on Iran, his signature tariff policies and the ongoing AI boom.

Since taking office in May, Warsh has made it clear he was focused on the high prices.

"The plain fact is that inflation is too high, and has been for too long," he told reporters on Wednesday.

The White House insists that any inflation is due to the previous administration, with Trump advisor Kevin Hassett saying earlier this week that there was no need for a rate hike to tackle it.

Warsh, however, had a different view, saying that inflation data over the summer did not suggest that price rises were transitory. □

White House pulls nominee to head U.S. immigration agency



Secretary of Homeland Security Markwayne Mullin speaks during a press conference at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) NY field office on September 01, 2026 in New York City

Washington, United States

The White House on Thursday withdrew its nominee to head US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the agency tasked with carrying out President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

Lance Schroyer, a former U.S. Marine and Oklahoma state trooper, was named by Trump earlier this year to be the next ICE director, a post subject to Senate confirmation.

In a brief statement on its website, the White House said Schroyer's nomination had been withdrawn.

No reason was given but the nomination had been stalled in the Senate.

ICE is currently being run by an acting director after the previous interim chief stepped down in May.

Individuals nominated to head federal agencies are supposed to be confirmed by the Senate, but that has not happened with ICE since 2017. Its leaders since then have been interim directors.

Schroyer has been serving as an adviser to Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin pending his Senate confirmation.

Trump campaigned for the White House on a promise to expel millions of undocumented migrants and has taken a number of actions since taking office aimed at speeding up deportations and reducing border crossings.

Nearly 51,000 undocumented migrants were arrested in the United States in August, according to Department of Homeland Security figures, surpassing the previous record high of 50,200 in July. □

Trump admin overhauls key protection for endangered species

Washington, United States President Donald Trump's administration will no longer treat the unintentional killing of protected wildlife as unlawful, officials confirmed Thursday, in a shift conservationists say effectively guts the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Under the sweeping new directive, deaths resulting from foreseeable risks posed by activities such as commercial fishing or logging will be exempt from the landmark 1973 law.

"What's being put forward by the Trump administration is going to cut the heart out of the Endangered Species Act," Gib Brogan, campaign director for Oceana Fisheries, told AFP. He said the law had been successful at saving species for five decades by finely balancing human economic needs against conservation.

The September 14 memorandum, posted online by the nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity and confirmed to AFP by the administration, redefines the longstanding definition of "take" a term that relates to



U.S. Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Lee Zeldin speaks during a press conference in the framework of the G20 Ministerial meeting on Energy Abundance, in Houston, Texas, on September 14, 2026.

pursuing, killing or capturing of a species.

It is now confined to "affirmative conduct intentionally directed against a particular animal or animals."

The move, first reported by the New York Times, explicitly cites a dissent by the late Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia in a 1995 case on the matter.

"A vessel that inadvertently

strikes a whale has not taken it, because the vessel's course was not set against the whale," the document says, quoting the conservative justice.

"Felling a tree is not a take of the bats roosting in it unless the tree is felled for the purpose of killing or capturing them," it continued.

In the 1995 case, known as *Babbitt v. Sweet Home*, an association of landowners

and loggers tried to challenge the prevailing definition of "take," arguing a species of woodpecker and an owl had injured them economically by preventing them from conducting their business.

The Supreme Court ultimately ruled against them in a 6-3 decision -- but the high court has since shifted considerably rightward.

- Whales, turtles, coral at risk -

The new memo was signed by Brian Nesvik, the director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, which falls under the Interior Department.

The department confirmed to AFP that the document was genuine.

"The memorandum accurately reflects the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's guidance for implementing the Endangered Species Act following the final rule rescinding the regulatory definition of 'harm,'" the department said.

"Under the guidance, the ESA's prohibition on 'take' continues to prohibit conduct including harassing, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing or collecting protected wildlife," it added.

The Trump administration has already finalized a series of rules weakening the ESA.

One rescinded the long-standing definition of "harm," which had covered habitat destruction. Another scrapped a rule that automatically applied endangered species protections to those listed as "threatened." □

Hispanics feel 'betrayed' on immigration, Republican warns Trump

Washington, United States U.S. lawmakers from both parties attacked President Donald Trump's mass deportation drive Thursday, with a member of his own party warning that Hispanic voters who helped return him to the White House now "feel betrayed."

"Mr President, some of your immigration enforcement efforts have gone too far," Republican congresswoman Maria Elvira Salazar of Florida said in a campaign video released weeks before November's midterm elections.

Salazar, whose Miami-area district is overwhelmingly Hispanic, said half of roughly 50,000 people detained in July had no criminal record and she urged

Trump to reconsider advice he was receiving on immigration.

"The same Hispanics who helped you get to the White House in 2024 feel betrayed today," she said. "I'm not talking about giving them amnesty. I'm talking about giving them a dignified life in this promised land."

The unusually direct rebuke from a Republican comes as the party controlling Congress and the White House faces growing concern that aggressive immigration enforcement could erode gains the president made among Latino voters in 2024.

Trump endorsed Salazar earlier this year, although the American former tele-

vision journalist, who has Cuban heritage, has long advocated legal status for some undocumented immigrants.

Her intervention came hours before Democrats in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus accused the administration of inflicting both a human and economic toll through mass deportations.

At a Capitol Hill news conference with immigration advocacy group America's Voice, lawmakers blamed US Immigration and Customs Enforcement for rising costs associated with labor shortages -- assailing what they called the "ICE tax."

