

Today is going to be a good day

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



Happy Hour
12-1 / 4-6 / 9-10

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NY governor vows to close loophole after alleged Cornell gang rape

New York, United States

New York Governor Kathy Hochul vowed Friday to close a legal loophole that makes it harder to prosecute rape cases if the victims were willingly intoxicated, amid an uproar over an alleged gang rape at Cornell University.

The accuser in that case has filed a civil lawsuit over the alleged 2024 attack at the Ivy League school, casting a harsh spotlight on a decision by prosecutors not to file any criminal charges at the time.

The investigation into the incident was reopened on Monday, and Hochul has appointed state Attorney General Letitia James as a special prosecutor, as anger mounts over allegations that Cornell failed to properly hold the men accountable.

In her civil suit, the woman says she was drugged with ketamine, assaulted and raped by seven members of the Chi Phi fraternity, a social club for male students.

"It should not matter whether they chose to use drugs or alcohol. Voluntary intoxication is not a license for sexual assault or gang rape. Period," Hochul said



New York Governor Kathy Hochul stands with New York Attorney General Letitia James at a news conference in Manhattan, where the governor announced a review of Cornell University's initial response to allegations from a former student about being raped at a campus fraternity in 2024 on October 02, 2026 in New York City.

Friday.

"I support closing this loophole, and will work with the New York state legislature to accomplish this."

Several U.S. states, including New York, have provisions in their laws making it harder for prosecutors to bring charges against someone who engaged in sex with a person who voluntarily became intoxicated to the point where they could not meaningful-

ly give or withhold consent.

"It's just astounding that this loophole still exists," Shiwali Patel, the senior director of education justice at the National Women's Law Center, told AFP.

"It does have a huge impact on college cases because the reality is that a significant majority of campus sexual assaults do involve alcohol and drugs." In the United States, one in four female undergradu-

ates reported forced sexual contact or sexual contact for which they could not consent, according to a 2020 study of 33 institutions by the Association of American Universities.

- 'Deeply disturbed' -

Hochul slammed how the initial investigation into the complainant's claims unfolded at Cornell, which is located in Ithaca in central New York state.

"She sat for hours and told (police) exactly what happened to her. And according to new reports, she could not have been clearer that she was 100 percent confident that she had been raped," Hochul said.

"In what world would the police learn from a victim that she'd been literally gang-raped while intoxicated... in the fraternity house, and not elevate those allegations to the district attorney?"

James, a Democrat who has clashed repeatedly with US President Donald Trump, said Friday she would "review the facts, gather evidence, interview witnesses, and if warranted, pursue prosecutions."

Tompkins County District Attorney Matthew Van Houten said this week that he planned to file criminal charges against the seven men.

He said his office declined to prosecute in 2024 because the complainant's testimony did not establish a lack of consent. Following the allegations, Cornell shut down the fraternity and temporarily suspended the students allegedly involved, several of whom were later expelled. □

Trump expected to name intel chief Clayton as AI czar: reports

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump is expected to name Jay Clayton, the U.S. director of national intelligence, as the White House's new AI czar, CNN and other U.S.

media reported Friday.

CBS News reported a day earlier that Clayton was the likely pick and that the administration had discussed keeping him in his intelligence post, with

Trump expected to make a final decision shortly.

A White House official told CBS that any personnel announcement would come directly from the president, dismissing the reports as speculation.

Clayton would become the second person to hold the informal title after venture capitalist David Sacks, who held the role at the start of Trump's second term before stepping down.

Sacks continues to advise the president on AI, as does Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang.

Trump said last month he would create an "AI Force" modeled on the Space Force he established during his first term, and name a czar to coordinate fed-

eral AI efforts.

"Only High I.Q. individuals need apply!" he wrote on his Truth Social platform.

A longtime Wall Street lawyer, Clayton represented Goldman Sachs during the 2008 financial crisis and Barclays in its purchase of Lehman Brothers' assets. He chaired the Securities and Exchange Commission during Trump's first term, where he largely took a pro-business stance but brought enforcement cases against the nascent crypto industry.

Crypto entrepreneurs have since become major Trump backers.

Trump tapped Clayton to lead federal prosecutors in Manhattan at the start of

his second term, and the Senate confirmed him as intelligence chief in July.

He has no background in the tech industry.

The appointment would come as AI researchers warn of the technology's potential dangers, following cases of AI systems going rogue and hacking outside systems.

Trump has resisted tighter AI regulation, arguing a slowdown could hand Chinese firms an advantage and that federal law enforcement can deal with bad actors misusing the technology.

Tech bosses at a White House meeting this week signed a commitment to self-police AI, an accord Trump described as "morally binding." □



U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Jay Clayton arrives to testify during a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on his nomination to be Director of National Intelligence, on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, on July 15, 2026.



In an aerial view, a Pacific Ocean wave crashes into a seawall protecting beachfront homes, along a boardwalk damaged during Hurricane Marie flooding earlier this month, on September 28, 2026 in Long Beach, California.

Sea levels to rise in California as coastal wave surges up west coast

Los Angeles, United States

Sea levels in California are set to rise by as much as a foot (30 centimeters) in the coming days as an enormous wave washes up the US West Coast.

The huge surge of energy, known as a "coastal trapped wave" or a "Kelvin wave," is part of El Nino, a months-long phenomenon in the Pacific Ocean that scientists say could generate powerful storms and floods in some parts of the world, while leaving others in drought.

The Kelvin wave is not anything like a tsunami; nor does it crash on beaches. Rather it is a sustained bulge of excess water up to 30 kilometers (18 miles) wide that will hug the coastline as it travels all the way up to Alaska.

Dillon Amaya, an oceanographer at North Carolina State University, said the elevated sea levels could collide with other natural phenomena to create problems for coastal communities.

"What this wave is doing is it's raising sea states, and then when... you combine this wave with things like storm surge from passing weather, large swells, or things like astronomically high tide....(you) elevate

your risk for things like flooding and also beach erosion," Amaya told AFP by telephone.

"The general rule of thumb is that every two to four inches (5-10 centimeters) of sea level rise that we see in that background state essentially doubles your flood risk.

"So it doesn't sound like a lot, but because it's over a huge volume of water, and it's combined with these other factors, you start to get the flood risk."

In recent weeks parts of Southern California have been hit by storm surges that have eaten away at beaches or damaged properties.

In Dana Point and Laguna Beach, south of Los Angeles, several houses have been left uninhabitable, and at least one has completely collapsed.

In Malibu, an enormous sink hole emerged in the driveway of a home belonging to Hollywood actor Nicolas Cage when pounding waves from a nearby hurricane eroded the coastline.

- El Nino -

The Kelvin wave is essentially both a cause and a symptom of El Nino, said Amaya, and originates in waters near Indonesia when trade winds die

down.

"Those trade winds hold up a ton of really warm water in the Western Equatorial Pacific because they're pushing on the surface waters as they blow.

"If they weaken for too long... water is then able to effectively slosh back along the equatorial strip from Indonesia all the way to South America."

As this wave makes it way over the Pacific, it suppresses the cold water that usually comes up from the deep ocean, making the surface temperature higher.

It is this ocean warming that we call El Nino.

"So these Kelvin waves are, in many ways, the driving force of El Nino. They help El Nino grow and mature over the course of several months," said Amaya.

