

The Aruban native frog 'Dori'



[CREDIT Mauricio Rivera Correa]

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U.S. President Donald Trump delivers remarks during an election rally at McMorran Place Sports & Entertainment Center on October 25, 2026 in Port Huron, Michigan.

Mystery money floods U.S. midterm election campaigns

New York, United States

Five outside groups significantly funded by dark money have poured more than \$1 billion into the US midterm election campaign.

With just over a week until voting day, the records in the notoriously expensive U.S. election system have been shattered.

An AFP analysis of federal data shows just five groups known as super PACs (political action committees) accounted for nearly a third of non-party spending in this election cycle as of October 25.

Three of the five groups skew Republican, and about two thirds of the billion dollars spent will benefit the Republican Party (GOP), fueled by ultra-wealthy Republican-leaning donors like Elon Musk a key ally of President Donald Trump.

Musk alone has put almost \$450 million into Republican groups, including the biggest of the super PACs, the Senate Leadership Fund.

Meanwhile, Democrats have a fundraising edge when it comes to direct donations to candidates' campaigns and to the party's national committees.

Democratic candidates in competitive Senate and House races have consistently outraised their Re-

publican counterparts.

That suggests smaller donors in the Democratic base are highly motivated. But tortuous U.S. election laws impose strict caps on how much individuals can give, while there is no limit or really any control at all on how much super PAC groups can throw at candidates.

- Unlimited contributions -

The five giant spenders in this cycle are technically a mix of super PACs and hybrid PACs, entities that didn't even exist before 2010.

They grew out of a Supreme Court ruling, known as Citizens United, which held that the government cannot limit political spending by corporations, unions and other groups if they spend it independently of candidates.

A lower court decision ruled that these organizations could also raise an unlimited amount of money from donors.

The result was that big donors can funnel vast sums of money to try and influence elections and remain anonymous by donating through secondary organizations.

In contrast, direct contributions to a candidate's official campaign are lim-

ited to a mere \$3,500, and donations to national party committees have a cap of \$44,300.

The PAC spending sprees have surged ever higher during the Trump era, with Musk's mega-million donations encapsulating the new reality of pay-to-play politics.

But money alone is not enough, says Jen Heerwig, an associate professor of Sociology at SUNY-Stony Brook university.

"What we've seen is that even in races where there's hundreds of millions of super PAC dollars being spent, it's unclear to me that that's going to buy the outcome when you don't have the grassroots kind of enthusiasm or support for the candidate in that particular jurisdiction."

- Targeted spending -

Across the nation, super PACs have put far more of their money into Senate contests and spent it largely on attack ads.

The Texas Senate election tops the list in terms of expenditure. Democrat James Talarico has faced more than \$200 million in opposition from outside spending groups as he attempts to become the first Democrat to win a Senate race in Texas since 1988. □



U.S. President Donald Trump delivers remarks during an election rally at McMorran Place Sports & Entertainment Center on October 25, 2026 in Port Huron, Michigan.

U.S. judge says firing of daughter of former FBI director unlawful

New York, United States

A U.S. judge ruled on Monday that the firing of former federal prosecutor Maurene Comey, the daughter of Donald Trump foe James Comey, was unlawful and she should be reinstated.

Comey, whose father briefly served as FBI director during Trump's first White House term, was summarily dismissed in July 2025 as an assistant U.S. attorney in Manhattan. Comey filed suit against the Department of Justice in federal court claiming she had been dismissed "solely or substantially" because of her father's criticism of Trump or "because of her perceived political affiliation and beliefs."

In ruling against the Department of Justice, District Judge Jesse Furman said Comey, an assistant U.S. attorney (AUSA) in the Southern District of New York, had been deprived of her due process rights.

"Yes, the Attorney General is authorized by law to remove an AUSA," Furman said. "But the Attorney General... is also limited by law... to do so only in a particular manner and only for certain reasons."

Comey was involved in a number of prominent cases while serving as a prosecutor in Manhattan, including those brought against music producer Sean "Diddy" Combs and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

She also prosecuted Ghislaine Maxwell, the only former Epstein associate who was criminally charged in connection with his activities. Epstein died in prison before coming to trial in what was determined to be a suicide. Since taking office, Trump has taken a number of punitive measures against his perceived enemies, purging government officials deemed to be disloyal, targeting law firms involved in past cases against him and pulling federal funding from universities.

James Comey, an outspoken critic of Trump, was indicted in April for allegedly threatening the Republican president in an Instagram post that showed the numbers "8647" spelled out in seashells.

The Trump Justice Department has claimed that "8647" constitutes a threat to the president "86" meaning to kill and "47" a reference to Trump being the 47th president. Comey has denied threatening the president's life.

Trump fired Comey in 2017 as the then-FBI chief was leading an investigation into whether any members of the president's campaign had colluded with Moscow to sway the 2016 election, in which the Republican beat Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. □

Maine logging, cross-border ties whipsawed by U.S.-Canada tariff war

Fort Kent, United States

In the heat of U.S. midterm elections, President Donald Trump's tariffs on Canada and Ottawa's retaliation have taken center stage in timber-producing Maine, walloped by the economic fallout perhaps more than any other state.

Residents in Maine's frontier towns express worry that the tariffs have also triggered a rupture in cross-border relationships built up over decades, and that the intricate community fabric could take years to repair.

"Tariffs are definitely, economically, going to hurt us here" in northern Maine, brewery co-owner Shawn Pelletier said in Caribou, a city with extensive ties to Canada's New Brunswick province.

Maine is reluctantly on the front lines of the trade war which saw Trump last year slap tariffs of up to 50 percent on some Canadian goods, including logging equipment and some wood products.

Many logging operations in the nation's most heavily-forested state are suffering, and cross-border tourism has tanked. Households already struggling with fuel prices are seeing costs of



A sign welcoming Canadian people is seen near the US-Canada border in Madawaska, Maine on October 14, 2026.

living soar, an issue dominating the midterms.

Ahead of the November 3 vote to decide who controls the U.S. Congress, tensions are up in the port-of-entry town of Fort Kent and Maine's other border stations where two million Americans and Canadians cross every year.

"We're worried they hate us," a Maine retiree sitting with friends told AFP in Fort Kent, as she nodded towards Canada, visible across the Saint John River.

- 'Ripple' effect -

Figures show the economic pain has already arrived and is "far-reaching," according to Garrett Martin, president of the nonpartisan Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP). Because Maine shares "a long history with Canada, and intertwined both family and business relationships, I think there are a lot of ways in which we are potentially being hurt even more" by the tariff impact, Martin told AFP.

Canadian visits to Maine plunged 43 percent in the tariffs' first year, depressing shop sales and tax revenue, he said.

And in Maine's \$8-billion forest-related industry, "we're seeing cost increases ripple through," with some logging operations shrinking or shuttering altogether, Martin said.

Logging has been in a slump for years, with eight pulp and paper mills closing in Maine since 2012, according to Dana Doran, executive director of the

Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC).

Now tariffs on trucks, logging equipment, parts and wood products are sending prices "up 30 to 50 percent across the board," Doran told AFP.

High diesel costs have only darkened the scenario.