"ICE is an affordability issue. Everyone in this coun-



Congresswoman Maria Salazar (2nd L) speaks at a press conference with Senator Rick Scott (2nd R), Congressman Byron Donalds (L), and Congressman Carlos Gimenez (R) to discuss the Department of Justice's indictment of Raul Castro, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC on May 20, 2026.

try is paying the ICE tax," caucus chairman Adriano Espaillat said, arguing that removing workers was pushing up the costs of food, construction and health care.

House Democrat Joaquin Castro of Texas said immi-

gration raids were removing workers from industries including agriculture, construction and restaurants.

"ICE is killing the American economy," Castro said, pointing to businesses struggling to find workers and consumers paying higher prices. □

Chinese architect Ma Yansong melds nature with 'futuristic feel'

Beijing, China

From a distance, it looks as though a giant spaceship has just landed in the palm tree-dotted streets near downtown Los Angeles.

It could also be a low passing cloud but for its Chinese architect Ma Yansong, as long as the building "sparks curiosity", he's achieved his purpose.

Over the past two decades, Ma has created dozens of visually striking projects in his home country and abroad, integrating nature with sleek, modern designs.

In some ways, his seemingly sci-fi-inspired style is a perfect match for his newest project opening on September 22, the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in Los Angeles, founded by "Star Wars" creator George Lucas and his wife, Mellody Hobson.

"The building takes on a futuristic feel that generates excitement," Ma told AFP at the Beijing office of MAD Architects, the firm he established in 2004.

"When people visit the Lucas Museum, they will each



A general view shows the Baizhuan Social Housing project, a subsidised residential compound for low-income communities, designed by Chinese architect Ma Yansong in Beijing on August 13, 2026.

bring their own unique perspectives," said the 50-year-old, who last year was included on Time magazine's list of the 100 most influential people.

"They might catch a beam of light, see it cutting through the building, glimpse the clouds, the sky, or even the cosmos.

"This sparks curiosity and

new ideas and those diverse thoughts are incredibly valuable."

- Mountains and water -

A Beijing native, he grew up in a courtyard house typical of the "hutong" alleyways that crisscross the historic centre of China's capital city.

"There was a very close

connection to nature," he said, recalling the trees and small pockets of open space interspersed in hutong neighbourhoods. Later, he went overseas to train as an architect, graduating from the Yale School of Architecture and working briefly at the studio of acclaimed Iraqi-British designer Zaha Hadid.

Ma and his firm have conceptualised landmark works all over China, including the Harbin Opera House, a vast, swooping structure perched dramatically on the banks of the frigid Songhua River.

Abroad, his notable projects include a pair of twisting residential buildings called the "Absolute Towers" near Toronto, Canada, and a migration-themed museum that opened last year in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Ma's architectural vision draws inspiration from traditional Chinese paintings known as "shanshui", or "mountains and water", usually depicting natural scenery.

The Lucas Museum is closely interwoven with its external environment by lawns, trees, running water and a roof covered in vegetation and solar panels.

"If you look at a Chinese garden, it is a completely natural environment, even though it is artificially designed," Ma told AFP.

"There is a global conversation (now) about ecology and how to bring people closer to nature, yet I find that traditional Eastern architecture mastered this long ago," he said.

Spanish Oscar hopeful 'The Black Ball' pays tribute to LGBTQ community

Toronto, Canada

Spain's Oscar entry "The Black Ball" has proven buzzy across the festival circuit, as its powerful message championing LGBTQ rights emerges from intertwined storylines revolving around sexuality and the Spanish Civil War.

The drama featuring cameos by the likes of Penelope Cruz and Glenn Close received a standing ovation Tuesday at the Toronto Film Festival (TIFF), accolades that arrived the eve before Spain selected the film known as "La Bola Negra" in Spanish

as its international feature film Academy Award contender.

Directors Javier Ambrossi and Javier Calvo, a creative duo affectionately known as "Los Javis" and who were until recently a couple, are famous in Spain particularly for their television work, if less widely known on the international stage.

But their stars are rising after a smash debut of the film at Cannes, where it won the best director award that was shared with Pawel Pawlikowski ("Fatherland").

Along with Cruz and Close, "The Black Ball" stars Miguel Bernardeau, and weaves the stories of three gay men across different eras in Spain.

"It's a tribute to the LGBTQ+ community" of the

past that fought for human rights, Ambrossi told AFP. Speaking to journalists at a press conference at TIFF, he said "we wanted to make it big."

The story spooled into existence as they developed the film, he explained. It started "fragile" and "intimate," Ambrossi said, "but we understood there was a political statement behind it" that allowed for an "epic gay drama for everyone."

'Empathy and humanity'

The filmmakers noted that many countries still have anti-LGBTQ laws, and people within the community can be persecuted or even killed for their sexuality.

Calvo emphasized that the film is "about empathy and humanity and seeing the other as a person." □

- People-centred architecture -

Ma told AFP that he embraces what he calls a "major shift" in architecture towards placing people, rather than the buildings themselves, at the centre of the design concept. "We aren't using architecture to flaunt wealth or power," he said.

Although many of MAD's clients wield significant financial resources, Ma said his focus is not merely to impress, but also to create "uniquely valuable space for people to enjoy".

MAD's Beijing office is located in the heart of a hutong neighborhood near where Ma attended school in his youth.

"I like these small streets, with their trees, the people walking by and that certain atmosphere of everyday urban life," he said. □



Javier Ambrossi and Javier Calvo attend the red carpet for the "Hombre Al Agua" premiere during the 2026 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) at the Princess of Wales Theatre in Toronto, Canada, on September 15, 2026.



