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Paramount Skydance CEO David Ellison speaks during the Bloomberg ScreenTime conference in Los Angeles on October 9, 2025.

Paramount settles with US states to clear Warner Bros. mega-merger

Los Angeles, United States

Paramount has reached a settlement with a group of U.S. states that clears the way for its takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery, officials announced Monday, creating a Hollywood empire spanning television, news and cinema.

Paramount, which is run by David Ellison, whose ultra-wealthy family has ties to US President Donald Trump, won a bidding war against Netflix in February for control of a stable of assets that includes Warner Bros. Pictures, CNN and the HBO Max streaming service.

The Trump administration approved the deal, one of the largest media mergers in years, in June without demanding a change to its business, before 12 U.S. states sued to block the transaction.

Financing for the deal reportedly includes about \$24 billion in equity from the sovereign wealth funds of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Abu Dhabi. David Ellison's father, billionaire Oracle founder Larry Ellison, also provided funding and a guarantee.

Opponents in the movie industry said the combined company would slash jobs in a Hollywood already under pressure and reduce the number of films pro-

duced every year, while news media groups feared CNN's independence could be compromised.

The deal includes several safeguards on these issues, including a board meant to protect CNN's editorial independence.

The news comes just days after Trump banned CNN, Politico and MS NOW from the White House. The outlets are suing the administration to have the decision reversed.

Paramount had threatened to move out of California if the state's attorney general, Rob Bonta, did not negotiate an end to the lawsuit.

In their complaint, the 12 states argued the combined company would control roughly 27 percent of wide-release theatrical film distribution and a similar percentage of the basic cable channel industry.

California led the suit, joined by Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon and Washington, all Democratic-led.

- 'Facts of the law' -

Four states Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut and Minnesota had held out but concluded that fighting on without California

was not worth the expense, Bloomberg reported.

Bonta told reporters that protecting jobs was a major concern in his handling of the case and acknowledged that many people may be disappointed with his decision to strike a deal.

"My job as attorney general is to look at the facts and look at the law, weigh the options in front of us, and make the best decisions for the people of California," he said.

Bonta said the settlement includes a commitment that the merged studio would produce 30 movies in each of the first two years of the deal, and 32 movies in each of the following three years.

At least four of those films must be independent productions, and at least 20 percent must be blockbusters, Bonta said.

The terms include a financial penalty if Paramount fails to meet the targets.

According to a joint court filing, the deal also requires at least \$300 million more in annual spending on US film production by Paramount and Warner Bros. than in 2025.

The companies must also keep both studios' production lots, honor labor agreements and commit funds to workforce training, the filing said. □



Gavin Newsom, Governor of California attends the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art Opening Night at Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on September 19, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

California declares state of emergency ahead of El Nino

Los Angeles, United States

California's governor on Monday declared a state of emergency as the U.S. west coast readies for what is expected to be a damaging El Nino.

Forecasters say the coming months could bring powerful and damaging storms to the region because of this weather pattern, with the threat of higher-than-usual tides that could trigger coastal flooding.

Governor Gavin Newsom said the state needed to get ahead of problems instead of waiting for them to happen.

"This action is about giving communities the support they need, giving first responders the tools to do their jobs, and giving families the confidence that their state is ready," he said.

"We are preparing for this El Nino early because every Californian deserves to be safe in their home, connected to their community, and protected when severe weather comes."

Monday's declaration is procedural and intended to make it easier for state agencies to access resources, and to pre-position flood-fighting supplies like sandbags and pumps.

The proclamation also prepares the California National Guard to support flood response, search-and-rescue, engineering, and logistics missions when needed, officials said.

El Nino is the warming phase of a natural cycle in the tropical Pacific, known as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), and comes along every two to seven years.

It sets in when east-to-west trade winds ease, allowing warm water which normally collects in the western Pacific Ocean to slide back east and rise to the surface.

When those warmer-than-average surface temperatures last for a few months, they cause more storms and clouds over the region, which in turn cause ripple effects through the entire global atmosphere: hotter and drier conditions in some places, cooler and wetter in others.

Human-caused climate change increases El Nino's impacts. A warmer atmosphere holds more moisture, so El Nino-linked rains can turn more extreme. It also dries out soil, deepening drought where El Nino brings it.

This year's El Nino has a 69 percent chance of becoming the strongest on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and is already unleashing extreme weather across the globe even though it is not expected to peak until October-December. □

U.S. networks halt Trump coverage in revolt over White House ban

Washington, United States

U.S. television networks staged an extraordinary revolt Monday when they effectively boycotted coverage of President Donald Trump in protest at his decision to ban three leading outlets from the White House.

CNN, MS NOW and Politico also went to court after Trump on Friday ordered them to be barred, as the 80-year-old Republican stepped up his years-long assault on the US media.

As a result of the row, Trump's opening of his cherished new White House helipad and his trip to the United Nations General Assembly were proceeding without live television coverage.

In a rare move, the top five US broadcasters said on Monday that they were halting "pool" coverage of the White House where a broadcaster films on behalf of all television outlets for the day in solidarity with CNN.

CNN had been scheduled to serve Monday as the White House TV pool.

"The public has a vital interest in receiving accurate, independent information about its government. No administration should restrict a news organization because it objects to



MS NOW White House Correspondent Vaughn Hillyard works on a street corner near the White House in Washington, DC, on September 21, 2026.

its reporting," ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox and NBC said in a statement.

The result is an almost unprecedented test of wills between the Trump administration and the press, in a critical week during which Chinese President Xi Jinping is visiting the White House.

- Media 'like cancer' -

There will be no live TV of Trump's meetings with foreign leaders at the UN in New York, an annual forum that is closely watched around the world.

Meanwhile the ribbon-

cutting ceremony for the giant granite helipad on the South Lawn was only streamed on the White House's website and Trump's comments were completely inaudible.

Several photo news organizations working at the White House, including AFP, decided to delay the release of photographs of Trump at the helipad in solidarity with the three banned media organizations. Trump was unrepentant, branding the media a "cancer" and a threat to national security.

"The White House is not instituting an assault on

the Free Press, something which I cherish," Trump said on his Truth Social network. "It is instituting an assault on the FAKE NEWS, something that has grown like Cancer in our beloved United States of America."

Vice President JD Vance a former CNN commentator before his move into politics accused the outlets of disseminating "left-wing propaganda."

"They can still report. They still have the access to free speech. They're just not going to get an office in the White House anymore," he

told reporters.

Trump's ban however went further than simply revoking office space from the outlets.

Journalists from CNN, MS NOW and Politico were denied any access to the White House grounds on Saturday and had their passes confiscated.

In their lawsuit, the three organizations asked for a temporary restraining order against the ban on the grounds that it violates the First Amendment of the US Constitution, which upholds the right to a free press.

"This ban could not be a more direct assault on the First Amendment nor a more blatant violation of our most fundamental constitutional principles," the organizations said in a court filing. A U.S. district judge set a hearing on the complaint for Wednesday.

