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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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U.S. President Donald Trump (R) talks to (L-R) Rep. Rich McCormick (R-GA), Republican Senate candidate Rep. Mike Collins (R-GA), and Rep. Andrew Clyde (R-GA) as Trump arrives at Dobbins Air Reserve Base on October 16, 2026 in Marietta, Georgia.

U.S. budget deficit grows to nearly \$2 trillion, highest since 2021

Washington, United States

The U.S. budget deficit grew to almost \$2 trillion over the past year, government data showed Friday, reaching its highest level since 2021 despite President Donald Trump's promises to cut public spending. The expansion comes amid growing worries over the massive \$40.3 trillion US debt load and rising inflation, as the cost of borrowing climbs.

Refunds of Trump's tariffs after they were overturned have further fueled the budget gap.

The federal deficit, which occurs when government spending exceeds its revenues, rose to \$1.99 trillion in fiscal year 2026, the Treasury Department said.

This marked a 12-percent increase from the prior year, when the shortfall came in at \$1.78 trillion.

A key driver of expenditures was the rising interest paid on public debt, which jumped \$144 billion to a record \$1.36 trillion.

Interest costs on around \$32 trillion in publicly held US debt have been ballooning in recent years, and climbing bond yields have sparked further concerns.

Treasury bond yields, which

influence interest rates for mortgages and auto loans, have jumped this year, with steeper borrowing costs adding to pressures that US voters face ahead of November's midterm elections.

Meanwhile, an expected influx of revenue from Trump's sweeping tariffs have failed to fully materialize during his second term.

The Supreme Court struck down his global duties in February, triggering a wave of refunds.

Treasury data released Friday reflected \$145 billion in customs refunds over the year primarily due to tariffs erasing significant gains from Trump's duties.

Overall, government revenues climbed by three percent to \$5.40 trillion in the latest fiscal year, which ended September 30.

But spending was much higher, rising by six percent to \$7.40 trillion.

- War risks -

The deficit will likely be similar for the next year, said Nancy Vanden Houten of Oxford Economics.

But she warned "the risk may be for a larger budget gap if the war with Iran persists well into the fiscal year."

The Trump administration

has pledged to cut deficits and government spending since he returned to the White House last year.

Besides slashing the federal workforce and foreign aid, the Republican-controlled Congress pushed through cuts to the Medicaid health insurance scheme and moved to shrink the federal food assistance program too.

But they also extended expiring tax cuts and provided fresh funding for Trump's migrant deportation drive. The latest data released Friday showed that upticks in tax collection from individuals and customs revenues were offset by higher refunds and lower corporate tax collection.

Among other sectors, spending on defense military programs increased by \$48 billion, or six percent, over the year to \$917 billion.

Taken together, a Treasury official estimates the US deficit-to-GDP ratio is around 6.2 percent, up from 5.8 percent last year.

This stands in contrast to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's previously stated goal of bringing the deficit down to three percent of GDP, alongside other targets like spurring economic growth of three percent. □



Graphic content / Major General Allam Al-Saqqah (R), Director General of the Palestinian Authority's Civil Police, visits American freelance photojournalist Heidi Levine as she lies on a gurney at the emergency room of the government hospital in the Israeli-occupied city of Ramallah, while being treated after she was attacked by Israeli settlers while photographing Palestinian farmers harvesting their olives, in the Palestinian village of Abu Falah on October 16, 2026.

U.S. condemns 'criminal violence' in West Bank after photographer attacked

Washington, United States

The United States on Friday condemned "criminal violence by any party" in the occupied West Bank, after Israeli settlers attacked an American photojournalist covering violence against Palestinian olive farmers for The Washington Post.

Veteran photographer Heidi Levine was taken to hospital in Ramallah following the attack, with AFP photos showing her lying on a gurney with injuries to her leg and hand.

"We condemn criminal violence by any party in the West Bank and support appropriate investigations as well as legal accountability for those responsible," a State Department official said, on condition of anonymity, without directly criticizing the settlers.

"We are greatly concerned when any American is harmed overseas and stand ready to provide all appropriate consular assistance," the official said. "The Department has reached out to the Washington Post to offer consular assistance."

Speaking to journalists from her hospital bed, Levine said that "more than 50" masked settlers holding sticks suddenly attacked her while she was working near the Palestinian villages of Abu Falah and Turmus Ayya in the central West Bank.

"All of a sudden they jumped me and I luckily had my helmet and flak jacket on and I... kept my face to the ground to try to protect my face," she said.

"They just kept kicking me and kicking me," she added.

The State Department official said that Washington was in "regular dialogue with partners about improving stability and security in the West Bank."

One of US President Donald Trump's first moves upon returning to the White House in January 2025 was to lift sanctions targeting Israeli settlers, which had been imposed by his predecessor Joe Biden.

Violence has flared in recent months in the West Bank, with near-daily attacks, thefts or vandalism by Israeli settlers against Palestinians. The Washington Post said Levine had been wearing a flak jacket clearly marked "Press."

"We are outraged by this unwarranted attack on a journalist doing her job and urge a thorough investigation and follow-through from authorities," Matt Murray, the paper's executive editor, said in a statement. □

Trump's new press secretary out after less than week

Washington, United States

White House Press Secretary Katie Zacharia was pushed out Friday after less than a week in the high-profile job, following a series of blunders that added to distractions for her embattled boss President Donald Trump.

"Can confirm," a White House official told AFP, after Fox News reported that Zacharia, 41, was "transitioning out."

The writing was on the wall earlier when Trump made clear he was ready to see his newly minted spokeswoman go amid criticism that she had pretended to be a lawyer and over her one, much-mocked press briefing.

"I said, 'Katie, is this for you?'" Trump told reporters. "I said, 'Katie, you don't have to do this'... I said to her, 'Honestly if I were you I'd reconsider.'"

Zacharia only began her job five days ago, taking over from the combative Karoline Leavitt, who helped Trump reshape White House coverage by bringing in more friendly outlets and fiercely attacking critical media.

Zacharia had got off to a rocky start with her debut press room briefing Tuesday morning.



White House Press Secretary Katie Zacharia is seen after disembarking from Air Force One at Glacier Park International Airport in Kalispell, Montana, on October 14, 2026.

It lasted less than 15 minutes, beginning with a remarkably slow reading out of what she said were Trump's many accomplishments then taking just three questions from journalists.

She then was plunged into controversy when it emerged that her previous claims to be a lawyer were not true.

The kerfuffle is a distraction for 80-year-old Trump as he flies around the country trying to boost Republican candidates ahead of the

November 3 congressional midterm elections, with polls predicting a drubbing. The Republican leader himself also faces ever-lower polls as Americans sour over the war against Iran, inflation and perceptions of corruption.

- Not a real lawyer -

Zacharia had described herself as a lawyer during television appearances and on social media, and listed herself as general counsel of a California-

based conservative non-profit.