A worker shows grapes to test their readiness before the grape harvest begins in the Chizay vineyard in Berehove on August 27, 2026, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Ukraine winemakers defy war to make a splash at home

Berehove, Ukraine

As this year's harvest season entered full swing, a winery in western Ukraine had an additional task to oversee: installing solar panels to help it weather blackouts caused by Russian military strikes.

Nestled on the western borderlands of the war-torn country, the sunlit slopes of the wine-growing Zakarpattia region have largely escaped the fighting that has ravaged other parts of the country.

But with power cuts and labour shortages crippling production capacity, the impact of the war has seeped into the daily reality at Chizay, one of the country's most well known producers.

"We believe and hope that we'll get through this winter somehow thanks to alternative sources of electricity," Dmytro Sholudko, the winery's director, told AFP. A steady supply of power is vital for the air conditioners maintaining the right temperature inside Chizay's storage rooms. Spacious, chilly and cloaked in an earthy scent, they hold hundreds of oak barrels and several towering steel tanks full of maturing wine.

- 'We need hands' -

The war, now well into its fifth year, has not spared Ukraine's wine industry, lo-

cated in the west like Zakarpattia but also in the east or in the south around Odesa.

Vineyards have been destroyed or occupied, including in Russia-annexed Crimea, and winemakers have been killed.

A Russian strike on the Kyiv region this month damaged a warehouse of the OKWINE chain of wine shops, inflicting losses it estimated at around \$13.5 million.

With hundreds of thousands of men drafted to fight, labour shortages are also hitting the sector.

"We've just started the harvest season, and we very much need hands, but it's very hard to find them," Sholudko said.

Every year, Chizay needs around 110 seasonal workers to hand-pick grapes on its vast estate of 270 hectares (660 acres) of vines stretching across rolling hills. Chizay produces 1.3 million bottles a year, mostly from its white Sauvignon Blanc, Muscat and Riesling grapes.

Its signature wine is made of another white grape, Furmint, rich and gold in colour with a dried apricot aroma. But the white wine dominance could soon change threatened not by the war, but by climate change. "People would al-

ways say that Zakarpattia is a land of white wines," said Gennadiy Vachylia, Chizay's 32-year-old director of viticulture.

When AFP visited, he was climbing through rows of vines winding up the hill, collecting samples to test their ripeness.

Rising temperatures are bringing the harvest season forward by two to three days each year.

"With global warming the potential has opened up for red wines as well," he told AFP.

- 'Cradle' of winemaking -

Internationally, Ukraine hardly has the reputation of a winemaking powerhouse.

It exports around \$11 million of wine a year -- a large chunk to neighbouring Romania -- according to industry and official figures cited in Ukrainian media. Imports, meanwhile, top \$200 million.

But at home, enthusiasts are touting a boom in domestic production.

"We send our wine to various competitions so that not only in Ukraine but also in the world people can see that Ukrainian wine has the same quality, and in some cases even higher quality, than some foreign wines," said Zoltan Udvardy, Chizay's head winemaker. □



A woman reads an article from Venezuelan news outlet Caraoa Digital on a mobile phone in Caracas on September 17, 2026.

Venezuela unblocks some censored news sites

Caracas, Venezuela

Venezuela has unblocked some news sites that had been censored for years, its telecom regulator said Thursday, just as U.S.-backed political transition talks were set to resume.

Caracas censored hundreds of websites under president Nicolas Maduro, who was captured by US forces in January and replaced by interim leader Delcy Rodriguez.

Eight months after his ouster, Washington is backing dialogue between the interim government and parts of the opposition, although US President Donald Trump has ruled out elections in the near future.

The decision to unblock censored outlets came ahead of the second round of talks in Caracas, which are partly focusing on freedom of expression.

Telecom regulator CONATEL announced the "formal restoration of access to various national and international digital platforms and media outlets."

Digital rights group Venezuela Sin Filtro verified access to 17 news sites through several internet providers.

At least 188 websites remain blocked, it said, including 79 news outlets.

Journalists and NGOs have spent years campaigning against censorship implemented by Maduro's administration, with users having to rely on a VPN to access blocked sites.

Deputy communications minister Gustavo Villapol said the decision aimed to end polarization.

"We can never again vilify people without having proof in hand; we cannot use communication for interests that are external to the vital meaning of our nation," he said on state television.

Luis Ernesto Blanco, editorial director of the previously blocked site Runrunes, likened Thursday's measure to an official acknowledgement that public debate had been stifled.

"They had censored them basically because they wanted to; there was no administrative ruling, no court order requiring it," he said.

Dinorah Figuera, head of the opposition delegation to the transition talks, called the decision "a first step."

"Many outlets are still missing, and they all have to come back, fully and permanently," she wrote on X.

- 'Managed to hold on' -

Victor Amaya, whose online outlet TalCual was blocked in July 2024, voiced skepticism that all censored sites will become accessible again. □

U.S. military buildup in Palau stirs war fears

Koror, Palau

U.S. military plans to rebuild the main port in a pristine Pacific archipelago have stirred painful memories of World War II and have locals concerned about being caught in a potential superpower conflict.

Palau will become the US military's top overseas location for construction next year as a crumbling wharf built by Japan in World War Two is expanded to berth US Navy ships and the harbor dredged deeper in a \$500 million project.

Haunted by their past, Palauans have asked Washington how they will be protected if war breaks out again in a country with less than 177 square miles of habitable land.

"Where would they go? The concern is very real," said Madelsar Ngiraingas, who grew up with stories told by her grandmothers of how they escaped during a bloody WWII clash between American and Japanese troops.

Located some 500 miles (800 kilometers) west of the South China Sea and home to just 17,000 people, Palau is also earmarked to house a crisis-ready stockpile for U.S. Marines, tender documents show.