- 'Friction' -

For two centuries, Canadian mills near Maine have processed vast amounts of its timber.

The border communities are linked through business and families, but "the tariff conversation I think has added friction to that situation, which is unfortunate," Doran said.

Canada, by far Maine's top trading partner, retaliated against Washington in September with tariffs of 25-50 percent on U.S. lumber, wood furniture and more.

Maine-based companies, particularly producers of hardwood, "rely heavily on those Canadian markets," Doran said.

Not all Maine loggers are upset. Pleasant River Lumber Company is producing 110 million board feet of softwood lumber per year at its main sawmill in Enfield and aims to expand production. □

U.S. told Venezuela weeks ago Machado should be able to return 'unperturbed': Rubio

Washington, United States

U.S. officials told authorities in Caracas weeks ago that Venezuela's opposition leader Maria Corina Machado should be able to return to her country without problems, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Monday.

His comments came a day after Machado landed in Caracas following almost a year in exile, and she attracted jubilant crowds in a challenge to the US-backed government.

Asked about the timing of her return, Rubio told reporters that "weeks and weeks ago, we spoke to the interim authorities." Washington explained

that Machado "should be allowed to return unperturbed" to her home country, he added.

"They told us that she could fly into the airport if she wanted to, and we communicated that to her team," Rubio said.

He added that the only time he discouraged her from going was right after devastating earthquakes in June, with efforts focused on getting relief aid into the South American country.

Machado's return puts Venezuela's most influential opposition figure back at the center of the country's tumultuous politics. She left home soil last De-

cember to receive the Nobel Peace Prize after nearly a year in hiding, and since then made at least seven unsuccessful attempts to return, according to sources in her party.

During this period, president Nicolas Maduro was captured in an extraordinary U.S. military operation. His deputy Delcy Rodriguez took over as interim leader with Washington's blessing. As U.S.-backed talks on a political transition took place, Machado had been forced to observe from exile in Panama.

A senior State Department official said the aim is to have a new Supreme Court by the end of this year, while the National

Electoral Council also has to be reformed.

Without these two steps, the official said, Venezuela will have challenges con-

ducting a credible election.

On Monday, Rodriguez called Machado's surprise return a "show." □



Venezuelan opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Corina Machado greets supporters upon her arrival in Caracas on October 25, 2026.

Oscar hopeful 'La Bola Negra' offers lessons about communicating, directors say

Los Angeles, United States
Festival darling "La Bola Negra" ("The Black Ball"), now leading many Oscars predictions lists, retraces the tragic past of Spain, but its subject matter is more relevant than ever, its co-directors say.
Javier Ambrossi and Javier Calvo, collectively known as "Los Javis," have wowed critics and filmgoers with their sweeping queer epic telling the interconnected stories of three gay men over multiple generations.

"It's a film about the danger of lack of communication... which really can lead us into horrible situations," Ambrossi, 42, said in an interview with AFP.

"I think we need to talk, not only in our country, but I believe it's quite a global issue. We live in an increasingly interconnected world of mobile networks, yet we make less and less effort to understand one another." The film stars rising talents Guitarricadelafuente, Miguel Bernardeau, Milo Quifes and Carlos Gon-



(L-R) Javier Ambrossi, and Javier Calvo seen onstage during "La Bola Negra" BAFTA Screening at AMC Century City 15 on October 18, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

zalez alongside veterans Penelope Cruz and Glenn Close in featured roles.

The movie, out in select U.S. theaters, begins in 1932 in Granada, amidst the tensions that ultimately led to the Spanish Civil War before winding through history to wrap up in 2017 in

modern-day Madrid. Early inspiration for the movie came from an unpublished play written by poet Federico Garcia Lorca, who was executed by fascist forces at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

"We had to dig deeply into

all the material, into Federico's works, into Federico's poems," the 35-year-old Calvo said.

He explained he went so far as to memorize some of Lorca's poems and letters in order to better understand the writer, and perhaps guess how the play might have ended if he

had finished it.
"Whenever I felt lost... I went back to read the books, reading them over and over," Calvo added.

- Oscars buzz -

The film's first thread, which comes directly from Lorca's work, follows Carlos (Quifes), who has been rejected from a social club in Granada in southern Spain for being gay, through a voting system using black and white balls.

As conflict erupts, the action moves to a small town where young trumpeter Sebastian (Guitarricadelafuente) finds himself co-opted by Francisco Franco's rebels.

Sebastian is ordered to watch over prisoner Rafael (Bernardeau), a Republican who is inspired by Lorca's real-life partner.

Los Javis use the stories to tell the tale of a brutal war that divided Spain and left deep scars, and the story of the joys and hardships of ordinary men turned into soldiers.

"It was a war that ultimately involved everyone, and everyone was affected," said Guitarricadelafuente, who has generated Oscars buzz for his performance.

The war is "still a ghost that appears from time to time," added the actor and singer, who is one of the composers of "La Nieve" ("The Snow") from the film's soundtrack, which could be an Oscar contender for best original song.

For Bernardeau, who is Spanish, the film offered him a chance to study his own country's history without the "bias" found in classrooms.

"It helped me develop a critical perspective, much as Rafael had, and to understand the significance of events at that time: the weight of the tragedy, the weight of war, the reality of the deaths but also hope," he told AFP.

The film wraps up in 2017, when Alberto, a young historian, unearths a family secret.□

Nelson's erotic dream letter features in London auction

London, United Kingdom
A huge trove of Horatio Nelson's letters, in which the British naval commander fantasises about his lover, Emma Hamilton, plans battles and scrawls after losing an arm, is expected to fetch millions at auction in London.
The pre-eminent vice-admiral, who achieved victories against revolutionary France and Napoleon but

was killed in the Battle of Trafalgar, was a prolific letter writer despite losing an arm and part of his vision in battles.

A British businessman who admired him, Clive Richards, spent decades collecting some 400 letters and other historic documents now on sale at Sotheby's with an estimate of £4 to £6 million (\$5.3 to

\$8M).
"It's an absolutely astonishing collection and I think what really distinguishes it is that it captures every aspect of Nelson's life and career," said Sotheby's books and manuscripts specialist Gabriel Heaton. Scandalously, Nelson lived openly with his lover, society beauty Hamilton, though both were married, and their letters make clear their devotion. By contrast, a message to his wife says he is too busy to write often.

Hamilton kept Nelson's love letters, many on display at Sotheby's until the closing date for bids on November 18.

In one written at sea in 1800, Nelson says: "last night I did nothing but dream of you", recounting how she embraced him and whispered "I love nothing but you my

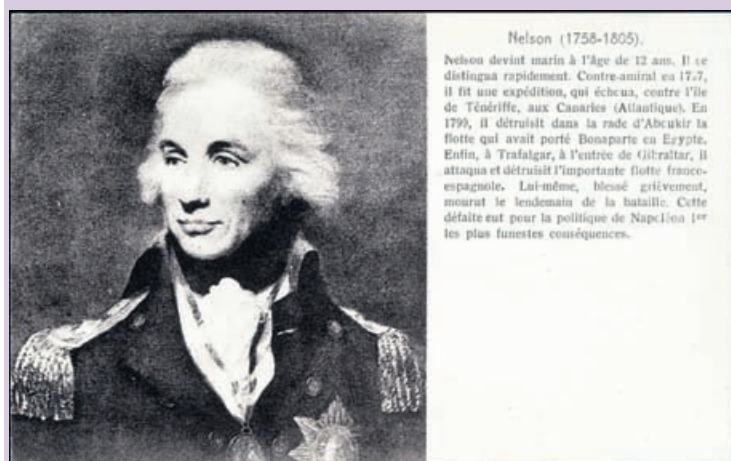
Nelson", after which he kissed her "fervently" and "we enjoy'd the height of love".