While she does have a law degree from a California university, she acknowledged Thursday she had failed the bar exam, a prerequisite for practicing law in the United States.

She embarked on a series of damage-control interviews on Trump-friendly outlets, but they did no good. In one of them, Fox News' Sean Hannity, a close Trump ally, appeared dismissive of Zacharia.

He asked the press secretary if she ever retook the bar exam. She replied: "I did not."

"It was never my intent to go into the practice of law," she said.

In another interview Thursday with pro-Trump outlet Real America's Voice, Zacharia said she had registered to take the bar exam but was "distracted and overwhelmed" by plans to move to China with her husband.

Zacharia said "many people in the field" had assured her that she could "label myself a lawyer," given her law degree.

- China's toilets -

"Fox and Friends," which often conducts friendly interviews with Trump administration officials, was unusually direct Friday when a host asked Zacharia if she still had the confidence of the president.

"I hope to be able to build the trust and confidence of everyone around me," she said, sidestepping the question.

Zacharia further stirred controversy on Thursday when she disparaged China, whose leader Xi Jinping was recently Trump's guest in a pomp-filled Washington visit. □

Democrats outraise Republicans despite Musk's midterm millions

Washington, United States

Democratic candidates have outraised Republican rivals by huge margins in key US congressional races, new campaign finance filings show, even as tech billionaire Elon Musk pumped record sums into efforts to keep President Donald Trump's party in power.

The figures emerged after candidates and political groups submitted their third-quarter fundraising reports to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) by Thursday's deadline -- the last quarterly disclosure before the November 3 midterm elections.

In six states viewed as pivotal to Senate control -- Texas, Alaska, Ohio, Maine, Michigan and Iowa -- Democrats collected between three and six times as

much as their Republican opponents in the July-September quarter, according to an analysis of the figures by Punchbowl News.

The reports revealed a striking contrast between Democrats' strong fundraising at the candidate level and Republicans' advantage in money flowing through wealthy donors and outside political groups.

In Texas, Democrat James Talarico raised a record \$64 million, compared with \$10.2 million for Republican Ken Paxton's campaign.

In Ohio, former Democratic senator Sherrod Brown raised \$23.1 million against \$4.8 million for Republican incumbent Jon Husted. And in Maine, Democrat Troy Jackson collected

\$20.4 million compared with \$5.2 million for Republican Senator Susan Collins. Democrats also outpaced Republicans in crucial House races, with at least 47 Republican incumbents outraised by Democratic or independent challengers, compared with only about six Democratic incumbents outraised by Republicans. At least 27 Democratic candidates in competitive House districts raised more than \$2 million each, against just four Republicans.

Yet Republicans have an enormous financial counterweight in Musk, the world's richest person, whose third-quarter donations of at least \$276 million were confirmed in the filings, making him the largest known political donor

of the election cycle. Of that, \$158 million went to the Senate Leadership Fund, the main Republican Senate fundraising group,

which is spending the entire sum on bankrolling a massive advertising campaign in Texas supporting Paxton. □



This combination of pictures created on October 16, 2026 shows Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, candidate for US Senate, in Dallas, Texas on September 9, 2026 and Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate James Talarico in Dallas, Texas, on September 10, 2026.

Film shot in secret of Iranian arts scene hits UK festival

London, United Kingdom

Shot in secret in Tehran, "The Friend's House Is Here" shown at the London Film Festival, is a "love letter" to young Iranian artists caught up in the turbulence of war, its directors told AFP.

The feature film, which had to be smuggled out of Iran, explores the daily lives of best friends and room-mates in Tehran -- Pari, a playwright and actress, and Hana, a dancer.

They belong to a community of young, underground artists who collaborate on projects such as Pari's plays performed in secret because she refuses to seek authorization from the Iranian authorities.

"The Friend's House Is Here," directed by husband and wife team, Hussein Keshavarz and Maryam Ataei, won a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival in January. It will be re-released in the United States on December 4.

It is a huge achievement for a film that nearly did not see the light of day due to the hurdles posed by the



(L-R) Hossein Keshavarz and Maryam Ataei, winners of the U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Ensemble Cast for "The Friend's House is Here," attend the 2026 Sundance Film Festival Awards Ceremony at The Ray Theatre on January 30, 2026 in Park City, Utah.

U.S.-Israeli 2025 bombings in Tehran as well as the authorities cutting internet communications.

"We want to show that within this kind of tumultuous time, these people are still living their lives and still

doing their art," Keshavarz told AFP.

While he is glad the world is discovering this "love letter" to the Iranian people and an "amazing generation of artists", the experience has been "bittersweet".

"The war (with the United States) is basically never ending ... the economy is really in a free fall. So, it's a very difficult time in Iran," said the filmmaker, who along with his wife Ataei has divided his time

between the United States and Iran for some 20 years.

- 'Independent women' -

In Tehran "we used to go to see so many underground plays ... and when we met this group of improv actors we were so inspired", Ataei said.

The filmmakers decided to highlight the lives of these young actors, drawing inspiration from artists arrested after posting dance videos or performing in secret. They also wanted to show "independent women and girls that are living together" and "helping each other", the director said.

But in the middle of preparations, the couple was awakened by Israeli and US strikes on Tehran in June 2025. The film was shot clandestinely over a few weeks between September and October last year, using a small camera and sound equipment concealed in a bag. For outdoor scenes, "usually, it was me and Hossein and the sound guy was somewhere far away from us. Sometimes we were only rehearsing with our

Coen brothers say they plan to make film together again

Lyon, France

Oscar-winning filmmaker brothers Ethan and Joel Coen told AFP they plan to make another movie together, having taken a break from their joint directing work that produced a string of classics from "Fargo" to "Barton Fink".

Both of them have latterly

turned to personal projects, working with their wives film editor Tricia Cooke and actress Frances McDormand on movies such as "Honey Don't" and "The Tragedy of Macbeth".

But they said they planned to reunite soon behind the camera, joking that it had to come soon because of

their advancing ages.

"We're getting old. It better be the near future," Joel, 71, told AFP in a joint interview ahead of a prize ceremony in the French city of Lyon where they are being given the "Lumiere" lifetime achievement award.

"We have a number of different things in what we call the library, things that we've written before," he added. "And then other things that we've thought about writing scripts about and never gotten around. So we don't know yet." He denied reports that "there's some kind of schism, that there's some kind of break that happened. In fact, it's not anything like that."

Their last film together was 2018's "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs", an offbeat Oscar-nominated Western starring Tim Blake Nelson,

which followed the 1950s Hollywood-set satirical comedy "Hail, Caesar!" in 2016.

Joel will release another solo project next year called "Jack of Spades" with Josh O'Connor, while Ethan has done a documentary about American pianist Jerry Lee Lewis as well as two other films with lesbian heroines.