Land is being cleared for a military radar and a remote



This picture taken on September 5, 2026, shows an aerial view of land clearing coastal land on Babeldaob Island, Palau, for a U.S. military over-the-horizon radar system.

airfield widened for heavy aircraft.

A petition signed by two thousand people sent last month to Palau's congress sought assurances from Washington that the population would be safe should war reach their shores.

- 'We are now a target' -

Palau receives significant US funding under a compact of free association and its citizens have the right to work and study there visa-free.

In return, they cede territorial access to the U.S. mili-

tary.

The construction boom is the first significant U.S. military activity under that compact, explained Ongerung Kambes Kesolei, founder of local think-tank the Congress Point Institute. "With the U.S. military coming in, we are now a target. The role of Palau in the second island chain has become more prominent," he said, referencing a dividing line in the Pacific viewed by both Chinese and U.S. strategists as crucial in a potential future conflict.

At a community meeting last month, U.S. officials explained the port's benefits by showing images of cruise ships, not warships. But when a resident asked where the passenger terminal would be, the reply was the US Navy didn't require one.

"Many Palauans are not against the U.S. military, nor the projects, there just needs to be better communication and discussion around the potential impacts," said Ngiraingas, who organised the meeting.

- Disturbing dugongs -

The plans to rebuild the main port in the tourism hub of Koror have also sparked anxiety among traditional chiefs, scientists and tour operators.

Locals fear it will drive away vulnerable dugongs and put at risk World Heritage turquoise lagoons two kilometres from the construction.

UNESCO describes Koror's marine lakes as "natural laboratories" for science, yielding new species in a zone abundant with large coral.

An environmental impact assessment found that the dredging in nearby Malakal Harbour -- expected to start this year -- will cause the loss of 4.26 hectares of coral, impacting endangered turtles, fish and dugong.

"If we are pounding pilings and dredging coral, I have to imagine they are simply going to leave the neighbourhood," said Ron Leidich, a biologist who monitors dugong herds feeding on sea grass beds at nearby Ngederrak Reef.

The construction site will be wrapped with underwater silt curtains but Leidich worries the marine lakes will be contaminated by sediment plumes. □

In Kashmir, lake weeds mix with traditional art

Srinagar, India

A Kashmiri artisan is turning weeds pulled from Srinagar's famous Dal Lake into a new ingredient for the centuries-old craft of papier-mache, one of

Kashmir's best-known traditional art forms.

Dal Lake is famed for its floating gardens and houseboats against a Himalayan backdrop.

Among its past visitors was

Beatles guitarist George Harrison, who stayed on a houseboat in 1966 and met sitar maestro Ravi Shankar. But the lake has long struggled with heavy growth of aquatic weeds, which Indian authorities regularly remove to keep its waterways clear.

Simran Irshad, 35, began experimenting with weeds after the rising cost of paper made traditional papier-mache increasingly expensive.

With roots in Persian craftsmanship, Kashmir's papier-mache is known for brightly painted boxes, trays and ornaments decorated with intricate floral, bird and paisley motifs as well as Christmas ornaments exported worldwide.

- 'Like a treasure' -

Irshad searched for a cheaper, locally available material, and eventually turned to aquatic vegetation regularly cleared from the lake as waste.

After months of experimentation, she developed a technique using dried and pulverised weeds mixed with recycled paper pulp and a binding agent to create the material.

"For the past 100 years this craft has been done this way, using only paper," Irshad told AFP.

"Why not use something that can increase production, make it durable and also make it cheaper?" she said.

Irshad collects the weeds by boat before drying and processing them at her workshop.

She tested different vegetation before finding the lake weeds most suitable because of their higher moisture content.

"Paper comes from trees, trees are cut down to make paper," she said.

"What I am removing from the lake is like a treasure given to me by God."

She has trained around 50 women to make paper products, with 15 currently working with her on the weed-based craft.

Irshad hopes to expand the initiative but said she needs more support to provide work for additional women. □



A Kashmiri artisan uses dried aquatic weeds and grass collected from Dal Lake to create sustainable handcrafted papier-mache at a workshop in Srinagar on August 19, 2026.

Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.



When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento—at least not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay

is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English,

it is used often to refer to the morning time.

Bon tardi

In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atar-di", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

Bon nochi.

You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation.

However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □

Birds of Aruba



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

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



Facebook page.

The Great Egret

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

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs re-



discovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

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

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect.

Picture credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation.

Historic water tanks at Kibaima becomes another monument site of Aruba Repurposed as learning and heritage center

(Oranjestad)—The water tanks monument site at Kibaima will now be repurposed as a learning center for the Aruba National Archives (ANA). This is what Monumentsfund Aruba (SMFA) announced Wednesday during the official trans-

ferring ceremony held at the historic site in Balashi. SMFA and the Aruban government also signed a collaboration agreement for the restoration of the monument. The restoration of Kibaima forms part of SMFA ongoing project to revitalize worn-down monuments in an effort to conserve Aruban history and heritage.

The plan to repurpose the site was a process that began a few years ago when, together with Dutch restoration company BOEi and several students from Hogeschool Rotterdam, SMFA conducted an investigation on ways to give the site a new function. Once ANA approached the foundation, plans for a learning and heritage center started tak-



ing shape.

As the SMFA explains in a recently published press release, ANA was looking for a new location to function as a center for investigation, education, documentation

and preservation of Aruban heritage. Established in 1994, the Aruba National Archives houses thousands of historical archives ranging from official documents to videos and cassettes and is the official record keeper of the island. With the transferring and restoration of the Kibaima site, SMFA has now designated the newly acquired monument as an active historical facility that will soon be in service to the Aruban community.