This letter was sold by Christie's in 2003 for nearly £120,000.

After a victory in Copenhagen in 1801, soon after Emma gave birth to his child, Nelson wrote he was "very tired after a hard fought Battle" but still managed to compose a short love poem.

Nelson had to learn to write with his left hand after his right arm was shattered by a musket in 1797; in one letter soon after the injury, he apologises before the words tail off and his wife takes over.

"You can see he's struggling. You know, he's actually forming the letters quite clearly, but it's hard, hard work," Heaton told AFP.□



Portrait of Admiral Horatio Nelson.

Botanists comb Gabon's rich rainforests with nature on the line

Libreville, Gabon

Each year, Gabon's lush rainforests yield the discovery of previously unknown plant species to botanists like Archange Boupoya who believes that this exceptional yet largely mysterious natural wealth needs cataloguing to save.

"We cannot preserve that which we do not understand," said Boupoya, the director of the Sibang botanical garden, a sliver of tropical forest in the heart of the capital Libreville, brimming with orchids snaking up metal columns or floating down from the shaded canopy.

"So we're continuing still today to identify this biodiversity so that we can save it." Together with a thirty-some-strong team of fellow botanists, Boupoya strives to make Sibang a sort of "museum of plants" for his central African country, 88 percent of which is still covered in jungle.

Understanding and protecting rare and exceptional species -- a key theme of the United Nations' COP17 conference on biodiversity which opened on Monday in Armenia is both their life's work and a monumental task.

"Unlike countries that are well-known botanically, like in Europe and Asia, Gabon remains very little



Archange Boupoya, botanist and director of the Gabon Herbarium, poses for a photograph at the Sibang Arboretum in Libreville on October 15, 2026.

understood," he explained despite the importance of the country's forests for the whole planet.

- Ten new species a year -

For Gabon is part of the Congo Basin, considered the Earth's second "green lung" after the Amazon rainforest, and a key natural sponge for absorbing planet-warming CO2.

Swathes of the country are carpeted with impassable jungles, with roads lacking. "Each year, while conducting botanical surveys, we discover an average of 10 new species," said Bou-

poya. According to the director, botanists believe that the country is home to between 7,000 and 10,000 known plant species, of which around one-tenth are under threat.

As part of a four-decade partnership with scientists from the Missouri Botanical Garden in the United States, teams from Sibang "will go into the forest for two or three weeks, collecting plants before oven-drying them", Boupoya explained. After being meticulously documented in Gabon, botanists from the United States, Britain, France and

Belgium are drafted into the work of identifying the samples.

For those as-yet unidentified species, the researchers have to offer a full description before having their discovery recognised by the international scientific community.

- 'Guarantee their survival' -

A few kilometers from the botanical garden, the 100,000 or so plants that make up the institution's collection -- whose oldest sample dates back to 1880 are stored in alphabetical order in imposing metal

cabinets at the headquarters of the national parks agency.

This precious archive of Gabon's flora was transferred here after having escaped the fire that ravaged the collection's former site, at the entrance of the botanical garden, in the middle of the country's post-election violence of 2016.

The cabinets house a record of a biodiversity under threat, especially from creeping urbanization, industrialization, deforestation, mining and the fossil fuel-rich country's oil industry.

"We've plants here that we're trying to preserve to guarantee their survival," Boupoya said as he passed a series of aquatic plant specimens pickled in alcohol for posterity.

- 'Much to explore' -

One such family of aquatic plants, the Podostemaceae, which resemble mosses and grow near waterfalls, are among the species threatened. Some of them have only been discovered recently.

But one of their habitats is threatened with destruction by the Kinguele hydroelectric dam, around 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the capital, whose construction is set to be completed within weeks. □

China condemns U.S. designation of Confucius Institutes as threat

Beijing, China

China accused the United States on Monday of "targeted smearing" over Washington's designation of Beijing-funded Confucius Institute cultural centres as national security threats.

Washington considers the centres on American university campuses as propaganda tools of the Chinese Communist Party and has imposed funding restrictions on the institutes since 2025.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said on Friday his department had dismantled dozens of similar organisations over two months that had reappeared in disguise, "using

different names... but with the same mission" and deemed them a threat to national security. China's foreign ministry criticised the move on Monday.

"We oppose the targeted smearing and stigmatisation of Confucius Institutes," ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said at a news conference.

"China-U.S. educational exchanges and cooperation are beneficial to enhancing mutual understanding between the people of both countries," he said, adding that such ties "should not be interfered with or undermined". China has set up hundreds

of Confucius Institutes in more than 150 countries over the last two decades, according to the body that oversees them.

Presented as China's answer to organisations such as Germany's Goethe-Institut or the British Council, they offer language lessons and cultural exchange programmes.

While Chinese leader Xi Jinping has called them a "symbol of China's unremitting efforts for world peace and international cooperation", the cultural centres have faced increasing resistance around the world.

Dozens of Confucius Institutes have closed down in



24 October 2025, China, Peking: Guo Jiakun, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, answers questions from journalists at the Foreign Ministry's daily press conference.

several countries following similar accusations of foreign interference including

in France, Sweden, Australia and Canada. □

Sri Lankan turbine project fuels anger as fish hauls plunge

Sri Lanka

Beneath rotating wind turbines on Sri Lanka's Mannar peninsula, a fishing net is hauled up the beach by tractor winches and 20 men, but once again the catch is meagre.

"I've been fishing here since I was a boy," said Venkatasamy Kalimuthu, 65, looking disappointedly at the catch - a few good fish, some small fry, and several clumps of seaweed.

"Before the wind turbines were installed, we caught a lot of fish," he added. "Now, much less."

Since they appeared six years ago, the Mannar wind turbines have been blamed for a host of problems from dwindling catches to floods, fuelling opposition to green energy projects as fuel costs soar.

Local residents are determined to see them dismantled or, at the very least, prevent more from being built.

The opposition comes as war in the Middle East sends fuel and electricity costs soaring, making the shift to renewable energy an economic imperative. Although he admits he has no proof, Kalimuthu is convinced the spinning blades are driving fish away.



This photograph taken on October 3, 2026 shows a fisherman showing his catch at a beach near a wind power plant in Sri Lanka's Mannar Peninsula.

ning blades are driving fish away.

"When the fans rotate, the shadow falls on the water," he said. "So the fish don't swim up to the shallows."

His colleagues agree, also blaming the turbines as well as competition from Indian trawlers.

- 'Toilets overflow' -

"We are not opposed to renewable energy in principle," said Lesley Jesurajan, a leading figure in the local civil society group OPEnE.

"But not here. There are plenty of other places to install wind turbines."