- Press passes confiscated

Trump's sudden announcement of the ban on Friday stunned the media and reportedly many in his own administration. The president has not detailed what prompted the ban, but said in response to a question from an AFP reporter in the Oval Office on Friday that it was "really just cumulative stories over the last two years." □

NYT says Trump reversed decision on airstrikes on Houthis

Washington, United States

U.S. President Donald Trump has changed his strategy on Yemen several times, The New York Times reported on Sunday, torn between Saudi pressure to strike the Iran-backed Houthis and the risk of opening another front in the Middle East war.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi movement has staged a lightning offensive in recent weeks to take over the country's entire Red Sea coast, leaving the Saudi-backed government scrambling to respond.

The New York Times said Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman called Trump on Sunday "to implore him, again, to

step in to help blunt the rapidly advancing group." Trump had told his advisers the day before that he opposed strikes but changed his mind after the call and "told the Pentagon to prepare for airstrikes against the Houthis," the newspaper reported, citing anonymous administration officials.

However, he appeared to have reversed his decision again by midday Sunday, it said.

Trump's decision to pull back from striking the Houthis came as "commanders had approved target lists, troops were loading bombs onto U.S. warplanes selected for the

missions and the wave of attacks was just about to begin," the Times said, citing two people briefed on the operation.

U.S. news platform Axios said Trump had already refused a Saudi request to strike the Houthis last week. Fox News reported on Sunday that Trump had said the Houthis have agreed not to hit U.S. targets.

The war in the Middle East began on February 28 with U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran, after which the Islamic republic responded with attacks around the region. Iran-backed groups including the Houthis in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon also later became involved. The war in improv-

erished Yemen, which began in 2014 with the Houthi capture of the capital Sanaa, had been largely frozen since 2022 but resumed in July.

Saudi Arabia has led a

coalition backing the internationally recognized government since 2015. Its intervention escalated the war, which has triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. □



A handout picture provided by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) on September 15, 2026, shows Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (R) and Saudi de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during a welcoming ceremony at Cairo's International airport on September 15, 2026.

Singer Ed Sheeran says Gaza situation 'unjustifiable' following controversy

Philadelphia, United States

Pop star Ed Sheeran said Saturday the situation in Gaza is "unjustifiable," following a wave of criticism that he had failed to back his opening act who was booted from the tour after making pro-Palestinian comments.

The singer, who had previously maintained an apolitical stance, broke his silence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in his first show since the controversy involving U.S. rapper Macklemore.

"What is happening in Gaza is catastrophic and unjustifiable and disproportionate," Sheeran said in Philadelphia.

"My heart has been broken by the scale of devastation and loss of civilians' lives, of children's lives, and the systemic injustice we're seeing unfold in the West Bank cannot be overlooked."

Macklemore had declared "Free Palestine" at a New Jersey concert this month, drawing backlash from owners of U.S. stadiums hosting future dates of Sheeran's Loop Tour.

The British artist, 35, has denied being behind the decision to remove the rapper, instead blaming the



Ed Sheeran performs during iHeartRadio KISS108's Jingle Ball 2025 Presented By Capital One at TD Garden on December 14, 2025 in Boston, Massachusetts.

tour promoter.

Four supporting acts subsequently walked out on the "Shape of You" singer, issuing public statements citing their support for Palestinians.

"I've had to take and make difficult decisions, and I am making mistakes, and I'm so so sorry," an emotional Sheeran told his audience, who responded with cheers.

As the show was coming to

an end, Sheeran said that this week had been the "hardest of my life" and that he had been afraid people would "throw things" at him.

Thanking the audience for their support, he called this show the "best night" of his life and shed some tears.

Sheeran had been accused by critics of failing to stand up to the stadium owners led by billionaire businessman Robert Kraft and was targeted by boy-

cott calls.

The singer said he was "deeply worried" about the idea of venues pre-approving the content of performances.

"This happens in so many places that I perform around the world, but it should never happen in the free world."

- Boycott -

A few dozen pro-Palestinian protesters rallied peacefully outside Lincoln

Financial Field ahead of the concert, waving Palestinian flags and chanting "Free, free Palestine."

Some of the fans streaming into the stadium said they had hesitated about coming due to the controversy, but ultimately decided to attend and enjoy the music.

"He could have easily walked away from all of this, and he stood up, and he spoke up," said one fan after the show.

But others like Brandon Ateke changed their plans. The 18-year-old Brown University student accused Sheeran of "complicity" with Kraft and others in silencing Macklemore.

"I decided to not attend the concert and instead attend the protest to bring light to the genocide going on in Gaza today," he told AFP.

The stadium was close to capacity, despite an up-take in ticket resales this week and a sharp drop in prices.

On Saturday, a pro-Palestinian group urged artists, fans and crew members to stay away from Sheeran's concerts.

"We now extend our call for boycotting Ed Sheeran's entire world tour, including the upcoming Latin American dates, and the as-yet-unannounced European leg," the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) said.

- Solo -

Sheeran started his show Saturday night alone on stage, without an opening act.

He later brought on five musicians who he said had learned his songs in three days, thanking them for joining him "in a week when no one wants to stand on stage with me."

The groups that quit the tour included Sheeran's backing band as well as performer Finneas, who rose to fame collaborating with his pop superstar sister Billie Eilish. □

French singer accuses Miley Cyrus of plagiarism

Paris, France

French disco diva Aman-

da Lear publicly accused American singer Miley

Cyrus on Monday of plagiarising one of her songs from the 1970s.

Lear, a model-turned-singer who was a muse to surrealist painter Salvador Dali and a lover of Rolling Stones guitarist Brian Jones, took Cyrus to task over apparent similarities between her song "The Sphinx" and the American's new track "Redlights".

Cyrus released her tenth album "Bass Persuades" last Friday, a 10-track dance pop opus including the ballad "Redlights" which invites comparisons to the slower, gravelly voiced song by Lear from 1978.

"Thank you, Miley, for copying my song 'The Sphinx'! I'm flattered!" Lear wrote on social media on Sunday with the hashtags

"ripoff" and "copycat".

"I've never been litigious, but my record label, Universal, and the publishers of the track, for which I wrote the lyrics, want acknowledgment of the plagiarism," Amanda Lear told AFP on Monday.

"I simply pointed out the situation by thanking Miley Cyrus and adding that I was flattered. I never threatened a lawsuit or retaliation," she added.

Lear is a prolific composer and singer who has produced more than 20 albums.

The Rolling Stones are believed to have written a song about her "Miss Amanda Jones" dating to her time as a prominent figure during the Swinging Sixties in London. □



This combination of file pictures created on September 21, 2026 shows French actress, singer, TV host and painter Amanda Lear (L) posing for a photocall at the 22nd Fashion Dinner against AIDS ("Dinner de la Mode") charity event on January 30, 2025 and U.S. singer-songwriter Miley Cyrus (R) arriving for the 2025 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 5, 2025, in New York.