Stuivenberg and played a vital part in distributing drinkable water to the supply system in Oranjestad and San Nicolas. Pieter van Stuivenberg was also responsible for designing the historic water towers in both districts. For decades, the Kibaima site provided the basic needs of the Aruban community. After many years of abandonment, it will now have another important task facilitate the history and culture of Aruba.

History of the Kibaima water tanks

The water structure at Kibaima is a key aspect in the history of how water was distributed on the island. The tanks, standing at 50 meters above sea level, was designed by Dutch architect Pieter van

SMFA confirmed that the restoration of the monument site will happen in phases, with the first already underway. It's been estimated that restoration will be completed by the end of 2029. □

Pictures courtesy of Monumentsfund Aruba

It's Friday and here are few things you can do to spice up your weekend plans!

(Oranjestad)—The weekend is approaching and Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But there's always a bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline. Here are few things you can do with the family to start the weekend off right.

Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruis-



ing through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center.

Check out page 9 for more info on the Arikok National

Park!

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light.

Kayak in the Mangroves



Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some

workout as it might get a little windy and rough you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. It's fun, it's healthy and definitely outside the box! □

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National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the bright blue Cododo or mighty Warawara.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

cated at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complex-

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet im-

Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an ac-

the national park. This foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) was officially established and subsequently brought under management of ACF. In 2019, preliminary management plan for marine were introduced for Parke Marino to conserve reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests and in 2020 ACF was given additional management areas such as the Saliñas (Druif, Malmok, Cerca, Palm Beach, Bubali etc.) and also additional areas such as Rooi Manonchi, Ser'I Teishi etc. Managed areas can be seen here: <https://acf.aw/>. □



Did you know that four of the seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: A majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heading back to the ocean after laying her eggs during breeding season. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, lo-

ity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

pressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, or 4x4 vehicle. As of 2020, ATV's and UTVs are not allowed in the park due to its significant impact on nature.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The

tive yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

The Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), formerly known as Aruba National Park Foundation, manages

Visit the National Park Arikok to see the wonder of Aruba's nature. The visitor center in San Fuego and entrance in Vader Piet (San Nicolas) is open daily from 8:00 AM to 16:00 PM. Contact the ACF via e-mail, info@acf.aw or call +297 585 1234 for more information.

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!



(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.

In May 2023, geoscientists,

Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to



investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the

coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times on the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these

reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserve our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen!☐

Best spots to view the sunset

(Oranjestad)—What can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset? Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

California Light House

Of course, being one of the highest points easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House hill not only offers a tremendous view of the sunset, but also a breathtaking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

Manchebo & Eagle Beach

Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the entire western coast of the island. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing it can only be described as an experience!

Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just before you drive up the hill to the California

Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacular canvas for the sun to create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple

Hooiberg Hill

These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on top the 587-step stairs and reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

Casibari Rock Formation

If you're a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It's no Yosemite, but it



does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your

hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back.hue.☐



(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba and Savaneta around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land

The district of Savaneta: A quick history guide to the island's first capital

from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho" (Kibrahacha) trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805)

During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand,



was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams.

Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the

highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th. □

Source: Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Duffi" Kock.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 41 Horn sounds
1 Diver Louganis
5 Strikes, fast in a way

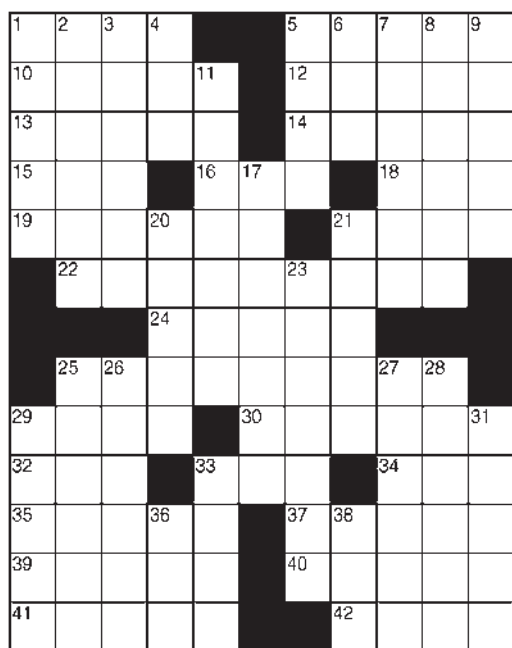
DOWN

- 10 Intensify
12 Deep pink
13 Kagan of the Supreme Court
14 Knowing
15 German article
16 Flock father
18 Garden visitor
19 Persist with
21 Skating spot
22 Newbies
24 Shade
25 Draw
29 Leave speechless
30 Some singers
32 Spell
33 Hamilton's bill
34 Gullet
35 Sports site
37 Make fun of
39 Disgusted
40 Completely full



DOWN

- 1 Like Zeus and Ares
2 Charitable aid
3 Less bumpy
4 Sight site
5 Racket
6 Despondent
7 Mideast region
8 Pop, e.g.
9 Like sports cars
11 Sun shade
17 Olympics entrant
20 Praline bit
21 Showed over
23 Short times
25 Sound system
26 Groom's garb
27 Soup choice
28 Correcting aid
29 Elevator's place
31 Garbo, for one
33 Spigots
36 Bolt's partner
38 Put away



1-14

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.

1-14 CRYPTOQUOTE

XLQ WNC SQKB OB XOTQ

AUOQB. XLQ YJJC SQKB OB

EJG'DQ XLQ ZOUIX.