- Not fantasy -

The brothers declined to give any details about what their next joint project would be, but it is unlikely to be fantasy-based. "It's definitely some weird cultural thing where mainstream movies are now mostly fantasy: fantasy, science fiction, horror, comic books, all different kinds of fantasy," Ethan, 69, explained. "It's a sad thing for us because we've never been drawn to those kinds of things." □



U.S. director Ethan Coen (L) and U.S. director Joel Coen (R) pose before receiving the 2026 Lumiere Award during the 18th edition of the Lumiere Film Festival in Lyon, central-eastern France on October 15, 2026.

iPhone" before the actual shoot, Ataei said.

Even on the streets or in cafés, the actresses do not wear the headscarf, like many Iranian women in defiance of the law, she pointed out.

That made filming "more difficult" especially as the movie was shot in continuous takes, including scenes where the characters walk through Tehran.

- Act of courage -

Filming was "joyous" resulting in a film that feels "very alive", said Keshavarz.

"When we were shooting it, the whole time, we were saying 'we have to finish quickly because there's going to be another war'." In December 2025, the film's sound mixing was nearing completion in Iran when anti-government protests erupted.

The regime's crackdown left thousands dead, according to NGOs, and was accompanied by a nationwide communications blackout. □

'Can't sleep': Spain's housing crunch upends lives



Laura Alonso, 26, poses in her new rental apartment during an AFP interview in Leganes, south of Madrid on October 8, 2026.

Madrid, Spain

At 38, Nadinne Fillol has a job, a partner and hopes of having children.

Yet Spain's housing crisis has left her sharing a flat in Madrid with three other people and doubting whether she will ever be able to afford a home of her own to start a family.

"There's no realistic way for me to have a home and give them even a minimally good life. It simply isn't possible," Fillol, who works as a comedian, told AFP from her room in the flat in central Madrid.

She would like to set up

home with her boyfriend, who lives in the eastern city of Valencia, but the couple says apartment prices are out of their reach.

Across Spain, soaring rents and a shortage of affordable homes are forcing people to delay starting families, putting pressure on households with children and leaving young people struggling to set up on their own.

The crisis has become a major political issue following the recent eviction of 87-year-old Maricarmen Abascal from her lifelong home and her subsequent

death, which fuelled nationwide protests.

Hundreds of tents have occupied Madrid's central Puerta del Sol square since she was taken away on a stretcher last month after the real estate company that owned her flat drastically hiked the rent.

Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called an early election for November 29 after his minority government failed to pass housing measures prompted by the protests.

- 'Infuriating' -

"It's infuriating," said Fillol,

who has slept at the protest camp, fighting back tears as she discussed the legislative defeat.

Damp patches and water damage mark the hallway ceiling of her flat, and the windows do not shut properly.

Fillol said her landlord refused to make repairs, telling her and the other tenants they would struggle to find affordable alternatives. She earns nearly 2,000 euros (\$2,200) a month before taxes, just below Spain's average gross monthly salary of around 2,460 euros.

Fillol pays 350 euros a month for a room barely big enough for a bed and a computer desk, allowing her to save towards a deposit on her own home.

But the deposit she needs keeps rising faster than she can save.

"It delays every major life milestone," she said.

- 'What's going to happen?'

Homeownership has long been the norm in Spain, where around three-quarters of households own their properties.

But asking prices for homes have risen by about 90 percent in Spain over the past decade, while average rents have almost doubled, according to real estate website Idealista.

Renting a 50-square-metre (540-square-foot) apart-

ment in Madrid cost an average of 1,170 euros a month in September around half the average gross monthly salary.

For Manuel Navarro, 32, who earns around 800 euros a month doing odd jobs, renting on the open market is out of reach.

He lives with his wife and their three children, aged four, seven and eight, in a flat belonging to the Madrid regional government's social housing agency that they occupy without authorization. Authorities are seeking to evict the family.

"There are days when I can't sleep," Navarro told AFP at his flat, where a battered pram containing two well-worn dolls stood by the entrance. "In front of my little ones, I try to lead a normal life, but when night comes I start thinking, 'My God, what's going to happen? What am I going to do with my children? Where am I going to go?'"

- 'Really hard' -

Landlords complain that evicting tenants who stop paying rent can take months, leaving them to cover mortgage payments and other costs, and that changing rules on renting create legal uncertainty.

The Bank of Spain estimates the country faces a housing shortage of 700,000 homes. □

Ukraine adds seeds to Arctic 'doomsday vault' in first since 2012

Oslo, Norway

Ukraine, a major grain producer, has deposited seed samples in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway's Arctic for the first time since 2012, after joining a UN-backed treaty on food and agriculture genetics earlier this year.

Housed deep in mountain tunnels around 1,300 kilometres (800 miles) from the North Pole, the vault is a "Noah's Ark" of food crops, designed to preserve plant varieties from risks including natural disasters, wars, climate change and diseases.

Ukraine deposited 773 seed samples this week, including various types of

sunflowers, grains, buckwheat and forage crops, the Norwegian agriculture ministry said in a statement late Wednesday.

It was Ukraine's first deposit since 2012, it added, and followed the country's joining of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, negotiated by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Often described as "Europe's breadbasket", Ukraine has a major gene collection of its own, with more than 154,000 samples representing around 2,000 species, according to the FAO. Its national gene bank, located in Kharkiv

in the east of the country, saw its buildings and infrastructure damaged by Russian shelling in 2022, before its collection was moved west, far from the front lines, Norway's agriculture ministry said.

The Global Seed Vault, inaugurated in 2008 with funding from Norway, consists of three cold chambers that now house more than 1.4 million samples, which their owners can withdraw anytime.

Far from conflict zones and at an altitude that protects it from rising sea levels, the vault is designed to withstand disasters, even in the event of refrigeration system failure, thanks to its



People stand in front of the entrance to the international gene bank Svalbard Global Seed Vault (SGSV), on February 25, 2020 outside Longyearbyen on Spitsbergen, Norway.

location beneath the permafrost.

It has nonetheless already been affected by global warming: in 2016, water

infiltrated its access tunnel without reaching the seeds leading to \$22 million of renovations to reinforce its waterproofing. □

Ivan Deforge, the French 'bison tamer' in Moscow

Moscow, Russia

"Go!" shouted Ivan Deforge, and without hesitation his 300-kilo hairy side-kicks Karym and Ural leapt through a ring of fire under the dome of the Great Moscow Circus.

The 56-year-old Frenchman has taken on the unusual challenge of training European bison to perform things they would not naturally do in the wild.

Circuses using wild animals have fallen out of favor across much of Europe due to concerns over animal cruelty, and France plans to ban them outright from December 2028.

But in Russia, more than 1,000 animals are currently made to perform in circuses across the country, nearly all of them state-run, official statistics show.

"There are two types of bison," Deforge told AFP after a training session with the animals, both two-year-olds with brownish-red coats.

The more docile American bison are sometimes seen in U.S. circuses for human entertainment, he explained.