Owned by state utility Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB), the turbines line a narrow strip of sand exposed to winds sweeping across the gulf between Sri Lanka and India.

The first phase 30 turbines with a combined capacity of 104 megawatts joined the grid in 2020, and construction on another 14 has begun.

A third phase of 52 turbines

had been awarded to Indian conglomerate Adani, but the government cancelled the contract in 2025 after a dispute over the price per kilowatt-hour. Even the first phase has fuelled anger.

Benedict Mary Vijiliya's village, around 100 metres (330 feet) from the coast, is surrounded by wind turbines.

She claims concrete foundations and trenches for access roads have prevented rainwater from

draining towards the sea. "During the monsoon rains, the water comes up to our waists and the toilets overflow," complains Vijiliya, president of the Women's Rural Development Society (WRDS), showing photographs on her phone of her home submerged under about a metre of water.

"We never had experienced that before 2020. Our homes are damaged, our cattle and our crops are affected, our livelihood is impacted and we can't even drink the water of our well anymore".

- 'Cheating people' -

In neighbouring Pesalai, fishing incomes have plummeted, said A. Stanislas Peries, head of the local fishermen's cooperative.

"Before, people could earn up to 5,000 rupees (\$15) a day from fishing. Now they barely make more than 1,000. Things have become very difficult."

Energy Minister Anura Kumaranatilleke said he had heard the complaints.

"We are carrying out feasibility studies," he said. "Once we implement this... the flood situation they are currently facing can be reduced." □

U.N. raises 'ethnic cleansing' concerns over Israel's Hebron operation

Geneva, Switzerland

Israel's military operation in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron, launched after a deadly attack by Palestinian gunmen, raises serious concerns of "ethnic cleansing", the United Nations warned Monday.

The municipality in Hebron, the Palestinian territory's largest city, said in a statement that 3,189 people had been forced from their homes by the ongoing operation.

It followed Friday's attack in which two Palestinian gunmen killed two soldiers at a checkpoint near the city, just days before Tuesday's Israeli elections. The gunmen were killed in a shootout.

Israeli troops entered the

Hebron neighborhood of Ein Deir Baha, where the two assailants lived, and ordered residents to pack up and leave.

Israel rejected the UN warning, with its foreign ministry on X calling it "not a human rights report but a propaganda document

detached from reality, aimed at undermining Israel's right to self-defense, delegitimizing the Jewish state, and legitimizing jihadist terrorism against its citizens".

UN rights chief Volker Turk said in a statement that Israel's "aggressive operation" has already resulted in the forcible displacement of thousands of Palestinians, "demolished homes and commercial property, and deprived residents of the ability to move freely". "The sweeping steps taken raise grave concerns of unnecessary and disproportionate use of force which must end," he said.

- 'Collective punishment' -

Turk said the lockdown was

confining many to their homes and immediate neighborhoods.

"Declarations by senior Israeli government officials indicate that the measures implemented are punitive in nature and designed to instil fear. This is unacceptable," said Turk.

"Those who have been displaced must be allowed to return home. Israel must ensure compensation and reparation for unlawful evictions and demolitions, and associated displacement."

"Collective punishment is a grave violation of international law. Threats to empty and erase entire neighborhoods also raise serious concerns of ethnic cleansing." □



Khaled Shawer AL Tamimi, 68, who was evicted alongside his family from Ein Deir Baha neighborhood by Israeli forces, poses for a picture with his grandson in Hebron, in the occupied West Bank on October 24, 2026.

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Traffic signs

(Oranjestad)—Though Aruba's traffic is relatively easy to manage, driving here—especially if it's your first time visiting—can be foreign. To help you out, here's a breakdown of some traffic signs you might encounter on the road.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebou-

wde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out. Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates

that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide



to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive over-

view of all traffic signs used on Aruba. □

Picture credits:
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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 histori-

cal 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 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

Natural Bridge

One of Aruba's favorite tourist attractions is the Natural Bridge. For thou-

sands 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 bridges 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 leaves from the St. Theresta church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed. The grotto is located road-side and can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location. □





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at your doorstep. Ideally positioned for exploring the island's southern coastline, Nanki Beach offers convenient access to the famous

Baby Beach and the beautiful Rodgers Beach.

Beyond the beaches, Nanki Beach is perfect for those

who love the outdoors, appreciate authentic local experiences, and want to connect with Aruba's culture. Located near San

Nicolas, the island's vibrant cultural hub, residents can discover local art, colorful murals, authentic cuisine, and the welcoming spirit of the community.

Whether you are looking for a vacation home, a personal retreat, or a real estate opportunity in a distinctive location, Nanki Beach Aruba offers a compelling combination of exclusivity, natural beauty, and authentic island living.

Nanki Beach Aruba is more than a place to own property. It is an opportunity to experience Aruba differently. Don't miss out; only 9 units left. □



(Oranjestad)—Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots you can explore. So take your snorkeling gear and visit some of these top places for underwater exploration.

Tres Trapi

'Tres Trapi' means three steps in Papiamentu. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by a tiny stairway carved into the rocky coastline. Tres Trapi is a small beach, located on the north-western side of the island, an approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you walk right into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While you're snorkeling, you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean Sea and

Aruba's underwater wonderland

if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animals, keep your distance and just enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken WWII ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes,

but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach is a lagoon with crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Further in the lagoon, you'll find a lot of people snorkeling. This is an excellent spot to go under water exploring—but do take care not to go too far out; outside the lagoon the waves can be pretty rough! In the lagoon there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will

find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. The main entrance to reach the beach is through a small bridge that takes you through the mangrove trees. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, accompanied with wooden stairs built to allow easy access to the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you'll find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is snorkel heaven. □

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David and Cindy Adams are celebrating their 30th consecutive visit to Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—Friends of Aruba, David and Cindy Adams, have recently reached out to Aruba Today to tell us about their long-time connection to the island. This year, they've been recognized by the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) for 30 years of consecutive visits to Aruba!

Over the years they have met many beautiful people and have watched generations of families on the island. The friends they have now are considered their extended family, and they keep in touch until they visit again. They also hold close to their heart the friends who they've lost over the years. "They will never

be forgotten; they are as much loved when we de-planed as the ones we still meet each year."

During the last 30 years, David and Cindy have formed a special bond with locals and the hard working staff at the hotel at which they own a time-share. "We have shared so much together: family milestones, everyday life moments, dinners, parking lot chats, a cup of coffee, a smile, a wave." To them, Aruba is a chapter in their life that means more than they can express.

Their children have also been part of their Aruban "dream". One of them,

their son Bryan, even owns his own time-share week. Recently, Bryan's son, Bryson, also received an honoring from the ATA for visiting the island for 10 consecutive years. "This day was a very proud moment for David and I; 30 years for us and 10 years for one of our grandchildren. We are so blessed and honored to be a part of this wonderful Island."

Congrats to David, Cindy and Bryan for their recognition. We are always glad to hear how much our readers' love Aruba; we love our tiny home and it makes us happy to hear you love it too! □



(Oranjestad)—Aruba has a very diverse fauna. Many know the burrowing owl 'Shoco' or the native rattlesnake 'Cascabel', but did you know that Aruba is also home to a small frog specie we call Dori? Rarely

spotted around the island, this little frog is recognizable by two inguinal poison glands on its rear that resemble eyes. The Dori is also known as the Colombian four-eyed frog.