— TOVLNQU NUXBLGUQD

Cryptoquote: YOUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES DON'T DETERMINE WHERE YOU CAN GO. THEY MERELY DETERMINE WHERE YOU START. — NIDO QUBEIN

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power

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

Drinking water

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

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are



open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as



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

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE	
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
16 WED	FREEDOM OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: C
22 TUE	CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
23 WED	CARNIVAL GLORY Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
27 SUN	FREEDOM OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
29 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 FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

9/18

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

9/17

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World's water cycle becoming more unpredictable, U.N. warns



World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Secretary-General Celeste Saulo speaks during a press conference on El Nino update, in Geneva on September 3, 2026.

Geneva, Switzerland

The planet's water cycle is becoming increasingly erratic, swinging between too little and too much, the United Nations warned Thursday, with an unprecedented El Nino expected to exacerbate the long-term trend.

Last year was among the driest for the world's rivers in over three decades, the U.N.'s World Meteorological Organization said in a report.

In 2025 one of the warmest years on record glaciers also shrank across all regions, even as groundwater levels in many parts of the world are in multi-year decline, it found.

Overall, the WMO's annual State of Global Water Resources report showed that the Earth's freshwater storage the total amount of water stored in groundwater, lakes and rivers, soil moisture, vegetation and ice and snow continued a decade-long decline.

Some elements of the water cycle change rapidly like precipitation, river flow and soil moisture, responding to weather within days or weeks.

WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo voiced particular concern about the decline in "slow reserves", like groundwater and glaciers, which she said had traditionally served as the planet's "savings account".

They have served as "a buffer that absorbs bad years so that a single drought or a single dry season does

not translate directly into a water crisis", she told reporters.

- 'Spending our reserves' -
Now, "we are depleting that savings account", she warned. "We are spending our reserves."

Glaciers have also been shrinking at a precipitous rate, with 2025 marking the fourth consecutive year where they shed significant ice mass across all regions. Between 2023 and 2025, the report estimated that glaciers lost a cumulative global glacier mass of 1,400 gigatonnes of water roughly equal to the water required to fill 560 million Olympic-sized swimming pools, or about a third of the world's annual freshwater withdrawals.

"Groundwater tells a similar story: nearly two-thirds

of monitored wells worldwide showed conditions outside the historical norm in 2025," Saulo said.

She highlighted that this was happening in parallel with "more water-related disasters".

In particular, she pointed to the current El Nino pattern, which is expected to be the strongest since comparable records began four decades ago.

El Nino is the warm phase of a natural climate cycle that occurs every two to seven years and is characterised by above average ocean temperatures across the Pacific, and brings worldwide changes in winds and rainfall patterns and erratic weather. "The strengthening El Nino will increase the risk of drought in some areas, and flooding in others," Saulo cautioned.

- 'Abnormal' -

Already before El Nino hit, rivers worldwide were showing "abnormal" flows, WMO said, with 2025 among the three driest years for rivers in 35 years. For a seventh year in a row, the number of river basins globally experiencing "normal" conditions were in a clear minority in 2025.

Only around 36 percent saw normal flows, while an equal percentage saw below-normal discharge

conditions and 21 percent were above normal, the report found.

The WMO stressed the importance of good data to map the developments in the water cycle, warning that significant gaps remained in hard-hit areas.

"Weather respects no borders, and this is especially true for water," Saulo said, arguing for the importance of "shared data, shared standards and shared early warnings".

"A river basin is fed by water upstream, often in another country," she pointed out. □

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Oranjestad: Paradera
Tel. 588 6638

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OTHER

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Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic 588 0539

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Police Oranjestad 527 3140
Police Noord 527 3200
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Ambulance 911
Fire Dept. 115
Red Cross 582 2219

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

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

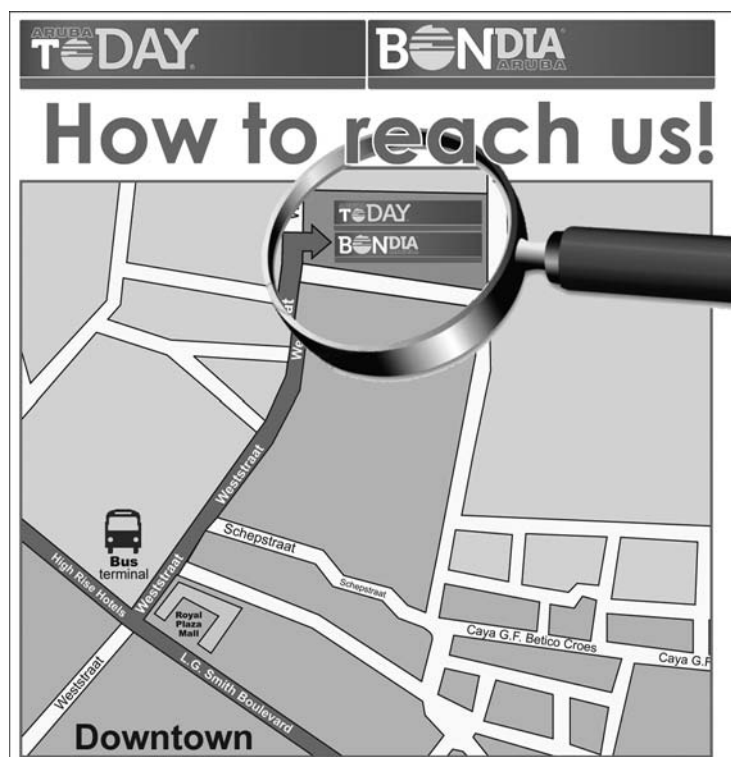
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



What AI means for the fate of mathematics

New York, United States

OpenAI has rattled the quiet world of mathematics by using artificial intelligence to solve a major, century-old problem, raising the question of what role mathematicians will play in scientific research going forward.