But European bison have "a much more difficult and slightly more aggressive temperament".

Deforge, who has been training circus animals for



French animal trainer Ivan Deforge works with European bison in the Great Moscow Circus in Moscow on October 1, 2026.

three decades, moved to Russia eight years ago.

"At the moment, I am the only one here -- even the only one left in Europe working with European bison," he said.

He has used giraffes, hippos, rhinos, camels and zebras, and now has both bison and elephants at the Great Moscow Circus, which opened during the Soviet era.

- 'Short words' -

A bill proposing to ban the use of animals in Russian circuses was put to the lower house of parliament, the

State Duma, this year.

MPs flatly rejected it.

"The issue of humane treatment of animals is sufficiently regulated by law," they determined, noting the economic interests of animal circuses, which remain a major draw for audiences.

Deforge says he treats his charges humanely.

"You have to love animals. You have to respect them," he insisted.

"When you have their trust, animals can do a lot of things."

In Moscow, Deforge is preparing to take on one of

the biggest challenges of his career by training Karym and Ural, who have been with the circus since August last year.

First displayed to the public during an "open rehearsal" four months after their arrival, the bison have so far only appeared in summer shows held in a small tent in a Moscow park.

Their appearance in the main arena under the big dome, scheduled for December, requires careful preparation, Deforge said. The trick was to use "short words".

"If you say: 'Come here,

please', that would be too long and too difficult to understand," he said.

- Myanmar elephants -

"And the Russian language has plenty of short words that I love using in training," he said, listing "Stoyat!" (Stand!), "Lezhat!" (Lie down!) and "Idi!" (Go!).

"That is much easier for the animals to understand," said Deforge, who tells his bison "Molodets!" (Well done!) after every successful exercise.

He puts Karym and Ural through their routine three to four times a week, with each session lasting an hour.

"The most important thing is that the animals are comfortable," he said, "and well-fed" with plenty of apples and carrots.

Deforge arrived in Russia in 2018 while touring with an Italian circus troupe.

He subsequently accepted an offer from Great Moscow Circus director Edgard Zapashny to join the team as an elephant trainer.

Working alongside Zapashny a big-cat trainer and fourth-generation member of the Zapashny circus dynasty Deforge is also planning to present a brand-new show featuring seven elephants to the public "soon". □

All contenders for U.N. chief receive veto: diplomat

United Nations, United States

All seven candidates to lead the United Nations received a vote of "discourage," effectively a veto, from a permanent U.N. Security Council member in the latest informal poll, a diplomat said Friday.

Friday's vote was the first time in the anonymous informal polling that Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States used colored straws to indicate their vetoes, while the Security Council's 10 elected members continued to use plain markers.

Costa Rica's Rebeca Grynspan who has been among the frontrunners in the five previous polls received the most "encourage" votes this time, but also got five

"discourage" votes, including two from permanent members.

U.S. media reports suggest Washington opposes all of the seven contenders in

the race.

Washington's envoy to the UN Mike Waltz refused to comment on the report, but said Friday: "We have always said we just simply

need the best."

On the question of new contenders joining the race, Waltz said "countries, if they want to to put more candidates in, that's certainly within their sovereign rights."

Among those considered by diplomats to be potential entrants are Nickolay Mladenov, the high representative for Gaza under the US-backed "Board of Peace," and the UAE's minister of state for foreign affairs Lana Nusseibeh.

Turkey's Feridun Hadi Sinirlioglu, Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), has also had his name floated.

Grynspan performed best on average in the first five

rounds of informal polling, again coming top Friday despite the two vetoes.

The other candidates are Guyanese ex-foreign minister Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Argentina's Rafael Grossi, the current head of the UN nuclear watchdog, Macky Sall of Senegal, Ecuador's Ivonne A-Baki and Maria Fernanda Espinosa, and Uganda's Olara Otunnu. The outgoing secretary-general, Antonio Guterres of Portugal, ends his second five-year term on December 31, 2026.

Even if a candidate earns the required nine votes from the 15 available in the Security Council, they must also avoid a veto by the five major powers, which are deeply divided. □



The United Nations Security Council holds an emergency meeting on the Ukraine-Russia war at UN Headquarters in New York, on July 27, 2026.

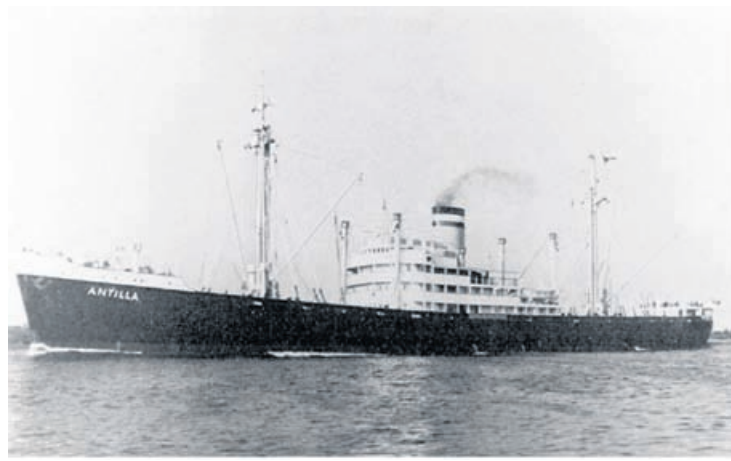
Up for a snorkeling adventure in Aruba? Top 3 shipwrecks to explore

(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 dis-

covered 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. □

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.

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Explore Aruba!

(ORANJESTAD)—Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. 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.

Arikok National Park

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. 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 34 square kilometers of protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whip-tail 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

Natural Bridge

One of Aruba's favorite tourist attractions is the Natural Bridge. For thousands of years, pounding waves and strong winds have slowly chiseled away the limestone cliffs along Aruba's north coast to create several natural bridges. The largest of these bridg-



es used to be the famous Natural Bridge. The bridge was a formation of coral limestone cut out by years of pounding surf, and was one of the largest of these types of spans in the world. It stood some 23 feet (7 meters) above sea level and spans more than 100 feet (30 meters). Unfortunately the bridge collapsed on September 2, 2005. Despite this, it is still the most photographed natural bridge

and it remains a popular tourist attraction in Aruba, with the adjacent and intact Baby Bridge also meriting a visit. The Natural Bridge is the perfect stop while touring Aruba. There is no admission fee or set hours for visiting. Quench your thirst with refreshing beverages & refuel your tank with local snacks.

The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration

of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas. A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos, was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession

Fun facts about cacti hedges "Trankera"

(Oranjestad) – When off-roading in inland Aruba, you may notice some cacti hedges around various properties or lined up by certain pathways. These man-made hedges are called "trankera" and play an important role in maintaining our flora and fauna.