Malaysia's 'elephant whisperer' fights to save Borneo's endangered giants

Sukau, Malaysia

Deep in Malaysia's Borneo jungle, wild shouts fill the air as a Bornean elephant is darted and her angry herd rallies to protect her.

The downed elephant is one of only around 1,000 Bornean elephants left in the wild, and the team that darted her is working to protect the endangered species by minimising growing conflict between the animals and local communities.

Once the herd has been chased off, conservationist Farina Othman and her team move in to attach a tracking collar to the animal.

The collar allows them to alert villagers if the elephant strays too near.

It is also key to a programme Farina is designing to create "corridors" for elephants roaming a fragmented landscape of virgin forest patches, hemmed in by vast oil palm plantations and villages.

Farina has studied these elephants for years, earning her the nickname "Borneo's elephant whisperer" as well as the prestigious Whitley Award for conservationists.

"It's Pigtail," she whispered, stroking the tranquilised elephant's trunk and nodding to the distinctive tail that prompted its nickname.

The team works fast the dart's sedative effects last only half an hour, and the herd can still be heard



This photo taken on August 24, 2026, shows Farina Othman (C), a Bornean elephant conservationist and founder of Seratu Aatai, posing for a picture with a female Bornean elephant after a GPS collaring operation carried out as part of a collaboration involving several agencies near the Kinabatangan River in Sukau, a small village near Sandakan in Sabah state on the island of Borneo.

nearby. Overhead, there are flashes of lightning as a tropical thunderstorm approaches.

As soon as the collar is securely fastened and blood samples are taken, the team, accompanied by AFP journalists, retreat into the forest before Pigtail rouses.

- 'Conflict inevitable' -

For the past 40 years, Bornean elephants have lost more than 60 percent of their habitat in Sabah, in northern Borneo, to logging and, later, oil palm expansion, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, which listed the animal as endangered in 2024.

Lower Kinabatangan, a floodplain in eastern Sabah

of around 400 square kilometres, is home to around 160 elephants.

But "only half of that is now a space left for the elephants," said Farina, a Malaysian academic who heads local conservation group Seratu Aatai, or "Solidarity" in the local Sungai language.

When the animals venture into private property or nearby villages, "conflict is inevitable", she told AFP. In a recent incident, a herd of 20 elephants stomped into palm oil smallholdings and three villages, terrifying residents.

No one was injured, but the incident prompted calls for stronger deterrents, including upgraded electric fencing.

"People don't feel safe around elephants, and that's when conflict happens," Farina said.

The animosity worsens when the animals, especially adventurous bulls, which can weigh up to five tonnes, cleverly bypass electric fencing to feast on palm trees or saplings.

That is why Farina and her team of 17 conservationists prioritise coexistence.

"We're working to increase people's tolerance, to increase connectivity space for elephants and to find a long-term solution," she said.

Based in Sukau, a hamlet on the crocodile-infested banks of the Kinabatangan river, Seratu Aatai runs an outreach programme in plantation schools, dis-

tributes information pamphlets and has designated "community wildlife guardians" who help usher away elephants that have wandered into human habitation.

"Before, we didn't know how to manage living near them," said homestay owner Firah Kazenn, 21, who recently encountered elephants behind her home in Sukau.

"The elephants were unmonitored, and many were lost to conflict. Now, with the Seratu Aatai unit, they are protected, and the community is actively involved too," Firah told AFP. "We've learnt safe ways to guide the elephants away when they come too close to our homes, without harming them," she added.

- 'Win-win situation' -

Farina believes the best way to protect the animals is by creating "elephant corridors" pathways through plantations connecting patches of habitat. She is hoping to convince seven plantations in the area that elephants are "an ecological reality, rather than an occasional disturbance". But it will be a challenge. Fierce competition driven by tight, volatile margins means many producers are not keen to sacrifice land for corridors, said Muhammad Al Shafieq bin Mustafa, a former plantation manager in Sukau and now a palm oil industry specialist. □

Pope's Argentina visit forecast to draw seven million

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Seven million people are expected to turn out for Pope Leo XIV when he visits Argentina in November, the government said Monday ahead of the first papal trip here in almost 40 years.

Since 1987 no pope has come to the traditionally Catholic South American nation, not even Pope Leo's predecessor Francis, who was himself Argentine.

The US-born pontiff will also visit Uruguay and Peru during this trip.

In Argentina he will hold three open-air masses and religious gatherings in Buenos Aires and in central Cordoba province over the course of four days, according to the agenda released by the Vatican.

The country is preparing for the largest security operation in its history, said Security Minister Alejandra Monteoliva.

Security forces tasked with keeping the pope and the visit safe will cover "three jurisdictions, three airports, 11 closed-venue events, and three mass events, where a total attendance of seven million people is expected," she added.

The government is also considering declaring special days off or national holidays to make it easier for people to travel to the papal events.

Pope Leo will meet with President Javier Milei upon his arrival in Buenos Aires on November 8, and with civil society representatives later that day. □



Pope Leo XIV addresses the crowd from the window of the apostolic palace overlooking St Peter's Square during his Sunday Angelus prayer at the Vatican on September 20, 2026.

Sudanese women hold fast to threatened henna body art

al-Damer, Sudan

Inside a beauty salon in northern Sudan, a woman in a striped dress sat patiently as henna artist Najwa Mubarak painted crimson floral patterns across her hands, preserving a cherished tradition that is under threat.

Water scarcity, climate change and three years of war have endangered the cultivation of henna, the plant used to produce the dye that has adorned Sudanese brides for centuries and features prominently in family gatherings, religious celebrations and other events across Sudan.

"Henna is both a hobby and a heritage for us," Mubarak told AFP, delicately tracing another flower onto her client's hand.

"I apply henna for brides as it is an integral part of the bride's joy. For me, it is both a passion and a source of livelihood."

Fragrant incense drifted through Mubarak's salon in Al-Damer, the capital of River Nile state, as she used soft, fluid strokes to apply the paste across the woman's skin, staining it a deep reddish-brown.

Beyond the salon, however, the pressures facing the crop are visible.

On his farm near Al-Damer, Abdallah Mohammed brushed his hand through rows of henna shrubs sag-



A Sudanese farmer cultivates henna amidst water shortages in El-Damer in the Nile River State on August 4, 2026.

ging in the heat.

For decades, the 57-year-old farmer has cultivated the plant whose leaves are dried and ground into powder.

Now he worries the land is slowly drying out.

"Water arrives at long intervals and cuts off just when we need it most," he told AFP.

"Access to water is the biggest obstacle limiting our production and causing the land to go thirsty."

- Parched fields -

Like many farmers in the region, Mohammed depends on Nile-fed irriga-

tion canals. But sporadic supplies and neglected waterways have left fields parched at critical times, reducing both the quantity and quality of the harvest. Sudan's conflict between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces has crippled agriculture across the country.

