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



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Birds of Aruba



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Watchdog clears former U.S. Fed chief Powell in renovation probe

Washington, United States

Donald Trump on Wednesday demanded former central bank chief Jerome Powell quit the body's board, despite a watchdog finding no criminal misconduct in a costly Federal Reserve renovation project. "At no point during our evaluation did we find reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of federal criminal law had occurred," the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the Federal Reserve said in its report.

In April, the Department of Justice dropped a criminal probe into the then-chairman over the cost overruns after Trump repeatedly criticized and insulted Powell over interest rate policy. In his second term, Trump had launched an unprecedented assault on the Fed's independence as he demanded the central bank cut rates to spur economic activity.

The charges were dropped after a senator from Trump's own party refused to confirm the president's



U.S. President Donald Trump points to a cost sheet as he speaks with Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell (R) as he visits the Federal Reserve in Washington, DC, on July 24, 2025.

chosen successor to Powell, saying he would only do so if the criminal probe was stopped.

At the time, US Attorney Jeanine Pirro said she would bow to the inspector general's findings. But on Wednesday, Trump demanded Powell be

"forced to resign" from the Fed's board over the issue and said he was direct-

ing his Attorney General to "study the report."

"If he doesn't resign, he should be sued, at the highest level," said Trump.

- Unprecedented assault -

Powell took the helm of the Fed during Trump's first presidency in 2018 and was subsequently reappointed to the position under Democratic president Joe

Biden.

When he announced that the DOJ probe had been launched in January, Powell explicitly said it was meant to pressure the Fed to set interest rates in line with Trump's preferences. In a highly unusual move, he did not resign his post on the Fed's Board of Governors when his term as chair ended in May.

At the time, Powell said he would not leave that position until the probe over the cost overruns was "well and truly over, with transparency and finality."

Trump's campaign against the Fed's independence has also seen him attempt to unseat another Fed governor, Lisa Cook, over mortgage fraud allegations that she denies.

In June, the Supreme Court sided with Cook and ruled that Trump could not summarily dismiss her over unproven allegations.

In August, however, the White House doubled down on its attempt to fire Cook.

On Wednesday, Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren said the OIG's report proved that Trump's DOJ has "no basis to restart the President's witch hunt against former Fed Chair Jerome Powell."

"The President should quit trying to fire Fed governors to cover up for his economic failures and instead stop his chaotic tariffs and end his war in Iran." □

Hegseth says U.S. cut number of generals, admirals by 20%

Washington, United States

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced Wednesday that the United States has slashed the number of its generals and admirals by 20 percent, in a move he said is aimed at "accountability."

Hegseth suggested the cuts targeted officers who failed to get on board with

his efforts to ensure the military is focused on war-fighting rather than the "woke" policies of previous administrations, describing the reductions as an "accomplishment."

"The number-crunchers say we fired 10 percent of the generals and admirals across the force," Hegseth told troops at the Quan-

tico military base, saying: "We've also reduced the overall number of general officer slots by an additional 10 percent."

"So yes, 20 percent reduction across the board," he said. "The media calls that a purge. I call it accountability, and long overdue." The address to junior officers and enlisted personnel at Quantico came a year after a similar speech to top officers in which Hegseth said the U.S. military was too fat, too focused on leftist "woke" ideas, and in need of major shake-up.

He said Wednesday that top officers who "responded positively" to the previous speech are "leading newly focused and newly empowered and disciplined formations," while those who did not "no longer work here."

"We are no longer the

woke department, or the weak department," Hegseth said.

"Simple translation of that: no fatties, no trannies, no beardos, no weirdos, no wimps, no radicals. Just warriors -- just tough, ready, committed troops."

- Cutting 'fat' -

Hegseth ordered major cuts to the U.S. military including a 10-percent reduction to the overall number of generals and admirals, and a 20-percent decrease in the highest four-star ranks -- in May 2025. There were 831 active duty U.S. generals and admirals as of the end of that month, but Pentagon figures from the end of July 2026 the latest available showed there were actually more top officers a total of 851.

During his confirmation hearing in January 2025, Hegseth argued that the

Pentagon's bureaucracy was top-heavy and in need of cuts.

"It's going to be my job, working with those that we hire and those inside the administration, to identify those places where fat can be cut, so it can go toward lethality," he told lawmakers at the time.

Since returning to office early last year, Trump has overseen a purge of top military personnel, including the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, general Charles "CQ" Brown, whom he fired without explanation in February 2025. Otherseniorofficerspushed out include the heads of the US Army, Navy and Coast Guard, the general who headed the National Security Agency, the vice chief of staff of the US Air Force, a Navy admiral assigned to NATO, and three top military lawyers. □



Members of the U.S. military listen as U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth delivers the State of the Force address in Quantico, Virginia, on September 30, 2026.



A U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules military transport aircraft prepares for takeoff from Camp Victory on the outskirts of Baghdad International Airport on September 29, 2026.

U.S.-led coalition ends mission in Iraq

Baghdad, Iraq

A U.S.-led coalition deployed in Iraq more than a decade ago to fight jihadists concluded its mission Wednesday, a move celebrated by the country's leaders and President Donald Trump despite fears of emboldened pro-Iran armed factions.

Coalition troops deployed to Iraq and Syria in 2014 to fight the Islamic State group, which had seized large swathes of territory, committed massacres, and forced thousands of women and children into slavery.

The group was defeated in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria in 2019, but coalition forces stayed on to battle its remnants.

The United States and Iraq agreed in 2024 to wind down the mission, and U.S. troops withdrew gradually from bases across the country, restricting their presence to the autonomous northern Kurdistan region.