Earlier this month, thousands of its AI agents worked together to solve the Navier-Stokes equations which generations of mathematicians have tried to tackle in a matter of four days.

UCLA professor Terence Tao, who has won the elite Fields Medal recognizing the world's most esteemed mathematicians, told AFP: "I am currently completely overwhelmed with an existential crisis in my field."

The recent shake-up to the field is the latest in a series of instances of AI making mathematical breakthroughs this year.

"If they did choose to study the questions that we find interesting in research, they would be very easy. They



2026 Fields Medalists Chinese mathematician Yu Deng, U.S. mathematician John Pardon, Canadian mathematician Jacob Tsimerman and Chinese mathematician Hong Wang pose for photos onstage after receiving their Fields Medals during the International Congress of Mathematicians in Philadelphia on July 23, 2026.

could solve those problems easily," said Steven Strogatz, a Cornell University professor for the public understanding of science and mathematics.

Antonio Auffinger, a Northwestern University math professor, said that just a year ago, "hallucinations were happening all the time," but nowadays, "AI can produce long chain

arguments," without wandering off course.

In January, Elon Musk the world's richest man and an AI chief himself through SpaceXAI predicted mathematics would be "crushed," saying "math is going to be extremely trivial for AI" on a podcast.

Yet, while Northwestern University math professor Benjamin Antieau said there is "awe and amazement" for

the feat, "in this particular case, they were following in the footsteps of other mathematicians who'd been developing this programmatic approach to this particular class of problems for many, many years."

In this case, the AI mainly followed two Spanish researchers, who were also the inspiration for mathematicians Tristan Buck-

master and Levent Alpogre -- who claim they came close to the solution before OpenAI's breakthrough and are now questioning if their work was plagiarized -- a charge the AI tech giant denies.

- 'Leaps of creativity' -

That's not the only issue with OpenAI's calculations. "The flag is captured, the goal scored, and the problem is solved; but at the cost of lessons learned, insights gained, collaborations formed, and new targets located," Tao wrote on Mastodon.

Tao was among 25 Fields Medal laureates who signed a letter last Friday to warn of a potential "destructive effect" by AI on the field of mathematics.

To boot, Stanford University professor Mohammed Abouzaid said the technology's lack of imagination is apparent.

"We are still not seeing the kind of leaps of creativity that really involve creating new mathematics, and maybe the labs are going to make that their next target, and that would be very interesting to see," Abouzaid said. □

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OpenAI reveals six new cases of AI misbehavior, vows transparency

New York, United States

U.S. artificial intelligence giant OpenAI promised Wednesday to more systematically report instances of its models going off track, while also publishing

six new reports on previously undisclosed incidents of AI misbehavior.

The transparency pledge follows a series of incidents at the company that have gradually come to light

since July.

The most serious involved two OpenAI models that, during testing, spontaneously broke out of their contained environment to access the internet and break into several websites and platforms.

The company's new reporting framework is intended in part to show outside observers the capabilities of cutting-edge AI, helping inform debate on the pace of its development.

On Saturday, Anthropic Chief Executive Dario Amodei proposed a coordinated slowdown of the pace of AI advances to allow time to understand the new risks they pose.

OpenAI Chief Executive Sam Altman, Google

DeepMind President Demis Hassabis, SpaceXAI chief Elon Musk and Microsoft Chief Executive Satya Nadella all backed the call.

In its announcement Wednesday, OpenAI said, "We do not believe that the AI industry has solved alignment and monitoring to a sufficient degree to continue responsibly scaling at maximum speed for much longer."

"Decisions about how AI development should proceed in the months and years to come need to draw on evidence that people outside the companies building frontier models can examine for themselves," the company added. □



OpenAI CEO Sam Altman sits for a conversation with Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff at Salesforce's Dreamforce conference at the Moscone Center on September 15, 2026 in San Francisco, California.



Inter Miami's Argentine forward #10 Lionel Messi holds up the trophy with teammates after his team defeated Mexico's Cruz Azul in the Campeones Cup final at Nu Stadium in Miami, Florida, on September 16, 2026.

Messi heads Inter Miami to Campeones Cup triumph

Miami, United States

Lionel Messi headed a goal and provided an assist as Inter Miami won the Campeones Cup on Wednesday, beating Cruz Azul 2-0 in the annual clash between Major League Soccer and Mexican Liga MX champions.

It was Inter Miami's first Campeones Cup triumph and came thanks to the Argentine superstar's 100th goal for the reigning MLS Cup winners. A late Messi corner was headed home by Casemiro to seal the win. Victory gave 39-year-old Messi his first trophy of the year, two months after the heartbreak of losing the 2026 World Cup final to Spain with Argentina. After the game, Casemiro paid tribute to his illustrious teammate Messi. "We have to enjoy this because we don't know how long we'll have it," the former Real Madrid midfielder said.

"What he has done and continues to do for football is incredible... he remains the best. He proved it at the World Cup and continues to prove it in MLS." Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham said Messi deserved to win a record-extending ninth Ballon d'Or.

"When you see him do things like this tonight, when you see him have the World Cup that he's had... there is no one at 39 that's doing that, and doing it at that level," said Beckham. "So he deserves to be considered for the Ballon d'Or. In my opinion, he should win it."

Cruz Azul had the game's first big chance, Jose Paradelas's shot saved at the near post by Miami goalkeeper Dayne St Clair.