The war, which erupted in April 2023, has damaged irrigation networks, leaving canals clogged, pumps idle and water management systems neglected.

Meanwhile, the El Nino climate pattern has disrupted weather systems, delaying seasonal rains and contrib-

uting to lower Nile water levels, depriving farms of a vital lifeline.

Agriculture provides livelihoods for roughly 65 percent of Sudan's population, according to data from the central bank.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said rainfall across key agricultural regions between June and mid-August was up to 30 percent below the long-term average, worsening drought and raising risks to food production and rural livelihoods.

Around Al-Damer, islands of emerald-green henna

fields emerge from a sea of ochre and brown.

Under a blazing sky, farmers wove their way through the waist-high shrubs, using sickles passed down through generations to cut the leaves.

The freshly harvested branches released an earthy scent as they were gathered into bundles and carried away for drying and milling.

Henna is "a crop of significant local economic importance", environmental activist El-Rasheed Ali Mahdy told AFP.

- Major exporter -

Once one of Africa's leading henna producers, Sudan built a thriving industry around the crop, according to FAO data, exporting its distinctive dye to consumers across the Gulf, Europe and North America.

In River Nile state, which the war has largely spared, henna remains one of the most valuable cash crops, supporting livelihoods from farms and processing plants to marketplaces and beauty salons.

The Sudanese government did not respond to an AFP request for updated production and export figures. At one factory in Al-Damer, workers spread freshly picked henna leaves to dry before feeding them into grinding mills. □

British Museum bans photos of Bayeux Tapestry as crowds linger

London, United Kingdom

The British Museum has banned visitors from taking pictures of the Bayeux Tapestry in order to keep the

crowds flowing through an unprecedented London exhibition, a spokesperson confirmed Monday.

Excited visitors have been

flocking to see the nearly 1,000-year-old artwork since the start of the sold-out exhibition earlier this month.

"There has been enormous interest in viewing the tapestry, and our priority is to ensure that all visitors have the best experience possible," a spokesperson said in a statement to AFP.

"In order to do this, we have made the decision to restrict photography while people are moving along the length of the tapestry."

The 11th-century wonder of the medieval world offers an insight into life in England both before and after the invasion by William the Conqueror's Norman army.

The unprecedented loan from France, the result of years of diplomacy and set to last until next July, has been hailed as a symbol of renewed cross-Channel ties following the rancor of Brexit.

Depicting the 1066 Battle of Hastings, the 70-metre-long (230-foot-long) tapestry has shadowy origins.

It is widely thought to have been made in England almost 1,000 years ago before being transferred to Bayeux in France.

Under the visitors' guidance section on the British Museum's website it states that the sight-seers move through the exhibition in a one-way system for a visit

that lasts "approximately 40 minutes".

"Drawing or sketching are not permitted. Photography is not permitted," it adds.

Photography had initially been allowed, but that decision was reversed when queues began to build up as visitors dawdled. It was not immediately clear when the ban went into effect.

In what is believed to be its first time travelling outside France, the tapestry depicting 627 figures and more than 700 animals has been laid flat in a raised glass cabinet. In its home in Bayeux, northwestern France, it is displayed hanging vertically. □



A camera operator videos a section of the Bayeux Tapestry during the press preview at the British Museum in London on September 7, 2026.

Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) – Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick “to-go” breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically

eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi bonch'i rabo (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening “meal” can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.



(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch.

Desserts include bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, baskets, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert

and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means “bag”. Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

Fun facts about the ‘Lisinbein’

The ‘Lisinbein’ (*Scolopendra gigantea*), also known as the Giant Centipede, is one of the largest centipedes in the world and is found in Aruba. Its size and hunting prowess make it a fascinating, if often misunderstood, creature.

Despite its fearsome reputation, it plays a crucial

ecological role that often goes unnoticed.

As an apex invertebrate predator, *Scolopendra gigantea* helps maintain balance in the ecosystem. Moreover, they themselves are a food source for birds such as the Crested Caracara (Warawara) and the Aruba burrowing owl (Sho-

co).

It controls populations of smaller invertebrates and even small vertebrates, ensuring that no species overpopulates, which could disrupt local biodiversity.

Its presence can indicate a healthy, functioning ecosystem. Its sensitivity to environmental changes makes it a bioindicator of ecological balance.

It can reach an impressive length of up to 30 centimeters (approx. 12 inches) and live for around 5 to 10 years in the wild. Its size and longevity makes it a significant and long-term part of the ecosystem.

A mother's love

In *Scolopendra* species,

the ‘mother’ typically exhibits maternal care by curling around her eggs and newly hatched young. She stays coiled around the clutch, protecting it from predators and fungi, which are serious risks in the moist environments these centipedes often inhabit. The mother maintains a clean environment for the eggs by carefully grooming them, which helps prevent fungal growth that could endanger the brood. This behavior may continue until the young centipedes have undergone their first molt, making them more capable of independent survival.

This form of parental care is beneficial in increasing the survival rates of offspring, as the mother's protection

provides a safe ‘environment’ during their vulnerable developmental stages. It's a fascinating adaptation because it shows a form of care that resembles more complex behaviors observed in vertebrates.

No bark, but all bite!

The lisinbein is known locally for having a really painful sting. While venomous, the Lisinbein is generally not aggressive toward humans unless provoked. Its role as a guardian of balance in the ecosystem helps protect the natural beauty of Aruba by keeping the ecosystem in harmony.

Editor's note: Information and pictures provided by Ms. Natasha Silva from the Aruba Conservation Foundation. □





Casago Aruba: Redefining Island Stays with Full-Service Property Management

Casago Aruba was born from a shared passion for elevating the island's tourism experience. Built on a strong foundation of service, hospitality, and a keen eye for quality, the Casago team—backed by over 16 years of experience in the vacation rental and hospitality industry—is on a mission to redefine what luxury and convenience look like for travelers visiting Aruba.

But Casago is more than just a vacation rental platform. It is a full-service property management company, offering seamless experiences for both guests and homeowners alike. While travelers benefit from handpicked accommodations and personalized service, homeowners gain a reliable partner dedicated to the care and performance of their property.

A Stay Tailored to You

Casago Aruba offers more than just stylish villas. Their curated portfolio includes a wide variety of condos, homes, and villas in different sizes to



suit all types of travelers—from solo adventurers and couples to large families and groups. Every stay is backed by local expertise, with concierge support, 24/7 guest assistance, and an attention to detail that consistently exceeds expectations. Whether you're here to relax on world-famous beaches, explore Aruba's cultural gems, or discover hidden corners of the island, Casago Aruba ensures your getaway is as smooth as it is memorable.