"This Day is a victory for the United States, a victory for Iraq, and a decisive victory over ISIS," President Trump posted, referring to the Islamic State group.

"I had a choice to stay or to leave, and felt, without question, that it was time for America to go home!" he added.

- 'Sovereignty' -

The U.S.-led coalition did not defeat IS alone -- Kurdish Peshmerga fighters played an important role, as did powerful Iraqi factions, including pro-Iran groups that have yet to disarm.

The Iraqi government believes it will deprive Iran-backed factions of the excuse they have used to retain their arsenal.

But many fear the pullout might boost the pro-Iran factions and draw the country deeper into the Middle East war.

Hours after the U.S. announced the completion of the pullout, supporters of those groups gathered in a flag-lined public space to celebrate, with speeches delivered from a stage decorated with model drones.

Speaking at the event, a military spokesman for Kataeb Hezbollah, Jaafar al-Husseini, said the factions had been in talks on "regulating" their weapons but "have not yet received a response from the Iraqi government".

As such, they were "not bound by any timeline or agreement" to surrender their weapons, he added, and retained "the right to directly respond to any American or Zionist violation of Iraq's sovereignty".

Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi said "a new phase has begun, defined by Iraq's sovereignty, the strength of its institutions (and) the readiness of its forces."

- Intensified attacks -

Zaidi, who came to power this year with the U.S.'s blessing, has vowed to ensure that armed factions hand over their weapons. His government set September 30 as the deadline for factions to disarm, but later withdrew the deadline as talks continued to "regulate" weapons.

Kurdish military commander Sirwan Barzani expressed disquiet over the withdrawal, saying: "We have no means to protect the skies of Kurdistan."

He nonetheless told AFP that the Peshmerga forces remained prepared to confront any threats, stating that their capabilities had "improved significantly thanks to the training, assistance and armament provided by the coalition".

Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani also insisted on Wednesday that there was "extremely good coordination with the Iraqi federal government to confront any type of threat".

With several Iran-backed groups refusing to disarm, senior politicians are now hoping to work out a compromise. □



This handout picture dated January 12, 2023 provided by the Tennessee Department of Correction shows convicted US murderer Christa Pike.

Court halts Tennessee's first execution of woman in 200 years

Washington, United States

A U.S. court on Wednesday halted the lethal injection of a 50-year-old female killer that would have been Tennessee's first execution of a woman in more than 200 years.

Barely an hour before Christa Pike was due to die by lethal injection, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling to stay the execution, three decades after she murdered a classmate.

Pike was 18 when she and her boyfriend beat and killed Colleen Slemmer, 19, at a job training camp for young people.

The killing gained national attention after Slemmer's body was found with a pentagram, often seen as a satanic symbol, carved in her chest.

In the United States, only 18 women have been executed since 1976, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

"The interests of justice and the finality of Pike's impending execution compel the entry of a short stay of execution in order to properly analyze the parties' fully briefed arguments," the court order said.

The court is set to review whether allegations that Pike was sexually abused as a child were fully considered.

The case has sparked debate over capital punishment for young criminals.

Pike's lawyers argue she should be granted clemency due to her young age and mental health issues at the time of the killing.

"She was 18 when she committed her crime, and she was deeply mentally ill," they wrote in a clemency petition to Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, who said he would not intervene. The US Supreme Court rejected Tuesday an application for a stay of execution, which had argued that Pike's history as a victim of sexual assault, post-traumatic stress disorder and a blood condition meant a lethal injection would cause "needless suffering." Pike, the only woman on Tennessee's death row, had been set to die by lethal injection at 10:00 am (1500 GMT) on Wednesday at the Riverbend Maximum Security Institution in Nashville.

Independent U.N. rights experts have urged the U.S. government and Tennessee authorities to "immediately halt" the execution and commute her death sentence. "Pike's execution would mark the culmination of a trajectory of severe physical and psychological suffering marked by childhood abuse and nearly three decades of solitary confinement on death row," they said. □

Mediterranean migration crisis takes center stage in documentary 'Rescue'

Toronto, Canada

Even two decades working on migration issues did not prepare director Sine Plambeck for the gut-wrenching scenes of human misery she encountered in her new documentary "Rescue."

The film traces the work of men and women who patrol the Mediterranean Sea helping the often-desperate people they find there who are fleeing economic and political chaos and trying to make their way to Europe.

In one scene, cameras capture an operation by the NGO Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres) as they try to help a group in a stricken little boat.

What unfolds is a tense sequence that ends with the separation of a Yemeni family: a man is taken aboard by the activists while weeping and screaming for his family, who had been abducted by armed men just minutes



Migrants are seen after the arrival of the Geo Barents ship by Doctors Without Borders NGO at Salerno harbor in Salerno, Italy on July 13, 2024. There were 99 migrants on the boat, of which more than half were children.

earlier, right in front of the cameras.

The story deeply affected Danish filmmaker Plambeck, whose documentary premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival

and has its European premiere Friday at the Zurich Film Festival.

"It's been the most emotionally challenging and ethically challenging film I

have ever made because (I was) witnessing someone (being) captured, (while I was) there with the husband all the time," Plambeck told AFP.

The production follows Hani,

a Yemeni man, over the course of several months as he eventually reaches the Italian coast where he must endure an agonizing wait, unsure if he will ever see his family again.

Eventually, he receives news from his wife, Roro, whose cell phone footage features in the film detailing the physical, psychological, and sexual violence she and her children suffered at the hands of their captors.

"From the start she was like: 'I want to tell my story, and if you can help me get justice, I want that too'," said Plambeck, an anthropologist by training.