The Aruban native frog 'Dori'

Scientifically classified as *Pleurodema brachyops*, the Dori is a protected animal on Aruba and can also be found in Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Panama and Venezuela. Though ephemeral or permanent pools are essential for breeding, you can encounter a Dori far from a fresh water source. However, fresh water continues to be important for their survival, so you won't see much of them during Aruba's dry seasons.

The Dori was at one point the only amphibian on the island, until the invasive Sapo (marine toad) was

introduced around 1960. According to some sources, these species can be accidentally introduced through importation of soil or pre-planted trees.

The Dori population on Aruba is dwindling, so it's highly important to conserve their existence by protecting their habitats (like wetlands).

A recognizable feature of the Dori is its poison glands on its rear. When threatened, Dori lowers its head and raises its rear end. The poison glands of it rise back towards the predator. The glands can look like a set of eyes, causing the pred-

ator to confuse the Dori as a larger animal.

If this doesn't work, Dori straightens out its back legs to reveal the vibrant orange coloration in an attempt to startle the predator. If the hungry creature decides to take a bite out of the frog, it ends up with a mouthful of poison.

Before the current banknotes of the Aruban florin were introduced in 2019, the Dori was featured on the 100 florin banknotes from 1990 to 2019.

Sources: Etnia Nativa and Ms. Yesenia Arends on Facebook.

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



ORANJESTAD—Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Pineapple

Pineapple has more uses than topping it on your Christmas ham. According to elders, the skin of a pineapple is great to use to re-



fresh your body. Clean the skin thoroughly and make tea or warapa* with it. It is said that this tea can also be drank after an operation on the ovaries or uterus. This gets rid of irritation and inflammation.

Arrowroot

Arrowroot is native to tropical America and can be sold as a powder or whole. It is said that you can take arrowroot powder and make a "shalup" (porridge) for stomach pain or when you're feeling weak. You can make it with milk too, but it is advised to best use just water. You can also add prunes for a bit of sweetness. Arrowroot sha-

lup is also good to treat an unhealthy gut or for diarrhea.

To make arrowroot shalup, boil a bit of water and add one tablespoon of arrowroot powder and stir continuously until you reach porridge consistency. If you make a shalup with milk, add a pinch of salt. Raw arrowroot powder can be used to powder babies.

Eggplant/Aubergine

Eggplants, or aubergines, are easy to find in supermarkets around the world and can be grown all year round on the island. Related to potato and tomato, eggplants are good to calm nerves. It can also be used to lower blood pressure, by steeping its leaves in boiled water and drinking it. You can also make eggplant juice to help purify your blood. However, do make sure to drink slowly;



let it mix with your spit and then swallow.

Eggplant kataplan* can also be used to treat skin tumors, abscesses and hemorrhoids. Eggplant kataplan can also be used externally to treat arthritis.

*warapa: term referring to a water and sugar solution, a.k.a simple syrup.

*kataplan: porridge-like mixture used externally for wounds or parts of the body that are painful or swollen. □

Know more about the Town Hall Eloy Arends building

The Monuments bureau shares some essential facts about the Town Hall known as the Eloy Arends building. The aim is to educate the community about the mansion's construction, history, and preservation.

The Doctor Eloy Arends building is located at the Wilhelminastraat 8 and was the home of the Arends family. It was the first building that the Monuments bureau, and the Government of Aruba, restored in 1997. Mr. Medardo 'Dada' Picus, was the architect of this Aruban-Caribbean building. The building sits on a 1.545 m² plot of land and is a typical Aruban mansion. It is an open home with false walls that allow the connection of the rooms with each other.

The entrance has large doors and columns supporting the floor of the upper balcony. In between the columns, there are decoration details made out of wood. The elaborately detailed embel-



ishment is known as gingerbread trim and the triangular decorative wall surface over the columns is called the tympanum.

The top of the doors and windows have stained glass.

The building is not built on

ground level but at approximately 1.5 meters above ground level. This mansion elevation created storage below the wooden floors and allowed proper ventilation.

The building has lots of windows which allow plenty of light inside, as well as good

ventilation.

It has dormer windows and crowns on the outside part of the roof and different decorations on the edges of the walls and facade.

This is a stunning building full of beautiful details that resemble its beauty and

transform into a history of love. Aruban tradition for "well-to-do" families dictates that before a man gets married, he has to present his future wife with a newly built and fully furnished house. It was certainly the case with this building.

Due to the engagement between Eloy Arends and Monica Lacle (daughter of Adriaan Lacle, who is mainly known for the boulevard that bears his name), the construction of the mansion began in 1922 and was completed in 1925 when the couple got married.

The Office of the Civil Registry is located in the adjacent building, whereas the mansion hall is used exclusively for civil wedding ceremonies.

The Monuments bureau will continue to contribute and educate the community about the history of our monuments with significant value for Aruba. □

Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost

Aruban fruits and vegetables

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

Mispel



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

Kenepa



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

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



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

Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods



characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

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

Concomber chiquito



This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Concomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba

is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu



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

Pampuna



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

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1. Doles (out)
47. Be patient for

6. Croc's cousin
11. Banish
12. Barcelona buddy
13. Prairie State capital

15. Weed whacker
16. Dict. entry
17. Spot
18. Beaver State capital

20. Kiss
23. Crunch's cousin
27. Skating group
28. Leia's brother

29. Make sense
31. Door sign
32. Gem State capital

34. Reggae kin
37. Recipe amt.
38. Descriptive wd.
41. Sunshine State capital

44. Poet T.S.
45. Manicure targets
46. "I agree!"

DOWN

1. Netlike fabric
2. Trade show
3. Bike part
4. Yale rooter
5. "In the Night Kitchen" author

6. Blunders
7. French friend
8. Binds
9. Look lewdly
10. Took the bus

14. Salon stuff
18. Wash vigorously
19. "Winnie-the-Pooh" author

20. Mudbath site
21. Fuming
22. Help out
24. Chiding sound
25. Luau instrument

26. For each
30. Fries source
31. Sevilla's nation
33. Kinda: Suffix

34. Rose part
35. Healthy green
36. Stepped down
38. China setting
39. Sub spot

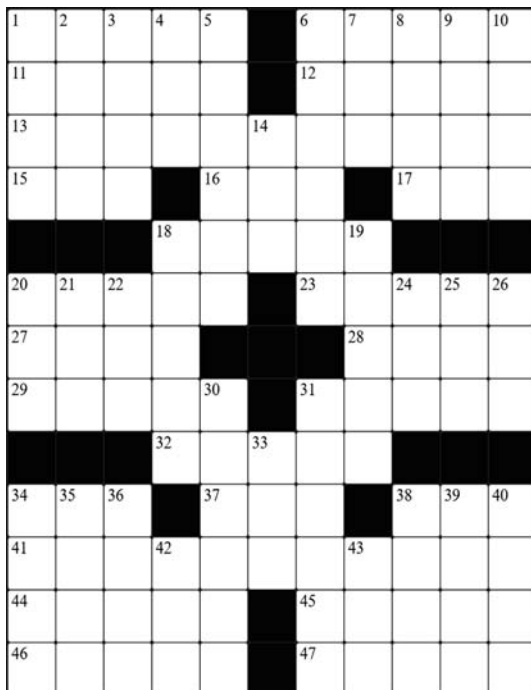
40. Witty remark
42. Brit's bathroom
43. Carpentry tool

44. Rose part
45. Healthy green
46. Stepped down
47. China setting
48. Sub spot



Yesterday's answer

author
20. Mudbath site
21. Fuming
22. Help out
24. Chiding sound
25. Luau instrument
26. For each
30. Fries source
31. Sevilla's nation
33. Kinda: Suffix



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.