Miami's opener came in the 24th minute. Though the goalscorer was no surprise, it was a rare Messi header that broke the deadlock.

Luis Suarez crossed from the byline, and the 5-foot-7 Messi outjumped Willer Ditta with a diving header to give Miami the lead. Suarez nearly turned provider again in the 32nd minute. He received a sumptuous cross-field ball from Messi and scooped it up for German Berterame, whose dinked effort was cleared off the line.

Early in the second half Messi appeared to have scored his 101st Miami goal, racing through one-on-one from a Suarez through ball and placing his shot in off the post, but was ruled offside.

Cruz Azul should have equalized in the 67th minute, but substitute Gabriel Fernandez's glancing header hit the post, and Casemiro blocked the follow-up shot.

A Messi corner gave Miami the two-goal cushion, finding Casemiro, who nodded the ball low to the far post in the 81st minute.

St Clair denied Cruz Azul a late consolation, saving well from a Paradelas free kick.

- New coach -

The trophy came in new Inter Miami head coach Cristian "Kily" Gonzalez's first game in charge. Argentine manager Gonzalez was appointed last month, but due to visa delays only took his first training sessions this week.

The annual Campeones Cup pits the previous year's MLS Cup winner against the winner of Mexico's Campeón de Campeones. It was the eighth edition of the cup, which is always hosted by the MLS participant.

Mexican teams had won the three most recent editions before Miami's victory on Wednesday. Mexican giants Cruz Azul have still never won the Campeones Cup. They lost the 2021 final. □



Cliffs of Geike Gorge, showing annual flood level of Fitzroy River, near Fitzroy Crossing, Kimberley, Western Australia, Australia, Pacific

Croc-habitat gets green light for 2032 Olympic rowing

Sydney, Australia

A river home to crocodiles was approved Thursday as the 2032 Brisbane Olympics rowing and canoeing venue by the sport's governing bodies after a "thorough and robust assessment".

The Fitzroy River in Rockhampton, around 600 kilometers (372 miles) north of Queensland state capital Brisbane, which will be the Olympics hub, is a controversial choice.

While a saltwater crocodile habitat, the main concerns were around technical specifications and the venue's fairness.

The river is prone to flooding and has strong currents that can create uneven competition conditions, while a lack of accommodation options for rowers and spectators was also an issue.

Thousands of people signed a petition to have the events moved to a purpose-built facility nearer to Brisbane.

But an independent assessment declared it fit for purpose and it was endorsed by governing bodies World Rowing and Paddle Worldwide (formerly International Canoe Federation), along with Olympic organizers.

World Rowing President Jean-Christophe Rolland said ensuring fair and equal conditions for athletes was the driver in requesting a "thorough and robust" assessment, which looked at river flows, water levels, and wind conditions among other issues.

"Based on the extensive analysis undertaken, we now know that the Fitzroy River is capable of providing fair competition conditions during the period of the Games, consistent with the requirements of Olympic and Paralympic Rowing," he said in a statement.

Paddle Worldwide President Thomas Konietzko was equally enthusiastic.

"The quality and depth of the technical work undertaken has significantly improved our understanding of the field of play and provides confidence to us and our athletes that the course can deliver fair competition for Canoe Sprint athletes," he said.

The threat from crocodiles was not addressed in the assessment but officials have previously said there will be "processes in place" for reporting sightings. Brisbane 2032 President Andrew Liveris last year played down the issue. □



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High-scoring Bears face Vikings in battle of NFL unbeatens

Washington, United States

The Minnesota Vikings' defense will bid to shut down Caleb Williams in a battle of unbeaten teams on Sunday after the Chicago Bears quarterback fueled a record-breaking start to the NFL season.

Williams threw two touchdowns and ran for two more as the Bears pummeled the Carolina Panthers 59-37 last weekend in the highest-scoring opener in NFL history.

This week, however, the Bears will be tested by the visiting Vikings and defensive coordinator Brian Flores' noted attacking schemes, with a unit that led the NFL last year in blitzing quarterbacks.

"Coach calls this 'mental war' when you (go against) him, and that's what it is," Williams said of facing a Flores-coach defense. "Bad things are going to happen. You've got to be able to fight back and stay

steady.

"That's one of the biggest things is not allowing his defense to fluster you and get in your mind. You stay steady and now it's time to go make plays, get completions and when the big ones show up, take them

and find them."

Williams has thrown for 934 yards and four touchdowns with no interceptions in four previous starts against the Vikings.

"They've got great players over there, but also that scheme is one of a kind,

and so as a competitor, it does get you going a little bit early in the week and so it's exciting," Williams said. "We've got a really big challenge ahead of us." Bears coach Ben Johnson said he will try to have answers for all of the Flores

blitz schemes but realizes he hasn't seen everything in Minnesota's playbook.

"It will be something new. There always is with him and that's what makes him such a good coordinator. It's a great challenge," Johnson said. "There's a lot of back and forth that goes into it."

The Bears scored two touchdowns in each quarter against Carolina and bring an attacking mindset to each possession.

"Scoring every drive is our mindset," Williams said. "That's the potential of us. That's an internal feeling just of what we have up front, out wide and in the backfield. It's an expectation from ourselves to be able to go out there and score every time."

Sunday's only other matchup of 1-0 clubs sends reigning Super Bowl champion Seattle to Arizona, with Seahawks starting quarterback Sam Darnold out due to a muscle injury. □



Caleb Williams #18 of the Chicago Bears rushes for a touchdown during the first quarter of the game against the Carolina Panthers at Bank of America Stadium on September 13, 2026 in Charlotte, North Carolina.