- 'Every day' -

Plambeck and her team undertook several expeditions alongside the rescuers in an effort to document the migration situation in the Mediterranean, a sea that tens of thousands of people cross every year. Hundreds of them die

along the way.

"We were filming under very challenging circumstances, the weather and the waves, and you know the whole nature around being at sea," she said.

But "what we are documenting in our film is something that happens every day," she said.

Plambeck said she was concerned by the shifting tides of public opinion and politics in Europe, where a growing anti-migrant movement is making its presence felt in mainstream discourse.

Where people fleeing the horrors of sub-Saharan Africa or the repression of Central Asia might have been welcomed in the continent a decade ago, they are now seen as a threat to keep out.

"We have a very right-wing change throughout the world on this (issue)... but that's what makes it even more important to talk about it."

Getting audiences to engage with the issue is not easy, says Plambeck.

Thai teen rocker Nene aims to tour, write music... and return to school

Bangkok, Thailand

Rising Thai teen rock star Nene Royal, fresh off her win on a top US TV talent show, told AFP Wednesday she planned to write her own songs, tour and "go back to school".

The 16-year-old, whose real name is Rattikarn Amloy, took home the \$1 million prize as winner of "America's Got Talent" this month, after wowing judg-

es and viewers with blistering guitar solos and rock ballad shrieks.

Hailing from the Thai island of Phuket, she has become a national figure in the Southeast Asian nation since entering the U.S. competition.

"My plan is... writing my own songs, you know, and also making some tours, and also go back to school," Nene told AFP

after a performance at a Yamaha music showroom in Bangkok.

The teen singer and guitarist said she was "shocked" and "fainted", dropping to the stage floor, when she was announced the champion on September 23.

Next month, she is set to open for U.S. band Avenged Sevenfold in Singapore, after playing with Linkin Park in the final episode of "America's Got Talent".

Videos of her televised renditions of alternative rock classics such as "Zombie" by The Cranberries and "Black Hole Sun" by Soundgarden had gone viral in Thailand and beyond.

She performed both songs on Wednesday with her backing Ozone Band three teen performers who matched Nene's chops on bass guitar, keyboard and

drums.

Asked about her band after the gig, Nene said: "I really missed them, because they're kind of like my brothers."

The boys traveled to California while she filmed "America's Got Talent" to cheer her on, she said.

"They're always supporting me."

Nene, who says she started playing guitar at age seven and learned mostly by watching online videos, earned a music scholarship to a private international school.

In July, she played alongside Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, who congratulated her win and praised her talent and dedication, saying it "brought pride to Thai people".

Appreciative of the outpouring of support from Thai fans, Nene said she did not expect the raucous homecoming.



Rising Thai teen rock star Nene Royal poses for a photograph ahead of a showcase in Bangkok on September 30, 2026.



Minas and Giorgos, the school's only two primary school students, enter a classroom for a lesson on the Aegean island of Thymaina on September 23, 2026.

Pirate island's plunging population shows Greece's demographic decline

Greece

"Let's go to war!" shouted six-year-old Giorgos at his older cousin, Minas, as the two chased each other with claw-like geranium stalks around the schoolyard on the tiny Greek island of Thymaina.

The two boys are the last primary school children on the far-flung eastern Aegean island, 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the Turkish coast.

"When I was a boy, the school had nearly 70 children," 77-year-old Manolis Mitikas, owner of Thymaina's portside cantina, mused over a game of backgammon.

Like the rest of Greece, the former pirate hideout is facing the effects of an ageing population.

The education ministry said it was shuttering 43 nurseries and 32 primary schools this year "due to very low to non-existent" student numbers.

Another 70 nurseries were merged.

The challenge is even greater in small Aegean islands far from the Greek mainland.

"If we have no more children, the school will close... and unfortunately, we have no more children in Thymaina," Marigo Kottara, deputy mayor of the Fournoi archipelago of which

the island is part, told AFP. Greece last year recorded fewer than 66,000 births compared to more than 107,000 in 2005, with the population estimated to fall by more than a million to 9.2 million by 2050.

Thymaina no longer has a nursery, and its high school closed years ago.

Six teenagers still living on the island take a boat to neighboring Fournoi every morning.

Thymaina's sole teacher, Konstantinos Fantelas, has to teach the boys everything from Greek to maths, history, religion and music. Thymaina is only served by two ferries a week linking it to the capital Athens a journey that takes at least eight hours, with a final hop from Fournoi. The connection can frequently be disrupted by poor weather, leaving islanders stranded for days.

- Pirate lore -

Fournoi's cluster of islands off Samos have many secluded coves that for centuries were perfect for piracy.

The Mitikas family claims descent from the area's last known pirate, Emmanouil Mitikas, who was executed in the 1860s.

"The pirate Mitikas was my father-in-law's grandfather," said Maria Markaki, a

restaurant owner in Fournoi. "My husband is still a pirate, he can't get enough of the sea," she joked.

The waters around the island have over 60 known shipwrecks dating back to the 6th century BCE.

Municipal officials now hope that a decade-long culture ministry initiative to open underwater archaeology parks in the area will draw more visitors.

The first of three is to open next year, Kottara said.

- Cash incentives -

Greece's downsizing of schools has drawn complaints from neighboring Turkey, which criticized Athens in July for closing down eight schools catering to the country's Turkish-speaking minority.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has described Greece's demographic problem as a "national danger".

His government which faces elections next year this month promised tax breaks to parents with three children, and extra cash for parents who have more than three.