10-26 CRYPTOQUOTE

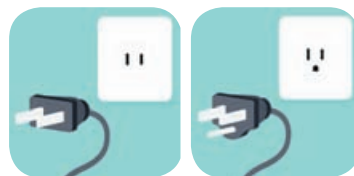
VLGVAIY DT Z MZRRIRHFZM!

YIUIYAIYZGDJX DJ SO AVKO

OIZY-YVHJK. --- FVMJ JDL MVRT
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IT LOOKED LIKE THE WORLD WAS COVERED IN A COBBLER CRUST OF BROWN SUGAR AND CINNAMON --- SARAH ADDISON ALLEN

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

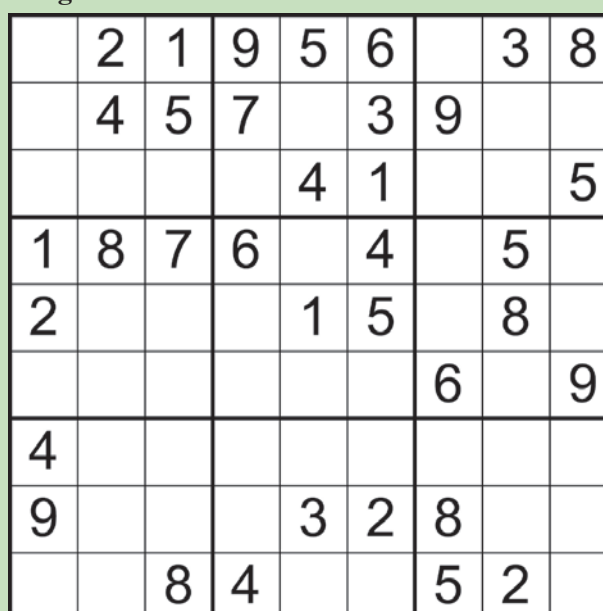
Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



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



Difficulty: ★★

10/27

Answer to previous puzzle



Difficulty: ★

10/26

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New space object 'black hole star' discovered by astronomers

Paris, France

Astronomers announced Wednesday they had discovered a new type of astronomical object called a "black hole star", potentially solving a mystery involving strange red dots spotted in the early universe.

The object looks like a star the size of our solar system, but produces 100 billion times more energy than any star a mighty blast of power closer to what is produced by a black hole. The black hole star, which dates from 660 million years after the Big Bang, was spotted by a US-led team of astronomers using the James Webb Space Telescope, according to a study published in the journal Nature.

Since history's most powerful telescope went online in 2022, it has been spotting many extremely bright cosmic objects dubbed "little red dots" in the early universe that have baffled scientists.

"What exactly these objects are has been one of the most debated topics of the JWST era," lead study author Rohan Naidu of Hawaii University said in a statement.

The team had been trying to find clues for a different mystery: why JWST keeps finding bright galaxies in the universe's infancy, when it was thought to have been too early for them to have become so huge.

But while looking through the images, they spotted a little red dot.

'Pure black hole star light'

"When we see something very red in the universe, we often assume that it is surrounded by dust, like soot or ash," said Robert Simcoe, a study co-author from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"The same way that the wildfire smoke from Canada recently made the sky in Boston look bright red, astronomical objects can also appear redder than their intrinsic colour when you see them through a



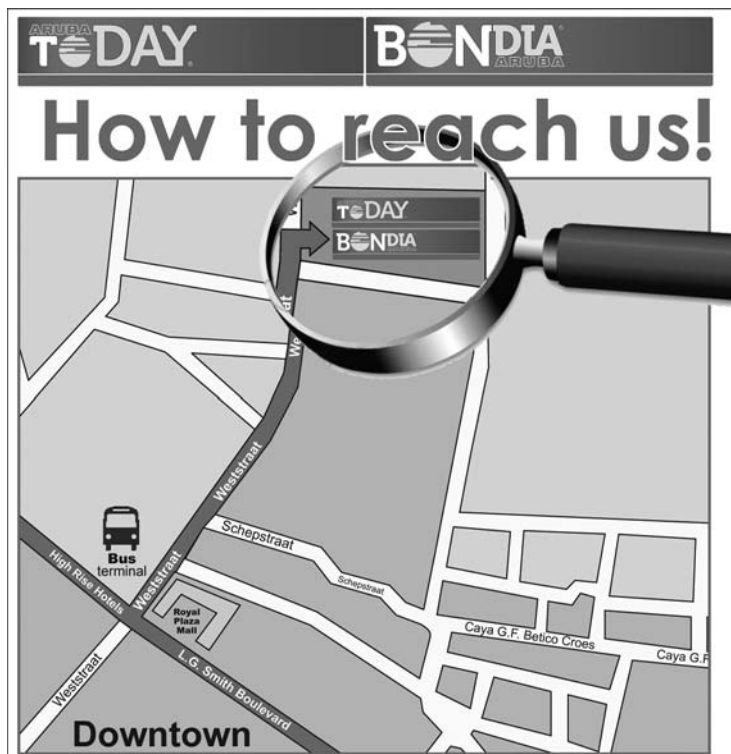
NGC 3521 is a spiral galaxy, nicknamed the Bubble Galaxy, located in the constellation Leo, about 35-40 million light-years from Earth.

veil of dust," he added. However when the team sifted through their data, they found that at certain wavelengths, the object's light simply disappeared. To their surprise, this suggested that it is not dust making this object appear red it is hydrogen gas. This explained the object's colour, but not how it could be pumping out so much energy.

"You can't be powering this by nuclear fusion, which is the energy source that sits at the heart of all the stars," Naidu explained.

Using modelling simulations, they determined the most likely scenario was that the object is powered by a central black hole surrounded by a cocoon of gas that makes it resemble a star. The team named the object MoM-BH*-1. The BH and asterix is for black hole star and the number one suggests they believe there are more out there. "Every little red dot is consistent with being a black hole star," Naidu said. "What is special about MoM-BH*-1 is, the black hole star is essentially com-

pletely outshining its surrounding host galaxy, such that we're seeing pure black hole star light." □



ARUBA TODAY

Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

From Carnegie to Claude: AI wealth could reshape philanthropy

Washington, United States

A wave of American wealth created by artificial intelligence companies could produce some of the largest charitable sums since the era of Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, raising questions about where the money goes.

Anthropic, the maker of the Claude chatbot, has said it would commit 5 percent of its shares to a new Anthropic Public Benefit Fund, a stake that could be worth around \$100 billion if the company reaches the \$2 trillion valuation investors are eyeing for a stock market debut expected as early as November.