The trankera dates to colonialism, where settlers established several 'cunucu' (farm) on the island. People either used stone walls or trankera as a fence to ward off strangers and wild animals that can feed on the cunucu vegetation or cattle. Nowadays, trankeras are less common,

and those that still stand are often not maintained. On the surface this seems like a bad development, however this proved to be beneficial for our flora and fauna. Naturally developed flora around the hedges offers more shelter for fauna. Another aspect is the propagation process. When pruning hedges, flowers and seeds were removed, which limits propagation to a minimum.

So, though trankeras don't play that big of a role in Aruba's agriculture anymore, our environment still reaps the benefits of these long-standing natural structures. □



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The Lionfish and its threat to our marine wild life

(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become a danger to our local fish and reefs.

Originating from the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the lionfish is a relatively small fish. It has no teeth, but it does protect itself against predators using its sharp, colorful spikes. It is said that the sting of a lionfish can be up to 100 times more painful than that of a bee's sting.

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a major problem for our lo-



cal marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other

types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba

foundation, every reef has a "cleaning station" tiny fish that eat algae and other types of waste on a reef, thus maintaining the reef's health and providing food to the fish population in the area. However, as the lion-

fish feeds off of these tiny fish, it becomes harder for the coral reef to maintain its health.

Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of these fish in the Atlantic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba, lionfish were discovered in 2009.

Controlling the lionfish population is challenge, as each female fish can lay up to 40,000 eggs a day. Luckily, we have people like van Brakel who dedicate their

lives hunting and capturing these invasive species, using them for consumption and jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object resembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance.

These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life. □

Fun facts about the "transhi" hedges!



(Oranjestad)—When off-roading, you may encounter some houses that have rock hedges, aligned perfectly and held together by cement or sometimes nothing at all.

These hedges are called "transhi," and have a historical and cultural meaning on the island. Used by cunukeros* around the island back when agriculture played a more dominant role in day-to-day life and survival, these stone hedges represent the resilience of our great-grand parents, who had to make do with what nature gave them.

These stone structures are traditionally placed carefully on top of each other. No

cement or other binding mixture was used to hold the structure together. Though not commonly used for modern homes, the few structures that remain around the island stood the test of time, some completely intact even after decades of rain, wind and urbanization.

These stone hedges are a representation of the Aruba's unique farming culture—which valued durability, sustainability and resilience.

*cunukero: Aruban farmers.

Pictures extracted from the 'Plantage Zorg en Hoop' collection on Coleccion. aw □

Why 'Rock Stacking' is more dangerous than you think

(Oranjestad) "Rock stacking" is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba's wilderness. Conservation organizations repeatedly warn people not to participate. To understand the growing opposition to the practice of stacking rocks, it is necessary to understand the deep and negative impact behind it.

The act, called rock stacking, has been practiced for thousands of years and was originally used to guide people on hikes or travelers in mountainous regions, as well as for rituals, burials, and memorials. However, the modern trend is quite different. Today, the popularity of rock stacking has less to do with utility and tradition and more to do with social media. An American artist based in Colorado, Michael Grab, noted that the trend really began gaining popularity around 2014 and 2015, before it exploded and became an international art form.

The reasons behind participation vary widely, ranging from something purely practical or a tradition from the past, to an activity for its "beauty." For many, it is about leaving a mark, creating "art," or simply enjoying the process of balancing rocks. In recent times, those who participate in



this especially in Aruba do so to leave proof of their presence or simply to post on social media.

Although it may seem harmless, there are several problems and negative impacts behind it. One of these is that many animal species hide under rocks to live, reproduce, or escape predators. If you move a rock, you may be destroying a home. If you stack one on top of another, you may expose prey to predators. Whether this is done in nature areas, along the coast, or in desert environments, it can destroy entire colonies and, in the worst case, threaten species that are already endangered.

There are microorganisms and small species such as insects or certain snakes

that live in the soil beneath rocks commonly used for stacking. These rocks help trap moisture underneath, allowing the ecosystem to sustain itself. When you remove a rock, the soil is exposed and the moisture can dry up, killing all living organisms that depend on that humid environment.

Additionally, each rock is full of life everything from aquatic plants to microorganisms attaches to them. Especially when it comes to rocks near the sea, they create habitats for some marine animals. Holes in the rocks can hold eggs, supporting them until the animals hatch. An expert explained that removing rocks from a fragile environment is essentially the equivalent of removing bricks from someone's

house while also taking everything out of their refrigerator.

There is also the issue of erosion and soil damage, because rocks help hold the ground in place, sealing the surface and helping manage excess water, even allowing new life to grow. When these rocks are removed, the soil becomes loose, significantly increasing the rate of erosion in that area.

This erosion can cause sedimentation in nearby bodies of water, negatively impacting aquatic habitats and water quality.

Rocks along the coast are part of a natural ecosystem and play an important role in protecting the shoreline from erosion and the force

of the ocean. When people remove or stack rocks, it affects coastal stability, increases the risk of erosion, and damages ecosystems. According to South African National Parks, this is particularly relevant for an island like Aruba especially considering that most, if not all, rock stacking on the island takes place near coastal areas.

It is understandable that rock stacking may seem like a fun activity to do while off-roading; however, the survival, protection, and conservation of the island are just as important if not more so to ensure that in the future there will still be an island for both locals and visitors. We want our visitors to appreciate what Aruba has to offer in a healthy and sustainable way. □

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. □

Aruba to me



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. □

The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

ORANJESTAD—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha

Written by Hubert (Lio Booi) One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one

day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was a epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aterima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aterima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aterima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things

Aruban flora and fauna, told Aterima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aterima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aterima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers.

Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aterima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the hut, Aterima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aterima's father and they saw another mira-



cle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the

legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1. Baylor setting
5. Fighting females
9. Clickable pix
11. Honolulu hello
13. Hunker down
14. Where Joan of Arc was tried
15. Groan inducer
16. Turned red, perhaps
18. Tot watchers
20. Due follower
21. Car quartet
22. Snake sound
23. Pay stub line
24. Frank holder
25. Sty group
27. Small dents
29. Crunch targets
30. Humiliating failures
32. Puts back on the payroll
34. Wish undone
35. Dancer

Castle

36. Skip the ceremony
38. Long attack
39. Conclude successfully
40. Mimics
41. African serpents

DOWN

1. Bits of smoke
2. Find not guilty
3. Sleep aid, of a sort
4. Words before tear or dare
5. Becomes twisted
6. Soothing stuff
7. "Mr. Jones" band
8. Translucent curtains
10. Block border
12. Llama's land
17. Form 1040 org.
19. "-- bien!"
22. Attila's men
24. Judicial
25. Louvre location
26. European peninsula
27. Conk out
28. Enhance, as an engine
30. Lets loose
31. Oozes
33. "Picnic" playwright
37. Pasture



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.