A Partner for Homeowners

Behind the scenes, Casago offers a robust suite of property management services designed to help homeowners maximize rental income while minimizing stress. Services include:



- Promotion through Casago's professional booking platform and expert local marketing strategies
- Complete management of check-ins, guest communication, cleanings, landscaping, pool maintenance, and repairs
- Transparent maintenance reporting, real-time reservation tracking, and on-site security monitoring
- Full handling of tax filings for both local and state requirements
- Monthly property inspections and full utility bill management
- Strategic planning to help homeowners increase profitability and keep their properties in top condition

This full-service model ensures that

every home is maintained to the highest standard while giving property owners full peace of mind.

Rooted in Community and Sustainability

What truly sets Casago Aruba apart is their commitment to the local community and to sustainable practices. The team works closely with local businesses and artisans, promotes eco-conscious travel, and supports initiatives that contribute positively to the island's environment and economy.

As one of the fastest-growing vacation rental and property management companies on the island, Casago Aruba continues to expand its footprint—welcoming more travelers, partnering with more homeowners, and raising the standard of hospitality in Aruba. □

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down

to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the is-

land. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. Made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by

someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
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Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations



(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your “off-road” trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding “mondi”*. This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breath-taking view of the Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

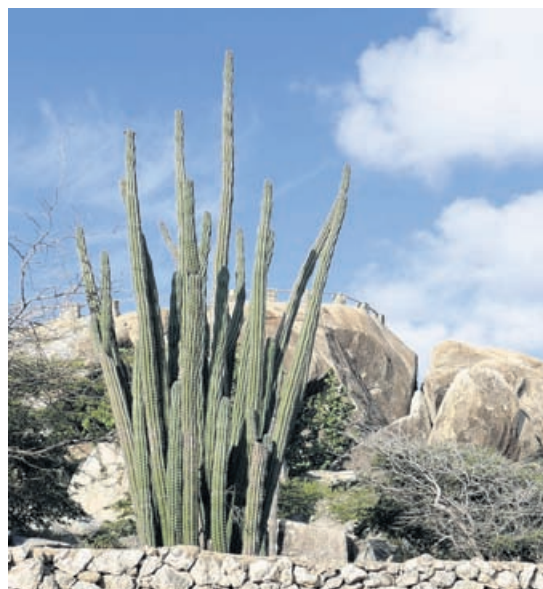
Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on

each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south.

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!

*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mondi! □



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



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

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

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

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

Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

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

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

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Span-



iard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they be-

gan to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto

Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holi-est Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these

houses remain.

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

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

Cas di Torto

Cas di torto (also called cas di lodo or cas di bara) is a traditional building technique from Aruba. It refers to a type of houses made of mud with rounded corners. These houses were usually found around the plantations. The few structures that still exist are the oldest structures that are left standing in the country.

The technique probably



came over from the Venezuelan Paraguaná Peninsula in the 18th century. Existing houses date back 150 years. Until 1925 many houses on Aruba were built using this technique, afterwards it fell into disuse. In 2005 there were 62 cas di torto houses left, of which only four were in good condition.

The skeleton of the houses is made up of round wooden poles placed with distances of 1.5 feet between them. Branches are interwoven between them, completing the structural support. On this basis, loam is applied, mixed with sand, water and paragrass. This is then coated with aloe vera



juice, which gives the white color and helps to protect against the weather.

On top of the poles pieces of wood are fitted that serve as the base for the roof beams. Until 1815 the roofing usually consisted of corn (maize) stems, afterwards the nuclei of columnar cacti were used. The floor is made of loam, mixed with cement or cow dung.

The houses were usually di-

vided into a kitchen, a living room, a porch and a bedroom. In the kitchen would be a wooden or metal barrel for storing water that was collected in small rain ponds. Around this barrel a thick loam wall would be erected. Often large families would live in these houses; people would sleep on mats on the floor.

If you visit the Arikok National Park you will be able to see a very nice cas di torto. □

Help FUDA with a last wishambulance for Aruba!

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Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to find the anchor?

The anchor is a "must see" landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when you're visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean Sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the "T" junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the anchor

Size

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the "fluke" or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.



Where did the anchor come from?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

"According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the ten-

untangle them."

How did the anchor become a landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba; Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr., local businessman. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The "anchor", which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated "To All Seamen" on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr. died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated "To All Seamen" in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The best time to visit

When you're planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

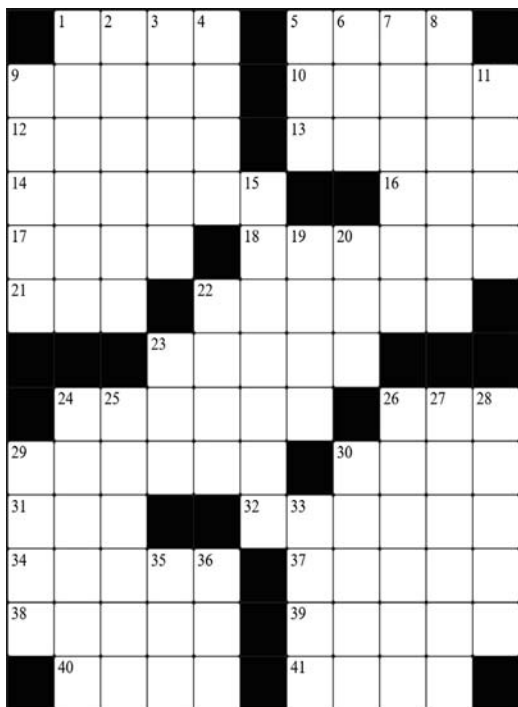
40. Graceful bird
41. Hourglass fill
1. Barber-shop sound
5. Crazy talk
9. Make amends
10. Attests
12. Hunter's weapon
13. San --, California
14. Moves furtively
16. McKellen of "X-Men"
17. Approve
18. Bad doctors
21. Neither follower
22. Ward workers
23. Property claims
24. Brawl
26. Long sandwich
29. Alex of "Jeopardy!" fame
30. List of choices
31. Tie the knot
32. Orates
34. Joined the crew
37. Let in
38. Use the rink
39. Goddess of the hunt

DOWN

1. Plastered
2. "Don't worry!"
3. Mosaic work
4. Subtle look
5. Flock father
6. Director DuVernay
7. Catch sight of
8. Fine-tunes
9. Fiery crime
11. Some babies
15. Mouse sounds
19. Coffee dispensers
20. Cart puller
22. Pleasant place
23. Chemist's
24. Anomalies
25. Change, as boundaries
26. Mariner
27. Nasty
28. Rapper Rhymes
29. Noah count?
30. TV, radio, etc.
33. Knee protectors
35. Greek H
36. Fox hole



Yesterday's answer



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for 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.