But with many Greek families making do with salaries of under 1,000 euros (\$1,135) amid skyrocketing energy prices, some local officials are taking matters into their own hands. □



This photo, taken on September 30, 2026, shows activist is entering a code into the "Abortomat" – Poland's first-ever abortion locker that allows women to access pregnancy-terminating pills anonymously, at the abortion consultation point "Abotak," located across the street from the entrance to the Polish parliament in Warsaw.

Polish activists open first abortion pill locker in Warsaw

Warsaw, Poland

Polish activists have opened the country's first-ever abortion locker, allowing women to access pregnancy-terminating pills anonymously and immediately in the country with some of Europe's strictest abortion laws, an AFP photographer confirmed Wednesday.

The small, colorfully painted locker, which activists call an "abortomat", consists of 22 compartments containing envelopes with medications allowing them to carry out medical abortions.

"It's a feminist intervention meant to show just how upside-down things are," Kinga Jelinska, director of the Women Help Women Foundation and co-founder of the Abortion Dream Team, told AFP.

"We always think about how to make abortion care easier, more accessible, friendlier, more people-centred," she added.

"It's simply logical and makes sense".

The facility's location across the street from the Polish parliament, which has failed to follow through on its pledges to relax the country's stringent abortion laws -- is purposefully symbolic.

It was here that activists decided to open an abortion centre just over a year ago.

Rather than a typical medical clinic, it provides women with access to resources, including pills, and a space to be able to seek support or carry out the pharmacological abortion.

Abortion in Poland is legal only in two circumstances: when the pregnancy resulted from a criminal act such as rape or incest or if it threatens the mother's life or health.

A 2020 decision by the Constitutional Tribunal, ruled that severe fetal abnormalities were not legal grounds for abortion.

Prior to this ruling, 98 percent of legal abortions in Poland were performed for this reason.

The new restrictions set off a torrent of protests throughout the country, which became the largest mass demonstrations in Poland since the 1989 anti-communist movement.

In the first half of 2025, only 846 legal abortions took place in Poland, according to data from the National Health Fund (NFZ) and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. □

Brazil's cellphone crime: a security nightmare in every pocket

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Eduardo Metzker, 29, was riding his motorcycle in Rio de Janeiro when he was suddenly boxed in by two other bikes. One of the riders put a gun to his head and demanded his phone and passcode.

The software developer watched with horror as the robbers drained up to 80,000 reais (\$15,000) from his banking apps, mostly in credit, while he scrambled to block his accounts.

"You know you go out every day, earning a living, saving money, building a life and then someone sticks a gun in your face and takes everything you have. My credit rating was ruined," Metzker told AFP. Cellphone crime, which can involve violence, financial fraud, and even murder, has become a potent symbol of the security crisis gripping Brazilian cities like Rio de Janeiro ahead of a first round presidential election on Sunday.

"The cellphone appears to encapsulate a growing panic over urban violence," the Brazilian Public Security Forum (FBSP) said in its annual report.

An FBSP survey published in May estimated that around



This screengrab from a security camera inside the car of Tabata Gomes Lenk shows the moment a thief breaks the car window to steal her cellphone in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on August 28, 2026.

14 million people had been a victim of the crime in the 12 previous months.

But only about 830,000 cellphones were reported stolen or robbed in 2025, according to the annual report, which draws on police data.

"We walk around completely afraid, constantly on alert," said Caroline Lo Bianco, 36, a dentist who had her phone ripped from her hands through the window of an Uber when she was seven months pregnant.

A spare phone for robbers

Ahead of a closely-contested election, both leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and his right-wing rival Flavio Bolsonaro have vowed to crack down on the crime.

Bolsonaro promises to quadruple jail sentences for cellphone crimes, while Lula has said "our goal is zero phone theft."

Polls show security is the major concern of Brazilians this election, but Metzker said he does not believe any candidate will make a difference.

"Honestly, they can say whatever they want, I have

no faith in them."

Fear of cellphone crime has pushed an estimated 30 percent of Brazilians about 65 million people to keep a cheap second phone, nicknamed a "robber's phone," according to the FBSP.

Metzker explained that after the robbery, he now carries one phone that he takes out on the street, and one that he keeps at home with all his banking applications on it.

Leonardo Silva, a coordinator for state and organized crime issues at the FBSP, said that cellphone crime

was growing more sophisticated.

Criminal "interest has shifted away from the phone itself, its physical value, to the data contained in those devices," he told AFP.

After being robbed, Lo Bianco blocked her bank cards, but the thieves managed to transfer almost \$700 from a digital bank account.

They also bought an Xbox on her Amazon app, which she managed to block before delivery.

The thieves even used her food delivery applications to send beer, meat, and McDonalds to different addresses across Rio de Janeiro.

- 'Multiple forms of loss' -

Luiz Fernando Bugiga, a prosecutor with the Special Action Group for Combating Organized Crime (GAECO), said a major police operation in Sao Paulo this month revealed an organized scheme behind cellphone crime with four distinct criminal cells.

Those who steal the phones hand them off to a specialized cell whose members "initiate bank transfers and data theft." □

Haze pushes Kuala Lumpur, Singapore into world's most polluted cities

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Malaysia's capital topped a global pollution ranking on Wednesday and nearby Singapore came in third, with smoke from wildfires in neighbouring Indonesia blamed for the unhealthy conditions.

A milky haze has shrouded the cities for more than a

month as smoke drifted from fires on Borneo and Sumatra islands.

Kuala Lumpur was the world's most polluted major city early on Wednesday, according to Swiss monitor IQAir, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) reading of 166. Singapore ranked third at 155. The AQI con-

verts measurements of pollutants into a single figure indicating air quality and potential health risks. Readings above 150 are classified as unhealthy, while levels above 300 are considered hazardous.