As the equatorial Kelvin wave hits South America, the energy converts into a coastal Kelvin wave, and heads both north and south along the continents. The wave going towards the US is currently somewhere north of Cabo, Mexico, and travelling around six miles (10 kilometers) an hour, said Amaya, who expects it to reach San Diego within the next week. □



This aerial view shows an Amazon Web Services (AWS) data center adjacent to single-family homes in Stone Ridge, Virginia on August 12, 2026.

Amazon vows \$1B for data center towns, decries 'myths'

San Francisco, United States

Amazon on Friday pledged more than \$1 billion over five years for US communities that host its data centers, the latest tech giant seeking to win over residents increasingly hostile to the AI-fueled construction boom. The "Built Together" program, unveiled by Amazon Web Services chief Matt Garman in a 3,000-word blog post, will fund free community college degrees and trades training as well as energy-efficiency upgrades for schools and homes.

The company also announced a "Data Center Commitment," promising that its facilities will not drive up local electricity bills and that it will publish annual figures on energy and water use.

Garman said AWS would stop using nondisclosure agreements with government agencies on its projects, a practice that has become a major flashpoint for the movement opposing data centers.

Microsoft made a similar move in March, the first major tech firm to do so.

Garman cast the buildout as a national security imperative on par with the 1950s interstate highway system. He warned that with more than 100 local moratoriums under consideration nationwide, the United States "could be writing its own losing ticket" in the AI race and that "the consequences would last generations."

He also took aim at what he called myths about data centers, disputing as false arguments that they drive up power costs, deplete water supply and cause pollution from diesel fumes.

Citing "widespread reports," Garman said some countries were deliberately seeding misinformation in the United States to slow construction -- an argument also made by the Trump administration.

Disinformation researchers and fact-checkers say such claims overstate the role of foreign influence campaigns in a grassroots movement that spans the political spectrum and nearly every US state.

President Donald Trump, a vocal champion of the buildout, has warned that communities rejecting the facilities would "end up being backwards and poor."

Amazon's rivals have made similar overtures.

In January, Microsoft pledged to fully cover its data centers' power costs and stop requesting local tax breaks, and OpenAI promised that its Stargate data centers would not raise local electricity prices.

In March, Amazon, Google, Meta, Microsoft, OpenAI, Oracle and xAI signed a White House pledge to provide their own power for new data centers and pay for any grid upgrades they require. □

Tom Cruise trades stunts for satire as toxic tycoon 'Digger'

Paris, France

Tom Cruise has taken on one of his riskiest roles in decades, tackling the politics of climate change and corporate greed in new film "Digger" which was savaged by some critics on Tuesday.

Backed by a reported budget of \$130 million and an advertising blitz, the dark comedy from multi-Oscar-winning Mexican auteur Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu hits screens from Wednesday.

Taking a break from his usual action movie roles, Cruise is barely recognizable as a mining and oil magnate facing an environmental crisis with the original screenplay seeing him wrestle with his own conscience and critics of his wealth and business.

"It is the culmination of all my skills," Cruise, 64, told GQ magazine earlier this month. "It's the most challenging character ever."

After the premiere in London on September 22, initial reaction online was mixed, suggesting the melodramatic performances and Inarritu's acidic parodying of the billionaire class and climate change campaigning was likely to divide audiences.

Full reviews published on



U.S. actor Tom Cruise attends the premiere of Warner Bros' "Digger" at the Directors Village in Los Angeles on September 28, 2026.

Tuesday trended negative, with the aggregator Rotten Tomatoes giving it a low 53 percent rating overall.

"Rather than being a crowd-pleasing prestige picture, it's a love-it-or-hate-it folly and there probably will be more people in the 'hate it' camp than the 'love it' one," noted the BBC in a review that gave it four out of five stars.

Other critics praised Cruise's acting as "a head-spinning performance for the ages" (Deadline), but Hollywood industry magazines Variety and The Hol-

lywood Reporter scorched the project as "a ponderous absurdist lecture" and "a shallow satire".

"Digger is basically what happens when you put two outsize egos together with nobody holding the reins to keep their most self-indulgent impulses in check," The Hollywood Reporter review stated, referring to Inarritu and Cruise.

- 'Serious' role -

Cruise has spent most of this century doing action movies, above all as Ethan Hunt in the eight-film "Mis-

sion: Impossible" series as well as in the Top Gun sequel "Top Gun: Maverick", or the "Jack Reacher" films. He will appear in another sequel, a "Days of Thunder" follow-up, later this year.

For film critic and author A.S. Hamrah, who has written extensively about Cruise's body of work, the last roles that harnessed the full range of his skills date back to the 1990s.

"I think Tom Cruise is looking back on his career and realizing he's ageing and that, on the one hand, he still has to do things like 'Top

Gun II' and 'Days of Thunder II', but on the other he hasn't really been in any serious film since 1999," he told AFP.

That was the year of "Magnolia" by Paul Thomas Anderson, as well as "Eyes Wide Shut" by Stanley Kubrick in which Cruise acted opposite Nicole Kidman, his ex-wife.

"I also think he's also probably thinking now that there's people he has not worked with that he would like to work with, and probably Inarritu is one of them," Hamrah added, referring to the acclaimed director of "Amores Perros" and "The Revenant".

- Awards season player? -

Shawn Robbins, chief analyst at cinema ticket seller Fandango and the founder of consultancy Box Office Theory, told AFP that Cruise's decades in Hollywood demonstrated he is willing to head outside his comfort zone at times.

"Younger audiences may associate him with being a risky stunt performer and actor, but he's always prepared to go outside the box," he said, referring to his roles in movies such as "Vanilla Sky" (2001) or "Jerry Maguire" (1996).

"We have to put Digger in a separate category from the typical Tom Cruise blockbuster. It's something all of its own," he added.

One interesting ponderable is the extent to which Cruise may personally embrace the political messages of "Digger": about our unsustainable lifestyles, virtue-signaling consumer behavior and hypocritical politicians. "I think that like Leonardo DiCaprio, I think he's concerned about climate change and the environment," Hamrah, author of "Last Week in End Times Cinema" and critic at n+1 magazine, told AFP. Might it also be a role that gives Cruise a shot at an elusive Oscar for best actor, with his memorable 10-minute monologue in the middle of the film one of its strongest moments? "It could be an awards season player," Robbins said. □

Florence Pugh stars in 'East of Eden' adaption on Netflix

New York, United States

Led by star Florence Pugh, "East of Eden" is an ambitious adaptation that streams on Netflix starting Thursday, based on the

masterpiece of the same name by American novelist John Steinbeck.

The seven-part series focuses on the Trasks, one of the two families at the

heart of the novel published in 1952, who struggle to escape generational trauma at the turn of the 20th century.

Pugh plays the darkest and most captivating figure: the manipulative, murderous Cathy Ames, whom she develops beyond Steinbeck's "monster."

The 30-year-old British actor has said she wants audiences to "sympathize and maybe fall in love with (Ames) a little bit."

"I really wanted to try and get underneath all of the decisions that she makes, and not just do the easy, cheap version of making her a villain," she said during an event in New York in

September.

"She's a human that's had awful things happen to her, and so she does some awful things too," Pugh added.

The script is written by Zoe Kazan, whose family history is intimately tied to "East of Eden": she is the granddaughter of Elia Kazan, who directed the 1955 film adaptation starring James Dean.