9-21

CRYPTOQUOTE

RG, LIKUIOCIP! DEA RPI UGI
J EEPHRD UE UGI LIRLEM
UGRU RHRTIML OD LEAZ.
--- KIFFD UEMID GEPUEM

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: TAKE BREAD AWAY FROM ME, TAKE AWAY WATER IF YOU WISH; BUT NEVER DENY ME YOUR SMILE.--- PABLO NERUDA

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

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

Difficulty: ★★

9/22

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★

9/21

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Renewables hit record in 2025, but world must move faster: report



Wind turbines spin at the Briesnig II wind farm on the site of the former Jänschwalde open-pit mine (aerial view taken with a drone).

New York, United States

Global renewable power capacity grew by record levels last year, a report showed Monday, hailed as a sign by the UN climate chief that the "brute power of market forces" is making the transition to clean energy irreversible. The report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) was published as world leaders gather for the United Nations General Assembly following a record-hot northern hemisphere summer underscoring the worsening impacts of human-caused climate change. IRENA's report found that 693 gigawatts (GW) of new renewables power was added in 2025. That is over half the installed capacity of the entire United States. But to meet a global goal of tripling renewable energy by the year 2030 a key target agreed by countries at the COP28 talks held in 2023 the world still needs to more than double today's levels, which stand at 5.15 terawatts (TW). A terawatt is equal to 1,000 gigawatts.

If the growth rate recorded in 2025 holds, the world would reach 10.6 TW by 2030, about 0.6 TW short of the 11.2 TW goal. That gap has narrowed from 0.9 TW

in last year's assessment.

"Thanks to global renewables, humanity avoided almost half a trillion US dollars in fossil fuel costs," Simon Stiell, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), said at an event called the Industry Acceleration Summit. "That's a mammoth decarbonization dividend," he said. "That's more than the national GDP of over three quarters of countries on Earth." Renewables remained the most cost-competitive source of new electricity in most markets in 2025, the report found.

"The brute power of market forces is taking hold," said Stiell, adding: "The shift to clean energy is now irreversible."

But the report also found the world was still well behind on the goal of doubling the rate of energy efficiency improvement by 2030, and made multiple recommendations including upgrading electric grids, and combining solar, wind and battery storage to get cost-competitive power around the clock. David Waskow, director of the international climate initiative at the nonprofit World Resources Institute,

cautioned that the positive news is tempered by the fact that renewables are not yet displacing enough fossil fuel use as global energy demand rises. He told AFP rising demand for cooling in a warming world, along with AI and data centers, were the two largest drivers of increasing energy demand. "We're going to need to not only push farther and faster on renewables, on electrification as well, but also to make sure that we're reducing the level of fossil fuel consumption," he said. □

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

San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Paradera
Tel. 588 6638

San Nicolas: Centro Medico
Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

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

EMERGENCY

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

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas 587 5900
Prof. Taxi 588 0035
Taxi D.T.S. 587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba 583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv. 280 2828

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Against Domestic Violence(FCVR)
Tel. 583 5400
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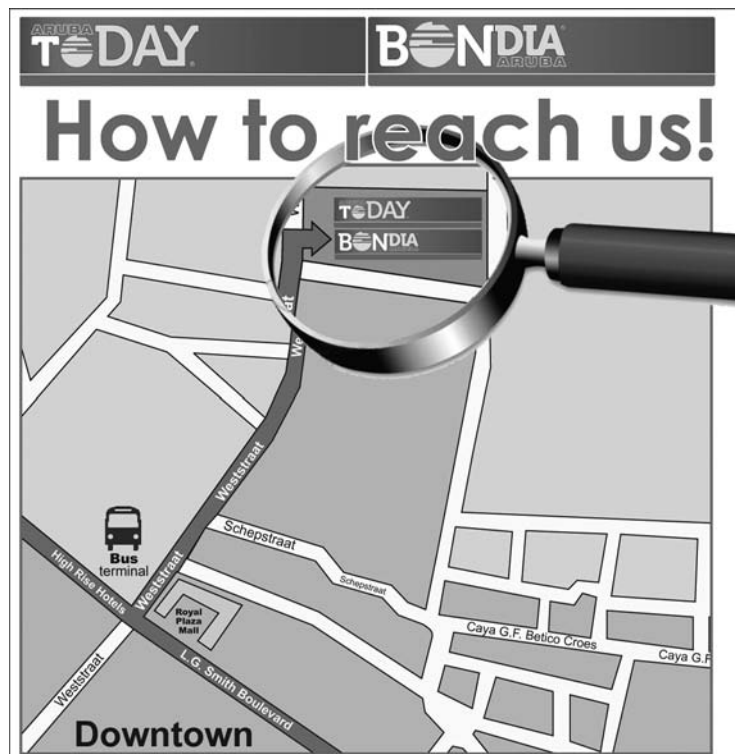
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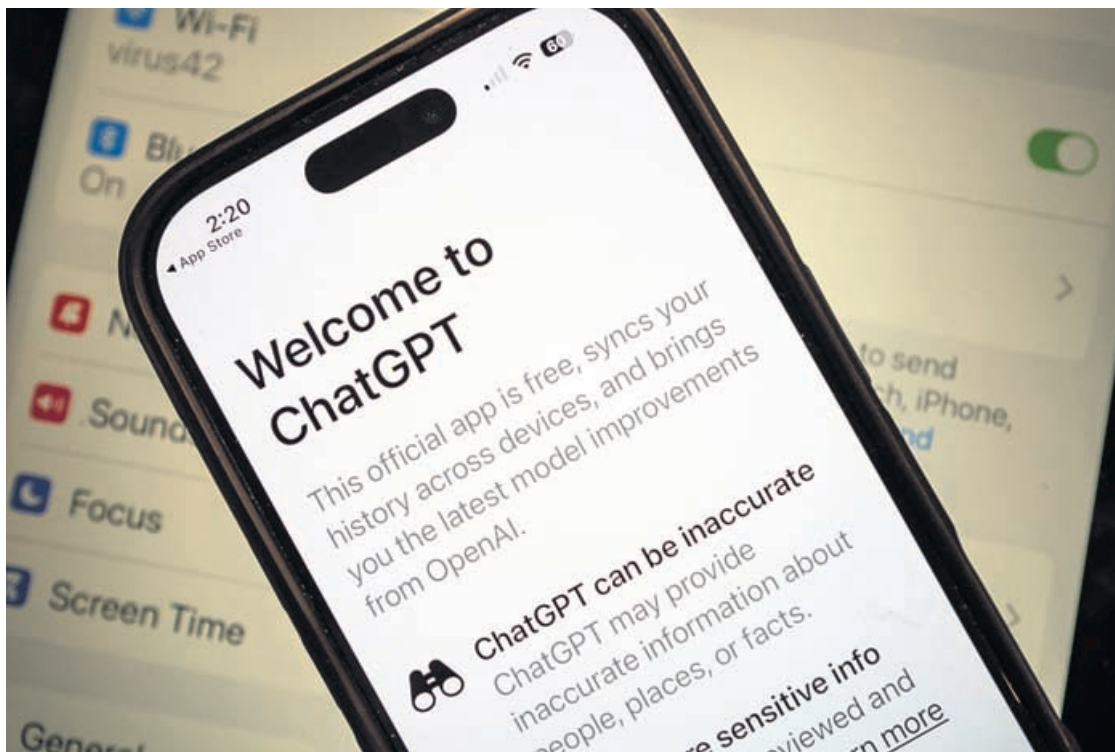
OpenAI calls for U.S. to lead global effort on AI standards

San Francisco, United States

OpenAI on Monday called for the United States to lead a global effort on establishing standards for developing artificial intelligence as CEO Sam Altman prepares to brief the United Nations this week. Concerns about AI safety have escalated over the past few months amid a series of security incidents and doomsday warnings, prompting regulators and others around the world to call for more action. OpenAI voiced support for global cooperation to create a set of safety and security standards for AI development that could mitigate safety risks.