9-25

CRYPTOQUOTE

D W N H B G Y F F Z I Q F F, C Y
E Q D N Y H D G N D W Q F F, Q H O
D P M D Z I N H O D W Y L Z Z O N H
Q F F. --- X K W Q X X Q O Q F N

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IMAGINATION
ALLOWS YOU TO BEND THE RULES OF THE
TEMPORAL WORLD. --- AMY SHERALD

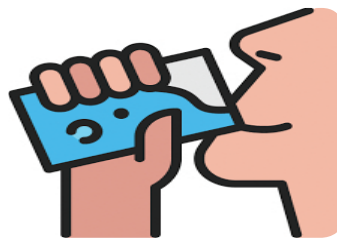
Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(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 Tele-



graph, 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	
10 SAT	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
11 SUN	FREEDOM OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
12 MON	QUEEN ELIZABETH Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: B CORAL PRINCESS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: C
13 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B CELEBRITY REFLECTION Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
14 WED	CARNIVAL VENEZIA Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C
17 SAT	STAR PRINCESS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

10/17

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

10/16

Millions may be forced to move as climate change hits South Asia: U.N.

New Delhi, India

Climate change is threatening livelihoods and forcing people from their homes across South Asia, but technology and government action could help limit the damage, the UN migration chief told AFP on Friday.

Rising seas, flooding and drought threaten homes and farmland, Amy Pope, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said during a visit to New Delhi. In the Himalayas, she pointed to Nepal's August 26 disaster, when a mountain and glacier collapse triggered deadly flooding, where IOM sent humanitarian aid to help.

In a worst-case scenario, up to 40.5 million people in South Asia may be forced to move by 2050, according to IOM.

"When they can't produce food, when they can't feed their livestock, it increases the likelihood of displacement," said Pope. "The first adaptation is often for people to move." Pope said climate change was also accelerating urbanisation in India.

"As people seek shelter from heat, they're going into urban centres," she said.

- 'Migration as a tool' -

The risks are particularly acute in South Asia, where vast populations and limited resources leave many communities vulnerable. "There's a lack of urgency globally about the risks that vulnerable communities are facing," Pope said, warning that funding to help residents prepare for climate change remained inadequate.

"The cost of a humanitarian disaster is in the billions. The cost of investing in some of the resilience measures can be far less," she said.

Better data and artificial intelligence could help governments identify communities at risk before disaster strikes, Pope said.

"With the advancements in AI forecasting, you can



This handout picture released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Djibouti on October 11, 2026 shows members of IOM Djibouti assisting survivors after a boat sank off the coast of Djibouti on the night of October 8-9.

now better anticipate those communities that are at high risk of displacement," Pope said. By combining weather forecasts with information about local livelihoods, authorities can identify which communities most need help.

"If you know a community is at risk, we don't need to wait until they're displaced to respond," she said. Measures could include improving farming methods, training people for other jobs and, where necessary, relocating communities repeatedly hit by floods or drought.

Finding the money for such

programmes is a major obstacle, Pope said, with governments often struggling to navigate the systems available to fund climate adaptation.

India's investments in early-warning systems, disaster response and technology offer grounds for optimism, she said. But no government can meet the scale of the challenge alone. International migration can also help people earn a living while filling labour shortages abroad. South Asia already has established migration routes, offering opportunities to build on existing links.

"Here we have government partners who recognise both the threats to their communities but they're also using migration as a tool for development," Pope said. □



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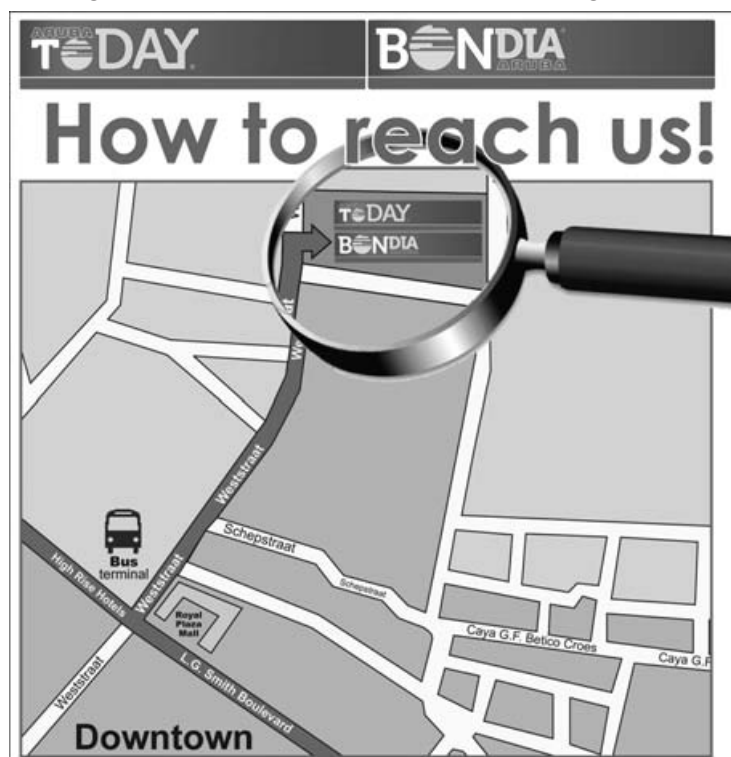
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7:00 pm/10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Dakota
Tel. 588 7364

San Nicolas: Centro Medico
Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

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

EMERGENCY

Police 100
Police Oranjestad 527 3140
Police Noord 527 3200
Police Sta. Cruz 527 2900
Police San Nicolas 584 5000
Police Tipline 1141
Ambulance 911
Fire Dept. 115
Red Cross 582 2219

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FAVI- Visually Impaired
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

'Mixed feelings': AI cracks centuries-old ciphers

Tokyo, Japan

Napoleon Bonaparte ordered the wartime missive written in code, creating a puzzle that went unsolved for more than 200 years -- until AI cracked it in a matter of hours.

Artificial intelligence is helping non-specialists unlock the secrets of historical sources, a trend described as a "turning point" in a field previously the preserve of scholars and dedicated hobbyists.

One new sleuth is Carter Church, a 27-year-old AI engineer who decrypted a 19th-century letter to one of Napoleon's generals.

Without digital tools, the task could have taken weeks, but the latest model from ChatGPT-maker OpenAI broke the cipher in just six hours.

"What AI mostly brings is persistence," Church told AFP, saying he felt "an unbelievable sense of satisfaction and excitement when I saw the result".

The message from 1809 detailing French and allied troops' positions in two dozen lines of symbols, numbers and letters had lain ignored in an online aca-



This photograph taken at military archives at the Vincennes castle, outside Paris, on October 15, 2026 shows of a reproduction of a wartime letter addressed to one of Napoleon's generals written in secret code in 1809, detailing the positions of French troops.

demic archive.

Because traditional, low-tech methods to crack ciphers are effective but time- and labour-intensive, historians "have more important problems to solve, so many ciphers like this often sit unattended", said Church.