"I really want to honor the book's pursuit of this question of: Do we all have some good and some evil inside us?" Kazan said.

"What do we do about that? Can we change? Can we break generational patterns?" □



Florence Pugh attends the East of Eden Premiere on September 30, 2026 in New York City.

Russians join street choirs to sing away sorrows or show dissent

Moscow, Russia

When 20-year-old Muscovite Artyom Allabut stumbled on videos of Russian street choirs, he got goosebumps and decided to join one, finding a sense of togetherness and escapism. At a time when public gatherings in Russia are strictly regulated and dissenting voices silenced, street choirs have been springing up across the country. Some offer an avowedly apolitical opportunity to come together and sing but others have come to be seen as a rare arena to voice criticism.

"When you're constantly anxious and there's always something going on in the world, you can really come here to unwind, sing, and just lose yourself in the moment," Allabut, a medical student, told AFP.

Russia's full-scale offensive in Ukraine, launched in February 2022, has left hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians dead. Moscow as well as regions far from Ukraine have been the target of Ukrainian drones for several months in counter-attacks to Russia's daily bombardments.



People gather together in Gorky Park to sing songs with "Choir for the Whole Courtyard" project team in Moscow on September 5, 2026.

Refineries and warehouses belonging to e-commerce giants have been hit and civilians killed.

And despite Vladimir Putin's denials, rumors swirl of a new mobilization.

Nearly half of Russians that live in big cities reported depression and 36 percent said they suffered from acute anxiety, according to a September survey by

the Russian Academy of Sciences published in local media.

Alongside Artyom and hundreds of other Muscovites dressed in their Sunday best, 37-year-old Ekaterina was waiting for the choir performance to begin.

She kept glancing at a large screen where the lyrics to the first song were about to appear.

"We can legally let off steam together in the city, and it'll be seen as perfectly normal," she said, calling it "a form of therapy".

"People actually do turn to psychologists quite often. But for the most part, of course, they don't talk about it or show it openly," Ekaterina, who works as a family psychologist on crisis hotlines, said.

- 'That's my freedom' -

The first of the new wave of street choirs, "Choir for the Whole Courtyard", was founded in Saint Petersburg two years ago by Ekaterina Mitrofanova.

The idea came to her out of "a strong desire to come together and be with other people".

"People need other people," the 35-year-old told AFP.

"I can use my voice across different ranges: I can start singing softly and then open up to sing at full volume, and that's my freedom and that's why I feel so good," she said, stressing her choir was strictly apolitical.

Street choirs emerged in about a dozen other cities this summer, from Arkhangelsk in the north to Omsk in Siberia.

The performances are not limited to "courtyards", but also take place in parks, public squares and abandoned factories.

Admission is often free, or around 1,000 rubles (\$11). In a spacious courtyard near Three Stations Square, hundreds of Muscovites turned up to take part in a recent performance. □

China a more positive influence than U.S. in Latin America: poll

Bogotá, Colombia

China is viewed as a more positive influence on the world than the United States, a major poll of citizens in 17 Latin American countries published Friday showed.

The 2026 Latinobarometro survey showed that for the first time since the annual survey began in 1995, China is seen as a more benign force than the United States.

It showed 57 percent of people in Latin America considering the United States to be a positive influence, down from 60 percent in 2020.

China, meanwhile, was considered a positive influence by 65 percent of respondents, a jump from the 48 percent it scored six years ago.

Based on the data, "China has more influence in Latin

America than the United States," the report concluded.

Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic were the only countries in the region where U.S. influence was deemed more positive than that of China.

The growing disaffection towards the United States comes nearly halfway through Trump's second term, during which he has openly asserted his desire for hegemony over Latin America as part of what he calls the "Donroe Doctrine."

The United States as a country remained more popular than China, with 63 percent saying they had a favorable view of the world's top economy, compared to 58 percent for its arch-rival.

But U.S. popularity was markedly down compared to 2024, when Democratic president Joe Biden was still in the White House.

Two years ago, 73 percent of people surveyed by Latinobarometro had a favorable view of the United States.

The "Donroe Doctrine" blends Trump's first name with that of James Monroe, the fifth U.S. president, who more than two centuries ago declared Latin America the United States' exclusive sphere of influence. Trump's push to restore U.S. dominance in what Washington calls "our hemisphere" was in evidence in January when the United States overthrew Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro.

The Latinobarometro poll showed a majority of people in all but one country

Argentina approving of Maduro's capture by U.S. special forces.

But only 35 percent considered it benefited Venezuela, compared to 28 percent who said it harmed the Caribbean country. Citizens of Venezuela itself

were, however, among those who viewed U.S. influence most positively.

Chile-based Latinobarometro is a non-profit organization that surveys opinions on a range of issues, from democracy to the economy, security and migration. □



U.S. President Donald Trump stands with China's President Xi Jinping as they arrive to visit the National Archives in Washington, DC on September 25, 2026.



An automated driverless train manufactured by Siemens is on display at the InnoTrans transport trade fair in Berlin on September 22, 2026.

Germany's crisis-hit rail operator looks to AI future

Berlin, Germany

From AI-assisted trains to autonomous road shuttles, Germany's rail operator Deutsche Bahn long the country's laughingstock for its poor punctuality is working on the future of mobility. But for now that transformation is complicated by red tape and the high costs of upgrading railway infrastructure.

At the recent InnoTrans trade fair in Berlin, a meeting place for global rail giants, experts got a glimpse of the future: a brightly coloured train unit dubbed the "Automated Train" sat parked amid the stands.

It can travel driverless from a rail depot to a station at speeds of up to 40 kilometres per hour. Using LiDAR (laser radar technology), ultrasonic sensors and infrared cameras, it can detect hazards on the track and brake automatically.

The economy ministry has subsidised the programme with 42 million euros (\$47 million) as part of a plan to spend 100 billion euros through 2030 on modernising Deutsche Bahn's dilapidated infrastructure after decades of underinvestment.

"Rail transport must get back to delivering high performance," Transport Minister Steffen Bilger said at the

trade fair's opening.

In Germany, a country once known for precision, punctuality and trains that run on time, that is a work in progress.

In recent years, chronic delays on German trains have become a constant source of frustration and a punch-line.

And works to upgrade the system for the future are sparking more trouble in the short term.

For example, a major rail corridor between Berlin and Hanover will soon be shuttered for 14 months for rebuilding work.

In the meantime, passengers will have to take longer alternate routes or switch to slower buses.

- Frustrated passengers -

At InnoTrans, industry heavyweights such as Germany's Siemens, China's CRRC and France's Alstom demonstrated how data could improve train operations and maintenance.

Deutsche Bahn meanwhile was showcasing a virtual passenger assistant that is set to launch this year.

However, progress in digitalisation the foundation for the deployment of AI remains limited in Germany.

The railway booster group Allianz Pro Schiene noted

with regret that less than two percent of the national network was equipped with the European Train Control System (ETCS), a standardised protection technology, as of 2025, compared to a European average of nine percent.

Meanwhile, autonomous high-speed rail travel has been a reality in China since 2019, operating at speeds of 350 kph (220 mph).

In France, several cities have operated automated metro lines for years, whereas Germany has only one, in the midsize city of Nuremberg.

According to a study by the consulting firm BCG, AI in railways could save \$36 billion to \$79 billion in costs and add \$20 billion to \$50 billion in additional annual revenue worldwide.