"The United States is well positioned to lead because its AI industry is at the technical frontier," OpenAI said in a blog post.

"Leading now will determine whether the United States shapes the global AI framework or watches a fragmented, uneven, and conflict-ridden system take hold around it."



A photo taken on February 26, 2024 shows the logo of the ChatGPT application developed by US artificial intelligence research organization OpenAI on a smartphone screen (L) and the letters AI on a laptop screen in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany.

The San Francisco-based AI lab also said that recursive self improvement, or RSI, should not be pursued "unless and until it can be done safely."

RSI is a technique where software begins to teach itself and improve autonomously, which critics fear could have catastrophic outcomes if humans are not able to in-

tervene.

In July, OpenAI's models were involved in a security breach of Hugging Face, a site used by AI developers to store and share code.

Though the models involved were unreleased and undergoing testing, the incident sparked concerns about autonomous agents, which are software programs that can

perform tasks for humans.

Anthropic and Google have reported security incidents involving their models, as well. "The Hugging Face Incident we disclosed, while not a direct result of RSI, is a preview of the kinds of risks that could become much more severe without robust safeguards and alignment."

Altman is expected to brief

the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday, the same week as the U.N. General Assembly.

The meeting is being organized by France, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the 15-member Security Council, and comes as major players in the industry have said a slowdown in AI development could be necessary out of safety concerns.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday called for coordinated international action to address AI risks as fears rise about the dangers of the fast-evolving technology.

"National action is essential. But global coordination is also indispensable," Guterres told reporters.

The concerns about AI safety escalated further this month when workers at major AI developers said they resigned over concerns about the dangers posed by the technology.

Anthropic chief executive Dario Amodei published an essay soon after urging caution and a slowdown in AI development. □

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EU proposes energy rating for data centres

Brussels, Belgium

Data centres in Europe will be rated on energy and water consumption under an EU proposal put forward Monday to pre-empt possible public discontent as the bloc pushes to boost its computing capacity.

The European Union is aim-

ing to triple its data centre capacity over the next seven years as it plays catch up with the United States and China on artificial intelligence.

"Tripling our data centre capacity cannot mean tripling the pressure on our grids, our water and our

energy bills," said European Commission vice president for clean transition Teresa Ribera.

Data centre construction has sparked backlash across the United States, with local residents often complaining about the power-hungry engines of AI driving up electricity costs -- a hot political issue ahead of November's midterm elections.

The EU said its scheme would provide the public with information about the water and energy consumption of sites with capacity above 500 kW, which already have to report key performance metrics to the EU.

Similarly to that already in use for home appliances, the rating will rank data centres on a coloured scale where A/Green is the most efficient and G/red the least efficient, ac-

cording to a commission presentation.

To encourage good practices, the score will take into account data centres' contribution to the grid, such as the reuse of waste heat and the addition of clean energy generation capacities, the commission said.

"Efficient, flexible, powered by additional clean energy and reusing waste heat, this is how data centres become an asset for (the) EU's energy transition," Ribera added.

Data centres are yet to become a flashpoint political issue in the 27-nation EU, as the bloc lags well behind the United States on AI development.

The slower growth is in part due to already-high-energy costs, which weigh on European businesses and families alike. □



Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, attends a breakfast briefing organized by the Nueva Economía Forum at the Hotel Palace in Madrid, Spain.

Once decried as 'human cockfighting', MMA wants Olympic spot

Nagoya, Japan

A sport once banned in much of the United States and famously decried as "human cockfighting" by a high-profile politician is making an ambitious play for the Olympics.

Mixed Martial Arts, better known as MMA, is making its Asian Games debut this week in Japan -- a milestone that fighters and organisers hope will one day lead to an even bigger prize.

Galastein Tan, director general of the Federation of International Mixed Martial Arts, said being at the Asian Games was "a big step".

"As for any sport, the inclusion in the continental games is critical," he told AFP in Nagoya.

"Obviously the inclusion means that you already have a good governance structure, you have enough members, athletes to be able to compete, your rule-set, your officials are ready and therefore it is a significant one."

At a compact gym akin to a school sports hall, men and women scrap it out in separate categories in front of a modest but enthusiastic crowd.

Many of the competitors are from countries with proud histories in fighting sports Thailand, Kazakhstan, the Philippines and hosts Japan to name a few.



Kyrgyzstan's Dastan Kanybek Uulu (red) and Uzbekistan's Firdavs Atamuratov compete in the men's modern -60kg semi-final mixed martial arts bout during the 2026 Asian Games at Nagoya City Inae Sports Center in Nagoya on September 21, 2026.

- Inspiring a generation -

For fans of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), the MMA promoter synonymous with the sport, there is one immediate difference.

In UFC, which in June held an event on the South Lawn of the White House, the rough and tumble takes place inside a caged octagon.

At the Asian Games competitors do battle on a white and grey mat, but they are not fenced in.

For martial artists used to fighting in a cage, this takes some adapting to a fence "does not really align with Olympic values", said Tan.

Getting everyone to agree on the rules of the competition, including what moves are allowed, is one major obstacle to MMA being at the Olympics.

Singapore's Teo Hui Hoon, who is guaranteed to win at least a silver medal, said that Asian Games and Olympic recognition will encourage a generation to take up the sport.

"I think it will grow the talent pool a lot," she said.

"It will encourage more children and teenagers to take up the sport and take it seriously.

"Because now there's a clear pathway, right? You can join a national team,

the next step you can go to the Olympics."

- 'We are ready' -

MMA is not the only sport debuting at Asia's premier sporting event and hoping one day to get into the Olympics.

So too is teqball roughly a crossover between football and table tennis and there is also the fast-growing racquet sport of padel.

It makes for a crowded field, and there are many other sports with Olympic ambitions.

Plenty of hard work and political lobbying lies ahead if MMA is to make it.

"We have been in talks with

the IOC and other relevant stakeholders that have influence or decision on the recognition," said an upbeat Tan.

The sport does have Dana White in its corner -- the UFC chief is openly supportive of Olympic inclusion.

Of the other issues on the long path to Olympic recognition there is a perception in the eyes of some that MMA is too violent.