To find the solution, Church, who works at U.S. cybersecurity firm SentinelOne, needed to learn "very lit-

tle" about code-breaking techniques or the historical period.

He spent some evenings going over it, then consulted Japanese patent engineer Satoshi Tomokiyo, who maintains an online list of unsolved ciphers, to verify it. "2026 will be remembered as a turning point for codebreaking of historical ciphers," Tomokiyo wrote on his website Cryptiana,

a go-to resource for the small but enthusiastic global community of amateur cryptographers.

- 'Mixed feelings' -

Researchers were already developing AI models to break ciphers, but the public release of state-of-the-art generalist tools has unleashed dozens of new solutions.

Although Church used

OpenAI's most powerful model, GPT-6 Astra, other people have used top offerings from rival U.S. lab Anthropic instead.

Tomokiyo said that since mid-September, most of the ciphers on his list have been cracked using AI.

"There remain some tough problems" which could stay an enigma for years to come, because there is less relevant data available to help AI figure them out, the 58-year-old told AFP.

"I'm excited long-time problems are now solved, but on the other hand, I have mixed feelings, because AI seems to have solved these difficult problems so easily," he said.

With technology draining the satisfaction of being first to crack a cipher, a fellow code-breaker told Tomokiyo: "I feel useless."

AI is surpassing human abilities in pursuits from mathematics to computer programming, while threatening to alter or even eradicate many jobs.

The technology is transforming the work of historians not only by decoding documents, but also by analysing millions of medi-

eval manuscripts or helping read ancient scrolls.

Too fragile to be unrolled without risking destruction, the Herculaneum Papyri hundreds of papyrus scrolls carbonised in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD are now being X-rayed and analysed by AI to reveal the hidden writing inside.

Researchers in Italy announced in June the first complete virtual unrolling of a scroll, which turned out to be a treatise on ethics.

- 'Facebook of the past' -

AI is also being used to build a huge, searchable collection of previously inaccessible sources on Jewish history and culture by transcribing 10 million pages of Hebrew manuscripts. "It's gigantic. No human being could process such a quantity" of data, said project leader Daniel Stoeckl Ben Ezra, of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris. □

Anthropic co-founder renews call for robust regulation of frontier AI

Bangkok, Thailand

Anthropic co-founder Jack Clark renewed calls on Friday for regulating artificial intelligence, saying that allowing companies to continue to operate without robust legislation was like letting a race car loose on the streets at night without brakes.

"It's remarkable to me that the toys I buy for my children are regulated more than the literal super intelligence I work on at my day job," he told an event at the IMF-World Bank's Annual Meetings in Bangkok. Clark said that U.S. President Donald Trump, whose administration has called for the industry to police itself, was against the idea of regulation but that China was not.

"I think its Formula One

at night without maybe brakes in the cars," he said.

He said the lack of clarity around the will for regulation meant "the Formula One car is roaring round

and nobody seems to want to put up a guard-rail?"

At an industry summit in Dublin on Wednesday, calls to prioritize safety in the development of pow-

erful AI technology dominated the conversation.

Concerns about AI guardrails have soared after models developed by OpenAI and Anthropic were involved in security incidents during testing, piling on pressure to regulate the technology.

A recent Anthropic report suggested small AI models may be only months away from behaving like computer worms, copying themselves from one internet-connected device to the next.

Anthropic has been among those companies calling for governments to step in, even suggesting international coordination to slow down the whole industry including Chinese rivals. □



Co-founder and Head of Public Benefit of Anthropic Jack Clark speaks during the AI and the Global Economy: From Risk to Opportunity panel at the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG) at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center (QSNCC) in Bangkok on October 16, 2026.

Brilliant Brewers sweep Dodgers to reach World Series

Los Angeles, United States

The Milwaukee Brewers defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers 6-4 to reach baseball's World Series for the first time in 44 years on Thursday after completing a 4-0 series sweep of the star-studded defending champions.

The top-seeded Brewers once again combined relentless offense with clinical relief pitching at Dodger Stadium to fight back from an early 4-0 deficit and snuff out the Dodgers' hopes of a rare World Series three-peat.

The Brewers, who last reached the World Series in 1982, will face either the Cleveland Guardians or Tampa Bay Rays in baseball's championship series.

"We've still got a ways to go. We've still got some big games in front of us," Brewers team captain Christian Yelich said.

"We've been so close to this so many times. Credit to our guys, our team, they stuck together, battled. We got down early, we were like it's gonna be a great story when we come back and win this."

Brewers skipper Pat Murphy meanwhile said simply: "They may have a bunch of Hall of Famers, but we have a bunch of gamers. And the gamers won this week."



Aaron Ashby #26 of the Milwaukee Brewers celebrates with teammates after recording the final out of the game against the Los Angeles Dodgers in game four of the National League Championship Series at Dodger Stadium on October 15, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

After a lacklustre defeat in game three on Wednesday, the Dodgers had been left needing to become only the second team in Major League Baseball history to overturn a 3-0 deficit to win a best-of-seven series.

When Shohei Ohtani smashed a three-run home run deep into right field in the bottom of the second inning the Japanese superstar's first home run in nearly two months Dodgers fans dared to dream of a miracle.

But Ohtani's mammoth blast was to prove the highlight of another largely

inconsistent performance by the expensively-assembled Dodgers offense, who squandered a series of late opportunities to get back into the game after stranding runners on third base in multiple innings.

Instead it was the Brewers swept 4-0 by the Dodgers in the National League Championship Series last year who rallied to a deserved victory.

- Outplayed by 'flawless' Brewers -

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts had few complaints at the loss, saying the 2024 and 2025 MLB

champions had been comprehensively outplayed.

"At the end of the day, we got beat," Roberts said. "We got outplayed in all facets. Those guys played flawless."

"Defensively they pitched better than we did, they hit better than we did, they slugged more than we did. You've got to sometimes just tip your cap."

"I personally told our guys that there's no apologies, there's no sorries. We gave it everything we had, and it wasn't good enough. That's part of life." The Brewers had initially

struggled to find a way past Dodgers starting pitcher Tyler Glasnow but began making inroads in the fourth inning after Brice Turang and William Contreras got on base.

Jake Bauers who was named series Most Valuable Player stepped up to drive a double into right field and suddenly the Dodgers lead had been cut to 4-2.

David Hamilton singled to score Sal Frelick in the fifth inning to make it 4-3, and when Bauers drew a walk with the bases loaded in the top of the fifth, the Brewers had drawn level.

Garrett Mitchell then homered for the second straight game in the sixth inning to put the Brewers 5-4 up and Hamilton added an insurance solo shot in the ninth to seal the win.

The Dodgers, meanwhile, were left ruing an anemic offensive display that saw them fail to exploit a series of promising openings with their season on the line.