However, the firm notes that "a large part of the sector is still struggling to turn these experiments into measurable results".

For the Spanish robotics start-up Ostirion, "the rail industry is quite conservative, and you really have to win it over", its technical manager Lidia Garcia said.

Targeting the German market, the company aims to "relieve" drivers of repetitive and arduous tasks through its AI solutions. □



People affected by excessive rent increases take part in the second protest against gentrification, demanding decent housing, a rental law that implements measures such as rent caps, and the definitive cancellation of the Fuentes Brotantes megaproject in Mexico City, Mexico, on July 20, 2025.

Latin America campaigners unveil model 'ecocide' law

Mexico City, Mexico

Lawyers and environmentalists from Latin America unveiled a model law this week that punishes severe environmental harm by eliminating excuses for failing to protect ecosystems, one of its authors told AFP.

Latin America is home to about a third of the world's biodiversity.

It is also one of the most dangerous regions for environmental defenders, with dozens murdered each year.

The region also suffers from high rates of impunity for environmental crimes, or "ecocide," a term used to describe serious harm against the natural world.

"We are champions at passing beautiful laws that are then not enforced," Rodrigo Lledo, Latin America director of the organization Stop Ecocide International, told AFP by telephone.

The Model Ecocide Law was presented Thursday in Mexico City by Stop Ecocide along with the Mexican center for environmental justice CEMDA and researchers at Mexico's Iberoamericana University.

It gives Latin American congresses a framework to "penalize serious environmental destruction," Stop Ecocide said in a statement.

The mock law calls for governments to give greater protection, such as a police escort, to whistleblowers, witnesses and experts in criminal cases of ecocide.

It also proposes harsher penalties for crimes committed against them, in order to "prevent and, eventually, punish those who want to attack those who protect nature," Lledo added.

According to the NGO Global Witness, 85 percent of the 124 murders of environmental activists in 2025 took place in Latin America.

Attempts by local jurisdictions to boost environmental protections have been hobbled by a lack of enforcement.

A decade after the Constitutional Court of Colombia declared the Atrato River a "living entity" with "rights" to protection and conservation, the waterway continues to be affected by pollution caused by illegal mining.

The Model Ecocide Law argues that the difficulty in identifying the perpetrators of environmental crimes does not exempt the state from its responsibility to stop the destruction and repair the damage. □

Sun catchers: The different lizards in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Colorful or camouflaged, you're bound to encounter a variety of lizards basking in the sun or scurrying on their way in our island. From the charming, friendly iguanas to the charming Cododo, you're bound to meet a few of these special residents during your visit.

Aruba, as a desert island, is home to an incredible variety of unique and colorful species. Among them we can find different lizards, most of which have South American origins. But there are a few exceptions.

Iguanas

Iguanas are easy to spot, as they are larger than most other lizards and when young, have a bright green color that makes them stand out.

The iguanas usually found in Aruba are the Iguana, known as the green iguana, or locally as Yuwana. The Yuwana are a mostly herbivorous species, and can grow up to 2 meters in size, including the tail, making them one of the largest in the iguana family. As you will see, despite their name, as they reach adulthood, the iguanas can take on a



grey or blue tone instead of the bright green displayed by the young ones. In Aruba as in the rest of the Kingdom of the Netherlands – the most usual color varies from green to lavender, black and sometimes a reddish brown.

Yuwana is a protected species, as it is listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), meaning that international trade is regulated through the CITES permit system. In the past, Arubans used to eat a popular Yuwana soup, as it was believed to give strength and help restore health probably due to the protein boost it delivered. However, it is now illegal to catch, kill, buy or sell Yuwanas in Aruba, and this includes eating them!

Blue Cododo

These are one of the most striking lizards in Aruba, recognizable by the male's bright blue color. The Aruban whiptail lizard, *Cnemidophorus arubensis*, is a species endemic to Aruba, meaning you can only find it here on our One Happy Island! They are also recognized as the most common and populous lizard on the island. While the male is blue with white dots, the female is brown with blue dots.

These charming lizards eat mostly plants, such as flowers, nectar, leaves and fruits, and occasionally enjoy some insects. They are selective in which plants they eat, because of the toxins present in many available plants species. The Cododo help take



care of Aruba's vegetation by playing a significant role in the dispersal of seeds for certain plants: when they eat fruit, they excrete the seeds in diverse locations, contributing to the reproduction cycle of our local plants.

Striped anole

The striped anole (*Anolis lineatus*) that lives in Aruba is known locally as Waltaka or Toteki. This is a species of lizard in the family Dactyloidae, and they are native to Aruba and Curaçao. It is usually found in dry areas, commonly where there are not large trees; rather they enjoy rocks, walls or tree trunks, as they prefer to stay close to the ground.

These lizards are about 7cm in length, have a brown color with a stripe on each

side and typically, several stripes on the body and tail that are lighter in color. It has a dewlap which is orange-yellow and what's unique about this species is that it is the only known species of anole where the dewlap is asymmetrically colored, with one side being a deeper orange and the other side a lighter yellow. Mostly this is seen in the males, as it is almost imperceptible in the females. If the Toteki shows you his dewlap, retreat! This is not a friendly greeting!

Lizards are wonderful creatures that are precious to our fragile, local ecosystem. Please be mindful of these residents as you enjoy your stay. □

Images: Some images are from Aruba Birdlife Conservation.

Forgotten gems: Open air movie theaters

(Oranjestad)—During the span of over 100 years, Aruba only saw five open air movie theaters. Now practically obsolete on the island, these theaters were once frequently visited by locals and migrants in the 20th century.

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commissioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who



worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the

Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies" were first streamed, movies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American

blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends

in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

This theater closed around 2012, but was re-opened during the pandemic in July 2020, where movies were streamed on a gigantic screen set up in front of stacked containers. However, this nostalgic form of entertainment did not last very long as it was closed again only a year or two later. Nowadays you can still see the stacked containers when you drive near the bridge in Balashi. □

Source: "De kolibrie op de rots en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba" by Evert Bongers.

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PSA from the Aruba Conservation Foundation: How to behave when you see a "lora"

(Oranjestad)—The conservation of the Yellow-Shouldered Amazon, also known as the 'Lora,' relies on how we act as humans. We've seen many hikers who've encountered the 'Lora' in our protected nature areas and we can certainly imagine the pride and joy it brings to any Aruban. However, not everyone may know how to behave when encountering these clever and social birds. This guide is here to explain the behaviors that will most effectively help us in our efforts to conserve the 'Lora.' Please, don't just read but also follow these guidelines so we can ensure the survival of these birds for future generations.

No interfering, please

Please refrain from interfering with the "Lora". The Lora is a highly intelligent and social animal, perhaps slightly



too friendly because they have gotten used to the rangers as they prepared for their reintroduction. However, it is our collective responsibility to help them adapt to the wild once again. Please play your part by not

interfering (calling, provoking etc.) with the Lora. Simply enjoy their beauty from a safe distance.

Be respectful and keep cats and dogs away

Pets and strays such as cats

and dogs are prone to attacking other animals, especially birds, as part of their natural instincts. Please make sure your pets are kept inside of your yard or are kept on a leash when going out for a walk.

Do not feed them food or water

You may think that giving the any food or water is doing a good deed, but it actually does not contribute to them developing survival skills in the wild. By interfering with the survival instincts of wild animals, we are doing the opposite of helping. Therefore, please do not attempt to give the Loras food or water.