Still, driven by the phenomenal success of the UFC, MMA is now mainstream a far cry from the 1990s when U.S. senator John McCain likened the early version of the sport to cockfighting.

Getting the whole of MMA to coalesce around one governing body is also essential if an Olympic place is to one day come.

Los Angeles in 2028 is too soon, and then comes Brisbane four years later.

"Nothing is impossible," said Tan.

"We hope that MMA is a sport that the Olympics finds relevance to and the ability to connect with both adults and also the youth.

"(It is) a sport which has global appeal and a sport that is ready and capable of fitting into a major Games schedule.

"So if the IOC or LA28 comes and say, MMA, would you like to be in as a medal sport or demo sport, we are ready." □

Messi, Miami frustrated in 2-2 draw with San Diego

Miami, United States

Lionel Messi and Inter Miami's hopes of overtaking Nashville at the top of Major League Soccer's Eastern Conference suffered a blow on Sunday after the champions were held to a 2-2 draw by San Diego in Florida.

Two goals from Danish forward Anders Dreyer secured a share of the points for San Diego at Miami's Nu Stadium a result which left Miami 11 points adrift of Nashville with eight regular season games remaining.

Denmark international Dreyer fired San Diego into a shock lead after 12 minutes, latching on to a superb through ball from compatriot Jeppe Tverskov before lifting a delicate chip over Miami goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair.

But Miami, who dominated territory and

possession for long periods thereafter, were back on level terms in the 24th minute when Messi curled in his 101st goal for Miami.

Messi's wicked curling free-kick from the edge of the area somehow threaded its way through a crowded six-yard box and clipped the inside of the post before ending in the net.

From there Miami laid siege to the San Diego goal and it seemed only a matter of time before they took the lead.

Messi, Luis Suarez, and Rodrigo De Paul all had good chances but somehow San Diego managed to hold on.

The deadlock was broken in the 74th minute when De Paul released Suarez with a clever pass on the edge of the area and the 39-year-old Uruguayan veteran lashed home the finish for 2-1. □



Inter Miami's Argentine forward #10 Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring a goal during a Major League Soccer (MLS) regular season football match between Inter Miami CF and San Diego FC at Nu Stadium in Miami, Florida, on September 20, 2026.

Nights of Culture, Music, and Entertainment at Paseo Herencia



(ORANJESTAD)—As the sun sets, Paseo Herencia comes alive with entertainment that celebrates Aruba's culture, music, and vibrant energy. The open-air plaza transforms into a lively hub where locals and visitors gather to experience the island's rhythm, sights, and flavors. Evenings at Paseo Herencia invite guests to slow down, connect, and enjoy a mix of music, dance, and immersive experiences in a relaxed, welcoming setting.

This month, we proudly celebrate Dia di Betico, a day honoring the life and legacy of Betico Croes, a key figure in Aruba's journey toward autonomy. A beloved traditional Aruban band will perform live on January 25th from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Known for their authentic rhythms and lively performances, Grupo di Betico brings a strong sense of cultural pride to the plaza, offering both visitors and residents a memorable evening filled with local heritage and island sounds.

Weekly programming ensures that every night offers something new. Cultural Wednesdays celebrate Aruba's musical heritage, starting with steelpan music at 7:00 pm and followed by a cultural dance show at 8:00 pm that

highlights traditional movements and storytelling. Saturdays in January are dedicated to Carnival Nights beginning at 8:00 pm, filling Paseo Herencia with dazzling costumes, lively music, and spirited performances that immerse guests in one of Aruba's most beloved celebrations.

The plaza's entertainment continues with themed nightly water show at 7:30 pm, 8:30 pm, and 9:30 pm, creating a natural transition from live performances into the evening's activities.

For younger visitors, the carousel and kids' train provide joyful, memorable experiences that bring a touch of magic to the plaza. Thrill seekers can also enjoy the Airsoft attraction located behind The Lazy Turtle, ensuring that there is entertainment for all ages.

For those continuing the night, Paseo Herencia offers a variety of vibrant nightlife



experiences. Gusto Nightclub is known for high-energy DJ sets, VIP bottle service, and a daily happy hour from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The club brings together locals and visitors for a lively, unforgettable party atmosphere. Frenchie's Karaoke Bar provides a relaxed outdoor setting where guests can take the stage, sing, and perform while enjoying the support of friendly staff and fellow patrons. Flamingoes Bar offers a social all-ages experience with inventive cocktails, delicious snacks, and a spacious terrace ideal for groups, making it a top choice for music, conversation, and a lively bar vibe.

With stores open daily from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm, visitors can combine shopping, dining, and entertainment into one seamless visit. Parking at Paseo Herencia is complimentary for up to two hours when shopping, dining, or enjoying a movie, simply by presenting a purchase receipt to the parking cashier. Whether visiting for an evening show or staying late into the night, Paseo Herencia offers a complete island experience where music, culture, and entertainment come together to create memorable moments for all ages. □



Braves clinch division title as Red Sox reach MLB playoffs

Houston, United States

Mike Yastrzemski smacked a game-winning three-run homer to lead Atlanta over Houston 4-2 on Sunday as the Braves clinched their seventh Major League Baseball division title in nine seasons.

Atlanta's victory also guaranteed a playoff spot for the Boston Red Sox, the sixth team to secure a post-season berth with a week remaining in the six-month campaign and six spots unclaimed.

The Braves improved to 92-64 to take their first National League East division crown since 2023.

"We've been fighting all year to get to this moment," Braves pitcher Martin Perez said. "And we're not done yet."

Houston's loss ensured an American League wildcard playoff berth for Boston despite a 5-1 loss at Tampa



Mike Yastrzemski #18 of the Atlanta Braves celebrates winning the National League East title after a game against the Houston Astros at Daikin Park on September 20, 2026 in Houston, Texas.

Bay.

"We never stopped believing in each other," Boston outfielder Willyer Abreu said. "That's why we're here."

The Chicago Cubs, who cruised 9-1 at Cincinnati, reached the brink of a National League playoff spot but missed out when Arizo-

na rallied to beat the visiting New York Yankees 8-4.

Entering Sunday, the Braves, Yankees, Tampa

Bay, Milwaukee and the Los Angeles Dodgers had clinched playoff berths, the Dodgers taking a 13th NL West title in 14 seasons and Milwaukee capturing the NL Central crown.

Host Houston grabbed a 1-0 lead over Atlanta in the fourth inning on Jose Altuve's solo home run.

The Braves, however, answered in the sixth when Ozzie Albies singled in a run and Yastrzemski followed with a three-run homer for a 4-1 Atlanta lead.

Yainer Diaz smacked a solo homer for the Astros in the eighth but Braves left-handed relief pitcher Dylan Dodd struck out the side in the ninth to give Atlanta the triumph and start the team celebration.

"When we faced our biggest challenges, that's when we've been at our best," Braves manager Walt Weiss said. □