"It's really impacting our health and also the visibility," said Izzah Irdina, 22, a recent graduate from Kuala Lumpur.

"During this haze I can't even see the Merdeka 118," she said, referring to the world's second-tallest building.

"In another two months I hope the haze will end," added Izzah, who said she mostly stayed indoors.

Anusuriyeh, 41, told AFP she was "not sure when it's going to end because it's a natural disaster".

"But I'm taking daily vitamins to keep my vitality,

and my children too are wearing a mask and taking vitamins," said the employee of Malaysia's petroleum giant Petronas.

Transboundary haze is a recurring problem in Southeast Asia, but this year's episode has been particularly severe.

Hot, dry conditions associated with the El Nino weather phenomenon have fuelled the fires in Indonesia, which are also linked to land clearing, making the blazes harder to contain.

- 'Pray for rain' -

In Singapore, 18-year-old student Darius Chew, who suffers from allergic rhinitis, said the haze had forced him to reduce his sporting activities.

"I've cut down on sports because it's really hard to

continue as soon as I start sneezing," Chew told AFP.

Fellow student Ryan Ang, 18, who has asthma, said he had been sneezing more frequently and suffering from a runny nose, particularly in the mornings and at night.

"I'm not really cutting down on outdoor activities much, but it's affecting my health a bit," Ang said.

"You can't really do as much as you want to do," he added.

Retired Singaporean Athirah Abudullah, 69, said the haze has had less impact on her because she spends most of her time indoors.

She ventured out mainly for groceries and prayers at the mosque, but said her granddaughter, who suffered from eczema, had been affected by the haze. □



This photo shows Tjilik Riwut Airport enveloped in haze in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, on September 24, 2026.

Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost

Aruban fruits and vegetables

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

Mispel

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

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often

used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



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

Tamarind

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

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

Concomber chiquito

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



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

Yambo

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

Bonch'i Cunucu

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

Pampuna



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

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".

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 "ataradi", 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".

Beaches for the whole family to enjoy!



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

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

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

et lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

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

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

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach

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

and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

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



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Dining in? Try making some local favorites! How to make "funchi"

(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it



to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce. □

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

Birds of Aruba



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

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



descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

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

Canadian in the house

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



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

Cabochon

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

Keeping up with the conniving spider... Nanzi fools Cha Tiger

Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger

retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children..."

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch.

Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife. □

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



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.

On May 30 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! ☐



Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names; Ayo & Alto Vista

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

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

Ayo

Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word "Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamentu spoken today,



'Ayo' means 'bye'.

At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and history.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

Alto Vista

This word combination can be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.

In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aruba. The walls of this church were made

with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi.

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1. Go by taxi
6. Latte topping
10. Resort off Venezuela
11. Eeyore's creator
12. Heathen
13. 1980 Tony winner for Best Musical
14. Poet Khayyám
15. Director Spielberg
16. Like the Beatles
17. Start of an ode title
18. Snaky shape
19. 1960 Tony winner for Best Musical
22. Cajole
23. Roster
26. 2016 Tony winner for Best Musical
29. Quick punch
32. Brief time
33. Wish undone
34. Looks forward to
36. Dance moves
37. 1999 Tony winner for

Best

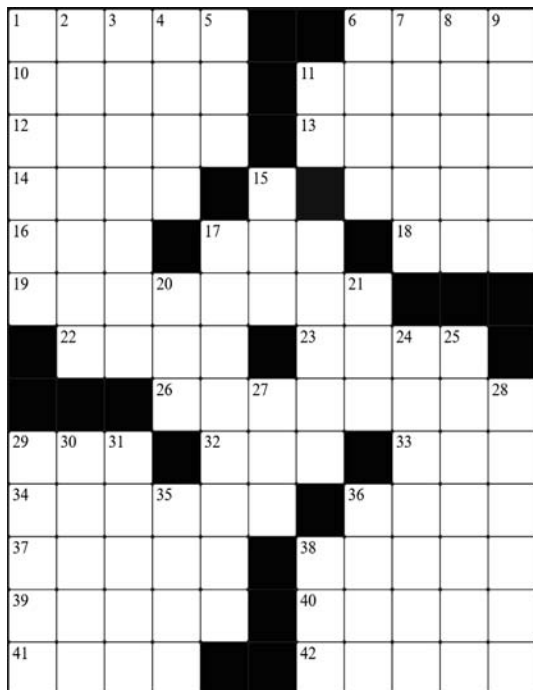
38. Painter
39. Japanese dog
40. Brat's opposite
41. Nevada city
42. Out of style

DOWN

1. Complete
2. Language of biblical times
3. Object of fear
4. Structural girder
5. Sandy color
6. Lincoln's bill
7. Green shade
8. Pays to play
9. Wherewithal
11. Like some auto finishes
15. Musical note
17. 21-Down, informally
20. Cheering cry
21. Well output
24. Orchestra section
25. Bald spot covers
27. -- amis (my friends)
28. Get snug
29. "Aladdin" villain
30. Came to sight
35. Analogy words
36. Comic Carvey
38. Travel aid



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.

9-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

Q I K ' D D P T X V D X K A X L W D P
N I G X , E V E B , N X D ' R Z H R D U I
L V N Y W K U W K D P X T V W K .

--- E W N N W X P I N W Q V B

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WE MAY ENCOUNTER MANY DEFEATS, BUT WE MUST NOT BE DEFEATED ---MAYA ANGELOU.