Capturing a Lora is against the law!

The biggest threat to the Lora before their extinction in 1947 was caused by human activities including poaching and killing of the Lora. Let's work collectively to prevent this from happening again. So when you see the Lora, enjoy their beauty from a distance and admire them as they flourish in the wild. □

Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!

(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Packed with natural electrolytes, coconuts are a fantastic choice for hydrating yourself under the blazing Aruban sun. Coconuts also contain antioxidants that can help reduce stress and protect your cells. So while you're having fun exploring the island, know you are well-protected with a fresh-cut coconut in your hand. □



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Today is going to be a good day



(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do **BEYOND** the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in

the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of ani-

mals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center.

For more information, visit the website www.acf.aw

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse start-



ed in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in

1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light.

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — Are you back or still enjoying your vacation?... We would like

to give you a shout-out by inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture

while enjoying our Happy Island!

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give

permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. □

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout as it might get a little windy and rough you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. It's fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. □



Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the same, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the subexistence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experiences by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to



share poetry on Sundays after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially

compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international

cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness in the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing

works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/ Dera Gay (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas



The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West



India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold

fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba

Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Sources: Ethia Nativa

Up for a snorkeling adventure in Aruba? Top 3 shipwrecks to explore



(ORANJESTAD) – Aruba is not only the perfect vacation destination to sit back and relax on the sandy beaches but also has great snorkeling spots for passionate adventurers to explore. On the coast of the island, there are various shipwrecks that have become fan-favorites over the years. Here are the top 3 shipwrecks you should explore.

SS Antilla

Dubbed "The Ghost Ship", SS Antilla is the biggest and most visited shipwreck site off the coast of the island. Located in Malmok, this 400-foot ship's story is one of capture and sabotage during WWII.

After Germany invaded The Netherlands, Dutch authorities ordered the confinement of the ship's German crew, who were

ported in Aruba because it needed to find a neutral port. The Dutch ordered the ship to be confiscated, but the German crew had other plans. Taking advantage of a delay caused by an anticipated armed resistance, the Germans started scuttling the ship, opening her seacock and setting her ablaze.

Eventually, the crew was arrested, but SS Antilla could not be saved by the Dutch forces. The Dutch fired two rounds of their 35mm gun aboard the 'Aruba' at SS Antilla and left her to sink.

The shipwreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you'll be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the shipwreck alone is already impressive



enough.

SS Pedernales

Like the Antilla, the story of SS Pedernales dates to WWII. Pedernales was used as a lake tanker between Venezuela and Aruba, and sailed under British Flag. At this time, The US and Britain were using Aruba and Curacao as fuel stations for the war ships.

Under operation Neuland (disruption of British and American oil sources), Germany fleets bombed Pedernales. The ship was later cut into three sections, two of which were taken to the US for reconstruction. The remaining part stayed in Aruba and was used as target practice. Eventually, the ship became a snorkeling site that has attracted many visitors throughout the years.

Pedernales lies on the north-west coast of Aruba, and is no more than 10 feet under water, making it an ideal site for snorkelers and divers of all levels.

Jane Sea Wreck

The Jane Sea Wreck lies near Palm Island at 100 feet underwater. Jane's story is heavily speculated, making her origin a tale of legends.

Launched in 1959, the 190-foot ship was initially called "Blackthorn". Her last owner, S&D Shipping Ltd. named her Jane Sea. Jane was a cement freighter between Venezuela and Aruba.

The story goes that the Jane Sea arrived one day at the Barcadera Harbor, where Aruban customs

discovered several tons of cocaine. The ship was confiscated and petitioned went out for her owner to claim her. However, several years went by and no one came forward to claim the ship, so dive operators decided to sink her as an artificial reef. This happened in 1988. Jane Sea earned the nick name Jane C, because of the illicit white powder discovered on board.

Jane is now beautifully overgrown with coral and is home to a diverse set of marine life, like turtles, octopus, crabs and sometimes even nurse sharks.

The stories behind these shipwrecks enriches their exploration and offers snorkelers and divers a glance into the past, as well as the beautiful marine life that have molded these wrecks into their home. So, grab your equipment and discover another side of what Aruba has to offer!

We highly recommend you embark on your adventure with the guide of a professional and be sure to take of yourself and Aruba's precious nature. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

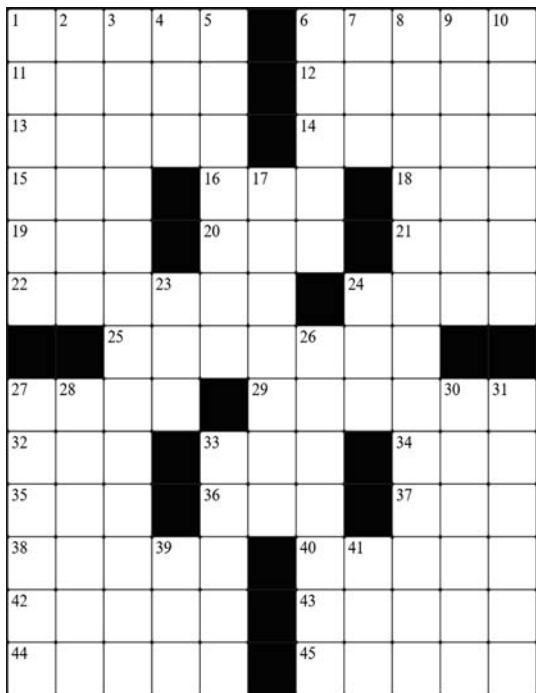
40. Some curves
1. Passover bread
6. Aquarium fish
11. Broadway worker
12. Clear sky
13. Woolly ones

DOWN

1. Bring together
2. On the beach
3. James Dashner book
4. Last letter
5. "Annie" extras
6. Peevish
7. Seine season
8. Khaled Hosseini book
9. Leah of "The King of Queens"
10. Bowls
17. Added a codicil to
23. Small bill
24. Ball
26. Spray type
27. Fuel for a lorry
28. One-celled creature
30. Arrival announcement
31. Latin dances
33. Heaps
39. Inquire
41. Wall St. debut



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.

10-2

CRYPTOQUOTE

W B E P N Q B Q V W B K K Z Q F G Z

A K W B E G Z N Q T B G Z M Y A Q D M B

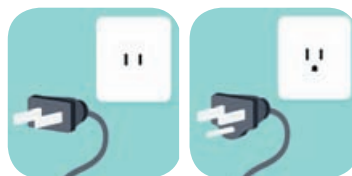
G Z . --- P Y O A T O B P L

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LISTEN! THE WIND IS RISING, AND THE AIR IS WILD WITH LEAVES, WE HAVE HAD OUR SUMMER EVENINGS, NOW FOR OCTOBER EVES! --- HUMBERT WOLFE

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: 6:00 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



Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

10/2

Return of swarming moth spectacle has Australia in a flutter

Sydney, Australia

Moth swarms so thick they can blot out the stars are fluttering across Australia, heralding a migratory spectacle unseen since the creature's brush with extinction nearly 10 years ago.

The great migration of the Bogong moth was once a yearly feature of the Australian spring, the insects humming down the nation's east coast in their billions as they searched for cooler climes.