They failed to score in the sixth, seventh and eighth innings after getting a runner on third base two of those occasions with only one out and the defeat was sealed with a whimper as Brewers reliever Aaron Ashby mopped up the final three outs. □

NBA general managers pick Spurs for title, Wemby as MVP

New York, United States

Victor Wembanyama and the San Antonio Spurs were predicted to win the 2027 title with the French superstar taking Most Valuable Player honors in an NBA team general managers survey released on Thursday.

In the 25th annual survey, general managers answered 48 questions and could not vote for their own team or personnel.

The Spurs, who lost to New York in last June's NBA Finals, were ranked the top choice as champion for the upcoming campaign by 50 percent of the 30 executives with Oklahoma

City second on 43 percent and New York and Philadelphia, the new club of LeBron James, also receiving votes.

Last year, Oklahoma City won the poll with 80 percent of GMs picking the Thunder to win the title.

The Spurs edged the Thunder as top pick in the Western Conference with New York the first choice in the East followed by Philadelphia.

Wembanyama, the top overall pick of the 2023 NBA Draft and 2024 NBA Rookie of the Year, topped the survey in eight different questions regarding play-

ers. The 7-foot-4 (2.24m) center who took the Defensive Player of the Year award last season, was predicted to be the next MVP by 77 percent of general managers, a record level of support in the survey.

Denver's Nikola Jokic, a Serbian center and three-time NBA MVP, was second choice at 10 percent. Wembanyama won as player the GMs would want to start a franchise at a record 93 percent.

The 22-year-old was also named the top pick as the NBA's best defender and most versatile player,

among other categories. Spurs guard Dylan Harper was named the player

most likely to have a breakout 2026-27 campaign. □



Victor Wembanyama #1 of the San Antonio Spurs celebrates a dunk against the Phoenix Suns in the first half of a preseason game at Frost Bank Center on October 14, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.



Head coach Todd Monken of the Cleveland Browns runs onto the field prior to the game against the New York Jets at MetLife Stadium on October 11, 2026 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Ravens, without Jackson, face familiar foe in Browns coach Monken

Washington, United States

Baltimore star quarterback Lamar Jackson will miss Sunday's NFL game at Cleveland with a left ankle injury but the Ravens will see a familiar face when they visit the Browns.

Browns first-year head coach Todd Monken, who served as the Ravens offensive coordinator the past three seasons, guides Cleveland (3-2) against the Ravens (4-1) in a fight for the AFC North division lead. "If I know Todd the way I think I know Todd, he will want to kick our tails," Ravens cornerback Marlon Humphrey said. Monken, 60, questioned how much benefit he will have knowing the Ravens players, noting they will know his offensive schemes as well.

"I don't know about that. Gets offset by what we do on offense I guess," Monken said. "Got a lot of respect for their players. What you see is what you get from them."

"Did I enjoy my time there? Of course. A lot of really good memories. Got a lot of good friends and people there. Other than that, no, it's a divisional game."

First-year Ravens coach Jesse Minter, a former Los

Angeles Chargers defensive coordinator who took over in January, will coach in his first game against a division rival.

"I've always felt like the division games mean a little bit more," Minter said. "It's just really an intent and a focus when you play division teams. It's our first crack at that."

Jackson, hurt in Baltimore's October 4 victory over Tennessee, has not practiced since and Minter said on Friday he would miss a second straight game, with Tyler "Snoop" Huntley starting for the Ravens at Cleveland after leading a comeback victory in Atlanta last Sunday.

"I've been there before where we played Snoop and Snoop is a really good football player. Won a bunch of games as a starter," Monken said.

In 2024, Monken directed the first Ravens team to throw for 4,000 yards and run for 3,000 yards in the same season.

"Todd's a great offensive play caller," Minter said. "A guy I've got a ton of respect for. They have a great defense. We're just excited for the challenge."

Two other 4-1 division lead-

ers face tests Sunday as well, with AFC East leader Buffalo at 3-2 Las Vegas and AFC South leader Jacksonville meeting Houston (1-4) in London.

- Hurts out for Eagles -

Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts was ruled out for Sunday's home game against Carolina after an ultrasound exam revealed movement in a blood clot discovered in his calf.

"Jalen will be out for Sunday's game versus the Panthers as we determine the appropriate course of treatment," the Eagles said in a statement. "His health at safety are our highest priority."

Two of the NFL's three undefeated clubs are at home this week, the Kansas City Chiefs (4-0) against the Chargers (0-5) on Sunday and the San Francisco 49ers (5-0) against Washington (1-3-1) on Monday. Minnesota (5-0) is off this week.

Sunday's other games include Chicago at Atlanta, Tennessee at Indianapolis, the New York Jets at New England, New Orleans at the New York Giants, Pittsburgh at Tampa Bay, Arizona at the Los Angeles Rams and Dallas at Green Bay. □



Poland's Iga Swiatek celebrates after winning against USA's Ann Li during their women's singles quarter-final match at the Wuhan Open tennis tournament in Wuhan, China's Hubei province on October 16, 2026.

Swiatek moves into Wuhan semi-finals

Wuhan, China

Iga Swiatek kept up her bid for a WTA Finals place with a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Ann Li on Friday that set up an all-Polish semi-final at the Wuhan Open.

The six-time Grand Slam champion will face Maja Chwalinska for a place in the final.

Swiatek is chasing one of the last two remaining spots in the eight-player line-up at next month's WTA Finals in Indian Wells and took another step forward by reaching the Wuhan semis for the first time in her career.

"For sure it's great that we have two Polish players in the semi-finals," said Swiatek of her upcoming clash with childhood friend Chwalinska.

"I think it means a lot to Polish tennis, so hopefully it's going to be a nice match. I'm really happy for Maja, she for sure improved her game this year."

It had been a banner week for 26-year-old Li, who stunned world number two Aryna Sabalenka in the second round and recorded the 100th tour-level victory of her career in the third round to reach a maiden WTA 1000 quarter-final.

The American world number 31 gave Swiatek a hard time in the opening set. But despite committing 21 unforced errors and facing three break points, Swiatek hung onto the one-break gap she created early on and took a one-set lead in 56 minutes.

Swiatek made a strong start to the second set and never let go, as she moved into her fourth WTA 1000 semi-final of the year.

French Open finalist Chwalinska reached her first WTA 1000 semi-final with a 6-0, 3-6, 7-5 triumph over Greece's Maria Sakkari.

"I think it would be great for us and great for Polish tennis as well," Chwalinska said of her Saturday meeting with Swiatek.

"It would be a great honour for me also because she's such a great champion, she's done almost everything in our sport."

Earlier, Sonay Kartal claimed the second top-10 win of her career and guaranteed herself a return to the top 100 with a 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 victory over Ukrainian world number six Elina Svitolina.

The first British player to make the semi-finals in Wuhan, Kartal missed six months of action this season with a spinal stress fracture before returning to competition three weeks ago.

Ranked a career-high 44 in the world 15 months ago, Kartal plummeted to 170 in the rankings due to her injury-enforced absence. □