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power



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

Drinking water

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



Supermarket hours

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

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

Safety

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

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE	
OCTOBER	
03 SAT	ISLAND PRINCESS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: C
04 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
06 TUE	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
07 WED	ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: I FREEWINDS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: Berth: E
10 SAT	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E

SUDOKU

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

King Classic Sudoku

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

Difficulty: ★★★

10/1

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

9/30

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Rising seas threaten spread of marine invaders, scientists say



A brightly colored humpback sunfish (*Lepomis gibbosus*) hangs from a fishing line immediately after being caught in the Oder-Spree Canal.

Paris, France

Sea-level rise driven by climate change could help invasive marine species spread into newly flooded coastal areas, threatening biodiversity and some economic activities, researchers warned in a study published Monday.

The findings in Nature Ecology & Evolution highlight the links between the climate and biodiversity crises, with global warming altering ecosystems and creating new opportunities for non-native species to thrive.

That could "potentially expose ecosystems and human activities that have not previously been affected by these species," said study co-author Xuan Liu of Beijing Normal University.

The researchers modeled the potential future spread of 122 established non-native marine animals, including fish, crustaceans, mollusks and sea stars, under different climate and

sea-level scenarios.

Climate change causes sea levels to rise through thermal expansion ocean water increases in volume as it warms and the melting of glaciers and ice sheets.

Global sea levels are projected to rise by about 20

centimeters (eight inches) by 2050 and 56 cm by 2100 under a scenario of moderate growth in greenhouse gas emissions.

That would see around 360,000 square kilometers (139,000 square miles) of coastal land flooded by mid-century, rising to 550,000 square kilometers by the end of the century.

More than two-thirds of the newly flooded coastal land roughly 290,000 to 470,000 square kilometers could become suitable for the marine non-native animals studied, particularly around estuaries at mid-latitudes, the authors found.

The risk is concentrated in regions including the eastern United States, Gulf of Mexico, North Sea, Gulf of Guinea, Arabian Gulf, northern Bay of Bengal, southeastern China and northern Australia.

Several species examined are already established in Europe, including the Pacific oyster, Atlantic blue crab and the veined rapa whelk, a predatory sea snail.

"Estuaries are particularly at risk because they are directly connected to the ocean and are also major hubs of human activity," Liu said.

Such areas could provide

stepping stones for marine invaders moving further inland as the sea advances, the study said.

The findings come as governments prepare for two UN-backed international summits on the twin biodiversity and climate crises: COP17 in October and COP31 in November.

A global assessment by the UN's expert scientific panel on biodiversity, IPBES, estimated that economic costs from biological invasions exceeded \$423 billion in 2019. □

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OTHER

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

EMERGENCY

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

TAXI SERVICES

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Prof. Taxi 588 0035
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
Centre for Diabetes
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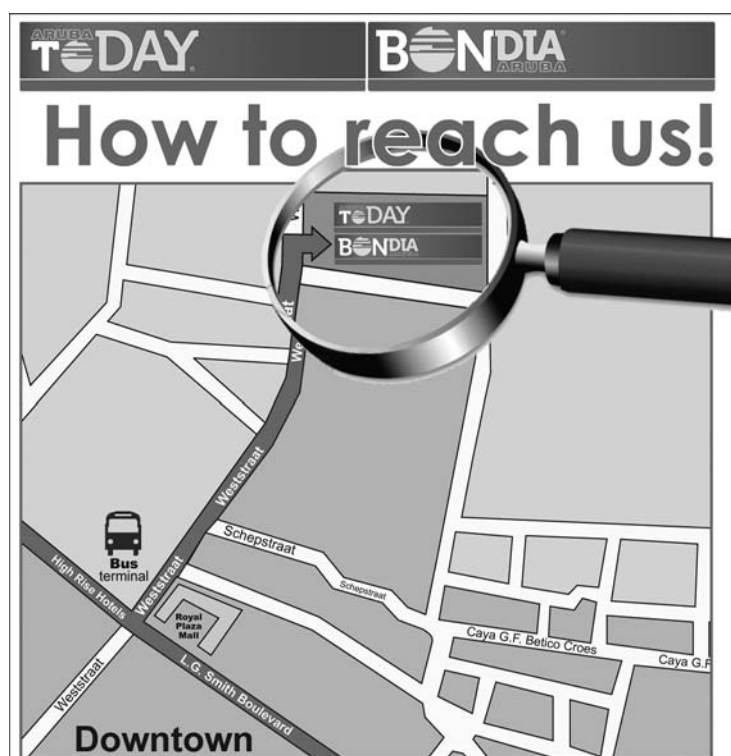
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



ChatGPT maker wants to be the App Store for AI as safety concerns grow

San Francisco, United States

OpenAI on Tuesday launched a less expensive artificial intelligence (AI) model and tools that run continuously, as it aims to reposition ChatGPT as an app store for AI.

Other companies, such as Adobe, will be able to offer their software directly within ChatGPT, which is now used weekly by 1.2 billion people. ChatGPT users will also be able to access their subscriptions in other apps.

"We want to help people discover what you build and connect you with new customers," OpenAI CEO Sam Altman told around 2,500 developers from around the world who gathered on the shores of the San Francisco Bay for the company's annual conference.

During his keynote speech, the 41-year-old executive made no mention of multiple security incidents that forced OpenAI to once again suspend develop-



Open AI CEO Sam Altman delivers the keynote address during the OpenAI developers conference at Fort Mason on September 29, 2026 in San Francisco, California.

ment of some models on Friday, after one of its agents gained unauthorized access to the internet.