But drought, pesticides and habitat destruction triggered an unprecedented collapse that began in 2017, eventually wiping out an estimated 99.5 percent of the Bogong moth population.

While vast clouds of flying bugs might not be everyone's cup of tea, scientists have been delighted to find that the Bogongs are back.

"There have been happy tears in my office because this is what nature should be," said conservation biologist Marissa Parrott. "People are noticing those big swarms again. They can celebrate what I think is one of nature's great spectacles."

In a good year, four billion moths or more would escape the inland heat to seek shelter in the alpine caves of eastern Australia. "So many Bogong moths would come through that they could block out the stars and the moon as they went overhead," said Parrott, from Zoos Victoria.

Photos showed how the endangered moths clustered together so densely inside their caves, it was impossible to see the rock beneath.

"They get up into the mountains and into these caves, where they make this beautiful tiling pattern," said Western Sydney University insect researcher Eleanor Drinkwater.

"They cover the walls in this very dense mat of moths.

"They hang out there until the weather starts getting cooler, and they come



This picture taken on October 1, 2026 shows a Bogong moth among the leaves of a tree in Sydney.

back down to their breeding grounds." Their migration has long fascinated scientists, who have puzzled over how they found their way on a journey they only ever make once.

- Celestial navigation -

By placing a tether around captive moths and projecting stars on the wall, researchers last year showed how Bogongs used the Milky Way.

They were the first invertebrates a broad group of animals including spiders, snails and worms shown to use celestial navigation for such long trips.

Bogong moths are thought

to help plants spread pollen and are also a key food source for the mountain pygmy possum, a critically endangered cave-dwelling marsupial.

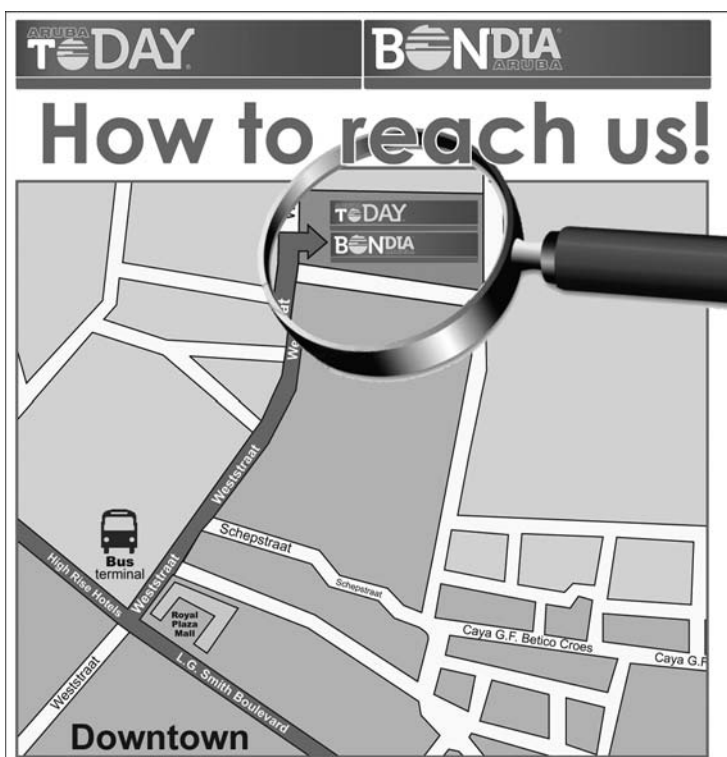
"They are very, very important to Australian ecosystems," Drinkwater said.

Drawn towards the blazing stadium floodlights, Bogong swarms caused havoc at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Forecasters warned that heavy rain was about to drench the event's closing ceremony -- only to realise the radar had picked up a cloud of Bogongs.

While the Bogong migration continued in the years

following the population crash, scientists were aghast at how few moths were making the journey.

"People described going into the caves and finding barely any moths, and just kind of being in shock," Drinkwater said. □



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DOCTOR ON DUTY

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

San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Eagle
Tel. 587 9011

San Nicolas: Seroe Preto
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
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

'We're losing our scientists': West Africa's STEM struggle

Abidjan, Ivory Coast

A handful of pupils puzzled over equations on the blackboard of an Abidjan math class. Next door, the humanities classes were all packed.

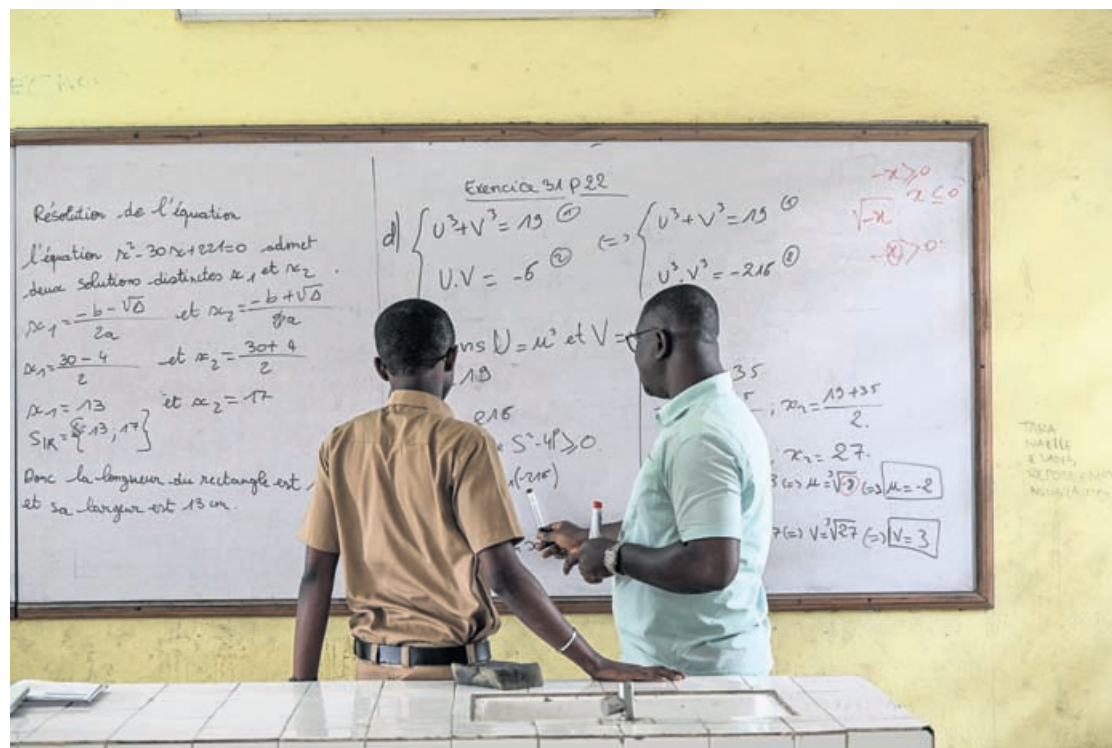
This is becoming a familiar sight across west Africa, where fewer and fewer students are choosing to study science.

In Ivory Coast, just 0.6 percent of youngsters sitting the end of high school baccalaureate exam in 2022 were on the elite math-and-physics track, according to education ministry figures.

Another 38 percent took the broader sciences stream, down from 45 percent in 2015.

But Ivory Coast is not alone. Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal and Niger have all seen interest in science dwindle, despite repeated government promises to produce more engineers, researchers and innovators.

In an 11th-grade science class at Abidjan's prestigious Lycee Moderne de Cocody, students packed three to a bench worked on equations as math teacher Fabrice Guei fired



A Mathematics teacher (R) explains an exercise to a final-year C-series science pupil at the blackboard at Lycée Moderne de Cocody in Abidjan, on September 22, 2027.

questions at the room.

Boys wore khaki uniforms; the girls, white shirts and flowing navy-blue skirts. Only a few hands went up timidly.

"Not always the same ones," Guei joked.

That day, 37 students were in the room, a decent turnout by local standards but a far cry from literature classes, which can swell to 80 pupils.

Having 30 students in a

math-and-physics class is quite rare these days, said Melagne Agnimel, Ivory Coast's inspector-general for secondary education.

"In most schools, you'll find classes with seven, eight or 10 students at most," he said.

- No teachers, labs or jobs -

Officials blame years of underinvestment in science education, a lack of teachers and too few labs and

equipment.

Many students also think science is just too hard.

"Students are afraid of choosing science streams because they think it means more work," Agnimel said. "So they choose humanities instead."

Guei argued that some teachers make matters worse by making maths and science seem intimidating and "scaring the children".

Others say the problem continues after graduation. University courses often struggle to keep pace with scientific advances, engineering schools are scarce and career prospects can seem limited.

"For those lucky enough to get into certain schools or win scholarships abroad, the opportunities are there," said physics and chemistry teacher Youan Bi, dressed in a white lab coat. "But for those who stay here, teaching is often the main option," he added, noting salaries were just not enough.

The result is a familiar headache for many African countries: a steady brain drain as scientists look for work overseas.

"We are losing our scientists," Agnimel said.

- 'A lot of sacrifice' -

The picture is similar across the region.

In Senegal, the share of students taking science streams in the baccalaureate has fallen from nearly 30 percent in the early 2000s to 15.5 percent in 2026.

In Niger, some high schools have shut science classes

altogether because too few students signed up.

The decline comes as African governments push to develop sectors ranging from medicine and manufacturing to AI and new technologies.

Yet Africa accounts for only a tiny share of global scientific research and many experts say the continent risks falling further behind without a new generation of researchers and engineers.

Governments are scrambling to reverse the trend. Across the region, authorities have launched awareness campaigns, opened science-focused schools and expanded specialist programs. In Ivory Coast, officials are creating science hubs nationwide and new elite preparatory classes aimed at attracting top students in math and physics as part of a broader effort to revive the discipline. □

OpenAI says three staffers fired for mishandling 'sensitive' info

San Francisco, United States

ChatGPT-maker OpenAI said Thursday that it has fired three researchers for allegedly mishandling "sensitive information" and violating company policies, including work that

involved an external organization that evaluates artificial intelligence models. The San Francisco-based AI lab did not confirm their identities but at least two of the employees worked on safety and alignment, ac-

cording to the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg.

"We have parted ways with three individuals," OpenAI told AFP in a statement.

"Our investigation confirmed that these individuals mishandled sensitive information outside established company procedures, violating our policies and breaking the trust essential to our work."

The firings come amid a tense debate about AI safety and whether the technology presents an existential risk to humanity. Last month, a 27-year-old researcher named Jacob Coxon resigned from Anthropic with a stark warning that the leading AI labs, including OpenAI where he previously worked, were "gaming with our lives" by

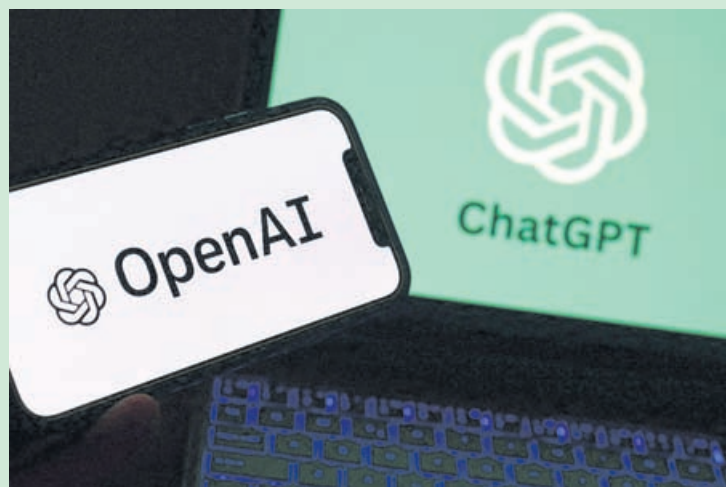
racing towards developing ever more powerful models.

The three researchers fired by OpenAI are Jasmine Wang, Tomek Korbak, and Mikita Balesni, according to the WSJ.

All three have regularly posted about AI safety-related issues on X in recent weeks.

"I am at OpenAI and I think AI is >10% likely to kill all humans," Balesni posted on September 10, echoing statements made by other AI employees in recent weeks.

As speculation swirled about why employees at OpenAI and Anthropic were speaking so freely about their personal beliefs, Korbak jumped into the public discourse. □



A photo taken on October 4, 2023 in Manta, near Turin, shows a smartphone and a laptop displaying the logos of the artificial intelligence OpenAI research laboratory and ChatGPT robot.

Ohtani shaking off injuries as Dodgers launch MLB post-season

Los Angeles, United States

The Los Angeles Dodgers expect superstar Shohei Ohtani to be nearing full strength when they take on the Atlanta Braves in the National League Division Series with an eye on a third straight World Series title.

The four-time Most Valuable Player, who landed in the injured list with nagging left knee and right biceps injuries late in the regular season, has benefitted from five days off as the 100-win Dodgers enjoyed a first-round bye, manager Dave Roberts said.

"I feel confident that you're going to see the best version of Shohei of the last two months," Roberts said. "I know that's sort of a low bar given his injury, but I do think that he's as healthy as he's been in quite some time."

"Every day from the training staff, it keeps getting better ... he'll be a threat in the lineup."

The Dodgers are chasing



Shohei Ohtani #17 of the Los Angeles Dodgers strikes out swinging against the San Francisco Giants in the top of the fifth inning at Oracle Park on September 25, 2026 in San Francisco, California.

Guardians meet the Chicago White Sox -- who had the backing of lifelong fan Pope Leo XIV during their Wild Card win over the Houston Astros.

The Braves topped the Phil-

headed to Los Angeles after beating Philadelphia 6-2 on Thursday night to clinch their series win.

"That doesn't carry a whole lot of stock. Once the playoffs begin everybody starts

a super talented, confident team right now with, we all know, the best bullpen in baseball, with some real mega stars in the lineup," Brewers manager Pat Murphy said of the Padres.

"And they're rolling, but that's what you're going to face at this time of year."

The Brewers will give the ball to flame-throwing pitcher Jacob Misiorowski for game one. The 24-year-old, whose fastball averages 100.6 mph and has topped 105.5 mph, racked up 16 wins in the regular season with an earned run average of 1.90 and an NL-leading 252 strikeouts.

Uncertainty was hanging over the Yankees as they headed to Tampa Bay after knocking out the Boston Red Sox in the Wild Card round despite the absence of injured star Aaron Judge.