Altman told reporters that "it is going to take us some time to figure out how to make sure that alignment, monitoring, safety, security stay well ahead of capabilities." A new model unveiled on Tuesday, GPT-6.1 Sol, was described as almost as pow-

erful as GPT-6 Astra at one-fifth the price. It comes one day after the company said it scrapped a new version of Astra because it often ignored instructions.

— New "Renaissance" —

Outside the conference, around thirty protesters shouted chants like "put people before profit," alongside demands that OpenAI

drop contracts with the U.S. military and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Inside, Altman rejected comparisons between the AI era and the Industrial Revolution.

"I think we should learn from the mistakes of the Industrial Revolution, and I think we should be more like the Renaissance," Altman said. That new renaissance is now

increasingly connected to agentic software – or programs capable of automatically completing tasks like managing calendars, booking reservations and sorting through email.

Attendees cheered the arrival of "dots" – OpenAI's version of AI agents which will run continuously and ask users to approve sensitive actions.

Dots will only be available to paid subscribers and are not yet available to individual users in the European Union, Switzerland and the United Kingdom due to regulations, though OpenAI hopes to resolve those issues.

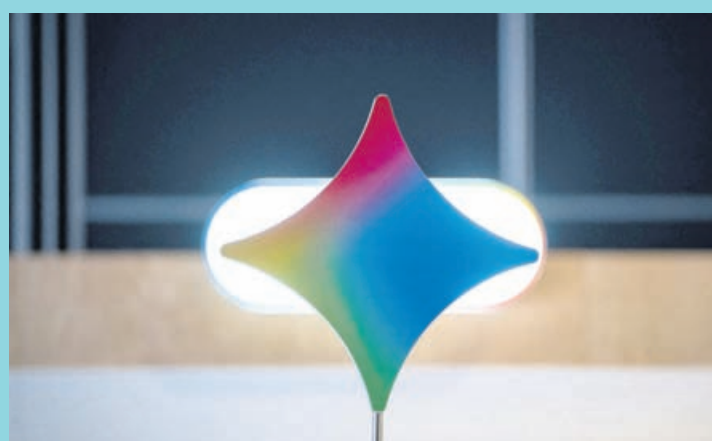
It competes with Meta's Muse and Google's Spark agents.

Last week Meta unveiled a small tamagotchi-like device powered by Muse that could ship by December. OpenAI is working on its own AI hardware but provided no updates.

However, integrating the new dots onto a device "seems like a very reasonable thing to assume we may do someday," Altman said. □

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Google restricts access to new AI model over safety concerns



The Gemini logo is seen at the "ALL IN 2026" conference at the Palais des Congres de Montreal in Montreal, Quebec, on September 17, 2026.

San Francisco, United States

Google on Wednesday said it would withhold its most powerful artificial intelligence model from the public for now, releasing Gemini 4 Argon only to a vetted group of cybersecurity experts to avoid misuse

by hackers.

"Safely releasing frontier capabilities at this level requires a phased approach," wrote Koray Kavukcuoglu, Google's chief AI architect, in a blog post announcing the model.

Google said it is voluntarily

giving the U.S. government early access to the model and will gather feedback from testers before making it widely available.

The cautious rollout mirrors the approach of rival Anthropic, which has kept its most advanced model, Claude Mythos Preview, restricted to a small number of trusted organizations.

Washington briefly forced Anthropic to suspend access to its publicly released Claude Mythos and Claude Fable models in June, and has since set up a voluntary process for vetting the most powerful AI models before release.

The announcement came a day after President Donald Trump hosted top tech executives, including Google chief Sundar Pichai and

Anthropic's Dario Amodei, at the White House, where they signed a voluntary accord pledging to police the risks of their own AI systems.

Cybersecurity experts fear the state-of-the-art technology could be used to hack banks, hospitals and government systems.

Google said Argon excels at complex tasks in software engineering, legal and financial work and cyber defense, with a leading ability to find and fix critical software flaws.

Early testers used Argon to uncover a flaw in software used by hospitals around the world that exposed sensitive personal information -- something other advanced models had missed, Google said. □

'No limits': Marathon world record holder Sawe chasing history

Berlin, Germany

Sabastian Sawe, the first man to run the marathon in under two hours, believes even faster times are on the horizon both for him and the sport.

In April the 31-year-old Kenyan clocked 1:59:30 in London, shattering the two-hour barrier many felt was untouchable.

"I know it's possible to run under 1:59," Sawe told AFP in an interview in Berlin, adding "it is hard to predict how fast I will be but (it's possible) if we've got nice weather, good pacing and I am in good shape".

Sawe said further records will fall as running's popularity skyrockets and technology improves.

"We don't know about the years in front of us because maybe other people will come along and do something great. There are no limits for now."

- 'Something special' -

Even Sawe was shocked by his exploits in London.

"I was not expecting to run under two hours," he said.

"I wanted to retain my title. When I saw (the time) with my eyes as I was almost finishing the race, it was something surprising for me and I was so happy and grateful."

The 2025 Berlin winner was set to run in the German



Kenya's Sabastian Sawe crosses the line to win the men's race in a new world record time at the 2026 London Marathon in central London on April 26, 2026.

capital again on Sunday, but missed out with a fractured leg.

"It was hard, but I had to accept it because injuries are part of running."

Sawe hopes to return for London in 2027 but has his eye on doing "something special" at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

"Now I'm getting to be someone bigger in athletics, I've learned a lot and I've learned patience is important and recovery is important to make you feel fast and strong."

Sawe was speaking in Berlin just one day after a brutal

injury crushed Tigst Assefa's shot at the women's record.

Cruising on world record pace until the 35-kilometre mark, Assefa ruptured her achilles tendon.

Running the last two kilometres without an Achilles, the Ethiopian somehow crossed the finish line first, recording the third best women's mark and a course record before collapsing.

"When I saw what happened I was shocked because she was running a good race this year in Berlin. Everything was perfect

for her... She was running to achieve everything she had worked for."

Sawe backed the 29-year-old Assefa to chase down the world mark.

"For sure she will because Tigst is a very strong woman and her mentality is something else. She always has the courage to push her limits. She's always been a winner."

- 'Protecting sports' -

The brutal injury not only snatched Assefa's shot at history; it stole a chance to overcome a record many believe is tainted.

Assefa's 2:11:04 was just over a minute behind the 2:09:56 set by Kenyan Ruth Chepngetich in 2024.

A year later, Chepngetich was suspended for three years for doping, but her record still stands.

Sawe has done more than most to improve perceptions, particularly in Kenya where more than 100 athletes are currently suspended.

For years, Sawe has taken the unusual step of volunteering for extensive additional testing, averaging an additional test every three days on top of national and international requirements.

"Even with what I have achieved, I want to show the world that not all athletes are running dirty... there was a time where there was more doubt than belief. "It's a nice routine for athletes to have multiple tests to prove that they are running clean and winning clean. It shows we are protecting sports for the future."

In September, Nairobi was announced as the first African host of the World Athletics Championships, with the Kenyan capital due to host in 2029. Sawe said he hoped his testing regime would help "give a good reputation to my country and show we are fighting doping in many ways".

Fury, Joshua kick off 'battle of Britain' in good spirits

London, United Kingdom

Tyson Fury and Anthony Joshua were all smiles as they kicked off the countdown to their much-anticipated heavyweight showdown at a pre-fight press conference in London.

The British two-time world champions will finally lock horns in Cardiff on December 11 after years of false starts and barbs at each other.

Those expecting fireworks as the two shared a stage in front of a crowd of 1,000 fans were left disappointed as both showed respect for their adversary's career.

Fury invited Joshua to join him for a "pint of Guinness" once they had finished

in the ring, while the 2012 Olympic gold medalist ended a face-to-face exchange by tickling Fury in the midriff.

The vacant WBA super heavyweight title is expected to be on the line and Fury hit back at criticism that the pair are only coming together well past their peak.

"People say this fight is too late," said the self-styled "Gypsy King".

"It's the icing on the cake for two great careers when we throw down in front of 80,000 people. May the best man win."

The fight appeared destined for Saudi Arabia or the United States during

the early stages of negotiations but Joshua believes the chance to face off on British soil will "inspire a generation".

"I'm really grateful for this opportunity and bringing it to Great Britain because I know people in pubs have had proper fights about who will win and family members have fallen out," he said.

"We'll inspire this generation and the next generation. It was people from this country supporting us. I'm fulfilling my destiny before I depart this world."

Fury has won 36 of his 39 fights and held the WBC, WBO and IBF heavyweight belts during his colourful

career, with his only defeats coming against Oleksandr Usyk in world title bouts in 2024.

Joshua has 30 wins from

34 fights, holding the WBO and IBF titles at various stages before a pair of losses to Usyk in 2021 and 2022.



British heavyweight boxers Tyson Fury and Anthony Joshua poses following a press conference in London on September 30, 2026, ahead of their highly anticipated heavyweight boxing fight in Wales in December.

Djokovic grinds out opening-round win at China Open

Beijing, China

Novak Djokovic held his nerve during a tense tie-break to beat Nuno Borges 6-3, 7-6 (7/2) at the China Open on Wednesday, extending his extraordinary unbeaten streak in Beijing. The 39-year-old Serbian was struggling physically but pushed through the second-set decider for his first win at any event since Wimbledon in July.

"It's a great pleasure to be back in my happy place," Djokovic said after the match, adding that the conditions and atmosphere in Beijing suit his game.

"Obviously I'm a completely different person and player than I was 11 years ago when I played here last but thankfully I kept the streak going and hopefully I can do it again," he said.



Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a return to Portugal's Nuno Borges during their men's singles first-round match at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing on September 30, 2026.

The former world number one is set to meet wildcard Bu Yunchaokete of China in

the second round.

Fans packed the stands in Beijing to watch Djokovic, a firm favourite in China who has never lost in Beijing in 30 matches -- although this was his first match at the event since 2015.

He delighted the crowd with an ace to end the first game and saved two break points after a pair of double-faults to win the first set. Djokovic has had health issues in recent months and struggled to pick up points at the start of the second set, using his racquet to stretch his back between games and needing a medical timeout as a trainer worked on his right shoulder. But he forced a path to victory in one hour and 50 minutes, clinching it when Borges, the world number 49 from Portugal, returned into the net.

It preserved Djokovic's winning streak in Beijing, where he has won six titles.

- 'Tough match' -

Earlier, Karen Khachanov swept aside second seed Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3, 6-3 in their first-round meeting. Khachanov, the world number 26, won three straight games, taking the first set in 31 minutes.

The 30-year-old then kept his cool to break Auger-Aliassime on the first match point, wrapping things up in one hour and 11 minutes. He faces either Arthur Rinderknech of France or qualifier Alex Molcan of Slovakia in the round of 16. Khachanov brushed off suggestions he had Auger-Aliassime's card marked following his second statement win over the Canadian world number five in a matter of weeks.

"It was a tough match," the Russian, who triumphed at the US Open, said.

"When you approach this match you are thinking it's a completely new match, completely different.

In China, in Beijing. Different court, different balls.

"You just focus again from zero. You know that what you did well... and you just try to keep the momentum going. There is not much secret about it." □



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