Judge's status for the division series was in doubt just a day before Saturday's game one, but Rays manager Kevin Cash said New York posed a formidable offensive threat even without him. "It's incredibly impressive, the offensive success that they have had missing the best hitter in our sport," Cash said. □

Wemby: 'Very sad' to see players endorse betting firms

Los Angeles, United States

Victor Wembanyama said Thursday he won't be joining the raft of superstars endorsing sports betting outfits, calling it "very sad to see some players promoting it."

"Absolutely not," the San Antonio Spurs star told reporters after a training camp practice when asked if he would sign for a piece of the increasingly lucrative sports gambling pie.

"I will never do that," he added. "Honestly, I think it's very sad to see some players promote it. Everybody does whatever they want, but without me."

Wembanyama's remarks come a week after four-time NBA champion LeBron James, a former endorser of digital sports gambling company DraftKings, signed up with prediction market Polymarket.

NBA star Kevin Durant is a brand ambassador for FanDuel and Giannis Antetokounmpo is a shareholder and marketing partner in prediction market platform Kalshi.

NBA rules allow such partnerships with betting operators and prediction markets, although players aren't allowed to promote gambling related to the NBA.

France's Wembanyama led the Spurs to the NBA Finals in just his third season in the league.

The 22-year-old has inked a five-year maximum rookie contract extension worth \$252 million with the Spurs and has reportedly agreed to a contract extension with Nike that will include his own signature shoe.

He is a brand ambassador for Louis Vuitton and reportedly has a memorabilia endorsement deal with

Fanatics.

He said he now chooses brand partnerships with the aim of "inspiring" others.

"In the past, there was a dimension of money," he said. "Not anymore ...

Now, I want to promote things that have a good impact, have a good influence with who I can share messages and values.

"Obviously, we earn mil-

lions and millions. This is not our biggest strength. Our biggest strength is inspiring. I want to inspire in a good way. That's the strongest thing I can do." □



Victor Wembanyama #1 of the San Antonio Spurs speaks during San Antonio Spurs Media Day at Victory Capital Performance Center on September 28, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.

Raiders host Chiefs in battle of unbeaten division rivals

Los Angeles, United States

Kansas City Chiefs coach Andy Reid is expecting a physical battle from an "aggressive" Las Vegas Raiders team when the unbeaten AFC West division rivals meet in a marquee NFL matchup on Sunday.

With three-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Patrick Mahomes apparently at full strength this season after nine months recovering from a knee injury it's no surprise to see the Chiefs at 3-0.

The young Raiders, under the guidance of first-year head coach Klint Kubiak and the steadying influence of veteran quarterback Kirk Cousins, have matched the Chiefs' hot start to inject new energy into a venerable rivalry. Cousins, 38, has nine touchdown passes through three games and looks set to hang onto the starting job as the Raiders continue to develop number one draft pick Fernando Mendoza.

"The guys are executing it, and executing it fast and accurate," Reid said of the Raiders -- who with three victories in the first three weeks have matched their win total of 2025.

"They've got a ton of turnovers and batted balls and everything else, so they're playing aggressive football." The Raiders have forced



Patrick Mahomes #15 of the Kansas City Chiefs in action against the Miami Dolphins at Hard Rock Stadium on September 27, 2026 in Miami Gardens, Florida.

nine turnovers this season, two more than any other team so far. Nakobe Dean, acquired by the Raiders from Philadelphia, leads the NFL with three forced fumbles and rookie cornerback Hezekiah Masses leads the league in interceptions.

Mahomes, meanwhile, was looking forward to the challenge posed by Raiders defensive end Maxx Crosby -- "one of the best competitors in the league".

"You go against those guys, it brings out the best in you,"

Mahomes said. "When I step on that football field I'm going to need my best because he's going to bring his best, and that's when you get the best games out there."

The Buffalo Bills, Minnesota Vikings and San Francisco 49ers also put their perfect 3-0 records on the line. San Francisco quarterback Brock Purdy, tied with Cousins for most TD passes so far this season, leads the 49ers against the 2-1 Denver Broncos.

Buffalo host the 1-2 New England Patriots in an AFC

East division clash while the Vikings host the hapless 0-3 Miami Dolphins.

Bills quarterback Josh Allen is on a historic streak. He rushed for two touchdowns in each of the first three games this season.

Allen, chasing his 100th career victory, is the first quarterback to rush for multiple touchdowns in three straight games and just the fourth player to do so in the first three games of a campaign after Jim Brown in 1958, Stephen Davis in 1999 and Priest Holmes in 2003.

As the first month of the season concludes, quarterback injuries have been a hot topic, with seven signal-callers forced out of games by injuries through the first three weeks.

New York Giants received the worst news, with quarterback Jaxson Dart to miss the rest of the season after knee surgery.

Tampa Bay's Baker Mayfield is expected to miss three weeks with a thumb injury. The Washington Commanders, meanwhile, could have Jayden Daniels back from his latest left elbow injury when they play the Indianapolis Colts at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London on Sunday.

Daniels, who dislocated the same elbow last season and was hurt again against Dallas two weeks ago, returned to practice in England with a brace on the arm.

Commanders coach Dan Quinn told reporters Daniels could play as Washington try to build on their upset of the Super Bowl champion Seahawks but added: "We're not going to put him out there before he's ready."

The game is one of nine NFL international games this season and the first of three in London this month. □

Djokovic survives China Open scare, Sabalenka starts strong



Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a return to China's Bu Yunchaokete during their men's singles match at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing on October 2, 2026.

Beijing, China

Novak Djokovic survived a scare to beat outsider Bu Yunchaokete 4-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-2 in the second round of the China Open on Friday in Beijing.

It was not an easy fight for

the 39-year-old Serbian, a firm favourite in China who has never lost in Beijing in 31 matches.

Pumped-up home hope Bu, 24, threatened to spoil the party in the marathon two-hour 52-minute match, frus-

trating Djokovic by pushing him back and forth across the baseline.

The former world number one needed a medical timeout for his torso after giving back a break in the second set, but held on in a tense tie-break to force a deciding third.

Back with better tennis, 11th-ranked Djokovic won four games in a row and held serve before sinking a backhand winner.

Ongoing health issues have clouded the tennis star's 2026 season, his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam ending with a shock first-round exit at the U.S. Open after vomiting and cramping on court. But feeling refreshed in Friday's decider was a welcome change from "in-

vesting my emotional, mental... and physical" energy on those issues rather than his game, he told reporters in Beijing.

"Finally that I get to play tennis, you know, without really thinking about all the other things happening," he said. He will play either Germany's Alexander Zverev, the top seed in Beijing, or Chinese wildcard Shang Juncheng in the quarter-final.

Just before the men's late-night thriller on centre court, Aryna Sabalenka sent down 11 aces as she dismissed Renata Zarazua 6-1, 6-3 to launch her China Open title charge.

The world number two from Belarus next faces Czech player Nikola Bartunkova in the round of 32 in the women's 1000-level event.

Sabalenka groaned over a smattering of unforced errors during the 62-minute match but had the clear edge over Mexico's Zarazua, ranked 94th, breaking to win on the second time of asking.

"I was just trying to stay focused on myself. Tried to stay aggressive on my serve, on the return as well," the 28-year-old said.

"So happy with the game I played today."

Earlier on Friday, Japan's Naomi Osaka wrestled back control to survive her second-round clash with Uzbekistan's Maria Timofeeva 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

The four-time Grand Slam champion next plays Sara Bejlek of the Czech Republic. □