Combined with pledges by its seven co-founders to give away 80 percent of their equity and a program matching employees' donations, Anthropic says roughly a fifth of its shares will be dedicated to public-benefit purposes.

"This might be one of the biggest stories in corporate philanthropy ever," said Michael Moody, a professor of philanthropic studies at Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthro-



Elon Musk reacts after being awarded the National Medal of Science during the "Golden Age of American Innovation Summit" at the Institute of Peace in Washington, DC, on October 8, 2026.

py.

The OpenAI Foundation, the nonprofit that controls ChatGPT maker OpenAI, holds a 26 percent stake in the company that was valued at about \$130 billion when it was restructured a year ago, more than the endowment of the Gates Foundation.

Nan Ransohoff of payments firm Stripe has de-

scribed the moment as a "third wave" of American philanthropy, after the industrial fortunes of the late 19th century and the internet billionaires of recent decades.

- 'Dies disgraced' -

Carnegie argued in his 1889 essay "The Gospel of Wealth" that "the man who dies thus rich dies dis-

graced," and by his death had given away the bulk of his fortune, about \$350 million.

Carnegie transferred what remained into a trust, which has continued to make grants for more than a century.

Rockefeller's money built universities and funded medical research and public health campaigns

around the world.

Railroad magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt gave comparatively little, apart from the \$1 million that founded the university bearing his name.

Anthropic is setting up its fund as a limited liability company that it wholly owns, rather than as a non-profit foundation, which must pay out a minimum share of its assets each year and file public tax returns.

"The trade-off is that decision-making stays with the company and transparency is voluntary," said Sarah Wolfolds, who studies non-profit organizations at Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business.

Anthropic has said the fund's equity will not be used for lobbying or political giving and that it will report on its activities.

- 'Where the money is' -

Many Anthropic founders and staff have close ties to effective altruism, a movement that favors causes such as AI safety and global health because of their measurable impact.

"Nonprofits tend to reorient their programs toward where the money is," Wolfolds said, warning that other causes can become neglected.

Moody said the philanthropic world would be "looking closely at which causes they support," including whether research funding is limited to AI.

Laura McGarry, of fundraising consultancy Graham-Pelton, said the charities best placed to benefit are those that already have relationships with the newly wealthy.

"It's really about values alignment," she said, adding that charities that court the newly rich only after their big payday risk looking transactional.

Effective altruism has shaped some donors' giving but has not "dramatically upset the apple cart," she said.

Anthropic has said the fund could make payments directly to groups affected by AI's impact on jobs, without giving details. □

Microsoft offers voluntary exit packages to 60,000 staff

San Francisco, United States

Microsoft is offering voluntary buyouts to about 60,000 employees, the company said on Monday, roughly a quarter of its workforce, as the tech giant seeks to cut costs while pouring money into artificial intelligence.

Staff on select teams in the United States, Canada,

India and Britain at vice president level and below will be eligible, a Microsoft spokesperson said, while some groups of employees, including some working on data centers, sales and marketing, are excluded.

"The Voluntary Exit Offer reflects an important part of how we're evolving our

approach to change: creating greater flexibility and, where possible, more ways for employees to shape their next chapter," Amy Coleman, an executive vice president and chief people officer, told employees in a memo.

It's the second voluntary buyout offer that Microsoft has offered employees this year.

In April, the company reportedly offered around seven percent of its US workforce the option to retire early. Around 30 percent of those eligible took the voluntary retirement plan, according to CNBC. Microsoft had 223,000 employees globally at the end of June, down from 228,000 at the end of 2025, according to regulatory filings.

Around 27 percent of Microsoft's workforce is eligible for the new buyout

offer.

The company is expected to report quarterly earnings later this week.

-Tech layoffs-

As major tech giants continue to spend heavily on AI-related investments, concerns persist about the impact of the technology on jobs.

Even industry insiders, such as Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, have warned of mass job losses.

Netflix will reportedly cut around 6 percent of its workforce, or 1,000 jobs, US media reported last week.

Auction site eBay laid off 1,000 employees earlier this month, adding to a previous round earlier this year which impacted 800 jobs.

In May, Meta laid off around 10 percent of its global workforce, impacting around 8,000 employees. □



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



Patrick Mahomes #15 of the Kansas City Chiefs passes against the Seattle Seahawks during the fourth quarter at Lumen Field on October 25, 2026 in Seattle, Washington.

Chiefs and 49ers suffer first losses of NFL season, Vikings stay unbeaten

Los Angeles, United States

The Seattle Seahawks put on a defensive masterclass to hand the Kansas City Chiefs their first defeat of the NFL season on Sunday, winning 20-3, while the San Francisco 49ers also surrendered their perfect start to the Atlanta Falcons.

Seattle utterly stifled their former running back Kenneth Walker III, who won the Super Bowl last season with the Seahawks and had led the NFL this year with the Chiefs in rushing yards per game ahead of Sunday's clash.

He could only manage 36 rushing yards from 14 carries on his return to Lumen Field, as the Seattle defense collectively swarmed their opponents, sacking Patrick Mahomes once and forcing another interception.

"We just had the one mindset to go in and just disrupt," said Seahawks safety Nick Emmanwori, who rushed Mahomes to create a Ty Okada pick that led to a Seattle touchdown on the next drive.

The scoreline was the Chiefs' joint-lowest in a game Mahomes started.

Jaxon Smith-Njigba caught a looping 28-yard pass from Sam Darnold in the second quarter but was initially judged to have run

out-of-bounds, before a video review awarded the touchdown.

Walker's Seattle replacement Emanuel Wilson rushed 21 yards through a gap at the heart of the Chiefs' defense in the fourth quarter.

Harrison Butker missed two field goals on a chastening night for the high-flying Chiefs.

Meanwhile in Atlanta, Michael Penix threw for three touchdowns and the Falcons defense forced four turnovers in a 29-20 win over the 49ers.

Penix connected with tight end Nick Muse for a touchdown to keep the Falcons within striking distance in the first half and hit Kyle Pitts for a TD that put Atlanta ahead in the third quarter. He found Drake London with a 21-yard touchdown pass in the fourth.

"Too sloppy to win," 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan said.

- 'Proud' -

Those results left the Minnesota Vikings as the only remaining unbeaten team, holding the Indianapolis Colts scoreless in the second half in a 16-10 victory that saw them improve to 6-0.

Vikings quarterback Kyler Murray threw a five-yard touchdown pass to T.J. Hockenson early in

the fourth quarter and Will Reichard kicked a 52-yard field goal with 1:39 remaining.

Sunday's action kicked off in Paris, where Pittsburgh quarterback Aaron Rodgers threw for 212 yards and a milestone touchdown to lead the Steelers to a 16-10 victory over the New Orleans Saints in the league's first regular-season game in the French capital.

Rodgers hit Darnell Washington with a four-yard TD pass to give the Steelers a 10-3 lead late in the second quarter, his 540th regular-season touchdown pass moving him into solo third place on the all-time list ahead of Peyton Manning (539).

The Los Angeles Rams snapped a two-game skid in emphatic style, beating the Raiders 35-21 in Las Vegas.

Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford threw for 195 yards and three touchdowns, all in the first half. He became the franchise leader in scoring passes an honor Stafford also holds with the Detroit Lions.

"We've had some tough losses late in games this year, played good enough football to win games and hadn't gotten it done... proud of our resolve," said Stafford. □



Claire Pease of United States celebrates during an award ceremony of apparatus finals of women's floor in the 54th Artistic Gymnastics World Championships at Rotterdam Ahoy in Rotterdam, Netherlands on October 25, 2026.

Pease spins to floor gold as U.S. tops gymnastics medal table

Rotterdam, Netherlands

American teenagers Claire Pease and Reese Esponda reaped the reward of high-difficulty routines to take the top two places in the women's floor exercise Sunday on the final day of the World Gymnastics Championships in Rotterdam.

Their medals allowed the United States, who collected eight medals, three of them gold, to edge China for the top spot in the medal count.

China finished with seven medals including three golds, the last of them earlier Sunday when Zou Jingyuan continued his domination of the men's parallel bars.

In the women's floor event, the 17-year-old Pease scored 13.866. Esponda, also 17, was second 13.566, 0.010 off French 16-year-old Maiana Prat and Britain's Abigail Martin, the oldest of the quartet at 18, on a tie-break.

Prat, who had the lowest degree of difficulty, was awarded bronze because her execution score was better than Martin's.

The American women put on a spectacular show in Rotterdam, led by Skye Blakely, who won gold in the all-around and bronze on the uneven bars and vault. The Texan, a model of resilience, was the feel-good story of this week in the Netherlands.

She was forced to withdraw from the 2020 Olympic Games, held in 2021 in Tokyo, and the 2024 Paris Games, with injuries.

Zou was again untouchable on the bars.

The 28-year-old finished on 15.733 for his fifth world title in the event.

Illia Kovtun, who left his native Ukraine after the Russian invasion and represents Croatia, was a distant second on 14.900, just ahead of Russian Daniel Marinov, representing World Gymnastics, on 14.866.

On the beam, Algeria's Kaylia Nemour claimed her second gold in two days as she edged China's Zhang Qingying a tiebreak.

Brazil's Flavia Saraiva was third.

The 19-year-old Nemour finished tied with Zhang on 14.566 points.

Nemour rebounded with two golds after finishing fourth in Friday's all-around after errors on the vault and the uneven Bars.

After finishing close to tears on Friday, Nemour beamed as she received a standing ovation on Sunday. □

Doncic dominates for Lakers as James' Sixers fall to Pistons

Los Angeles, United States

Luka Doncic scored a monster 52 points as the Los Angeles Lakers maintained their perfect start to life after LeBron James with a 132-123 defeat of the Utah Jazz.

Now the undisputed superstar of the Lakers since James departed this summer for Philadelphia, Doncic also provided 10 assists and eight rebounds in a masterful performance, with eight three-pointers and two steals.

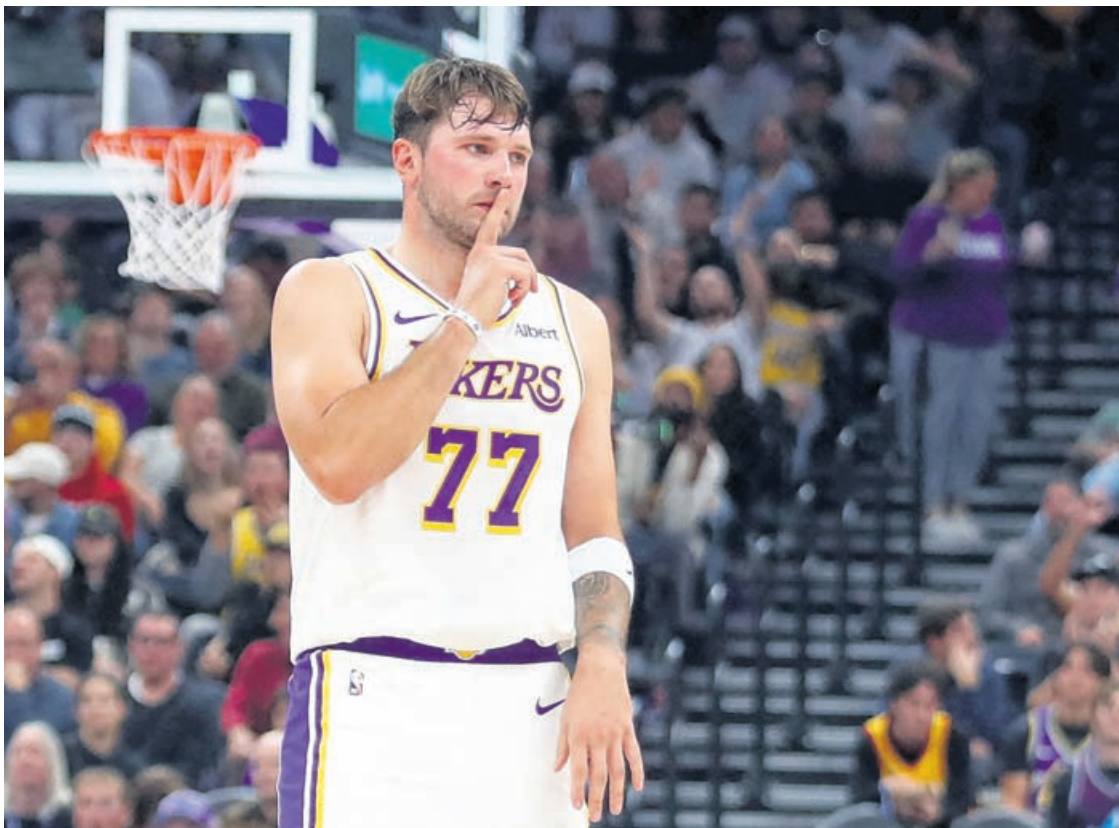
Doncic was supported by Austin Reaves, who had 29 points, as the visitors pulled decisively clear in the last four minutes of a game they had trailed for long periods.

"It's one of the best feelings down the stretch, tight game, hitting those threes," said Doncic.

"Played the basketball we know how to play. We are learning our lesson...we cannot start games like this any more."

It was the first 50-point game by an NBA player this season. Slovenian point guard Doncic was the league's top scorer last season.

After cruising to comfortable opening wins against



Luka Doncic #77 of the Los Angeles Lakers hushes the crowd after sinking a three pointer against the Utah Jazz during the second half of their game at the Delta Center on October 25, 2026 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

the Golden State Warriors and city rival Clippers, the Lakers overcame their first real adversity of the nascent season in Salt Lake City.

Utah led nearly the entire first half, pulling as many as 18 points clear, with Finland's Lauri Markkanen on scintillating form.

But the Lakers rallied. A

Doncic three-point pullup shot with seconds remaining in the second quarter gave Los Angeles a slender lead at the interval.

The Jazz had inched back in front with just over four minutes remaining, when another Doncic trey tied up the score 116-116.

From there Doncic and Reaves were relentless,

outscored the entire Jazz offense in the final quarter between them, as the new-look Lakers moved to a perfect 3-0 start.

"We have a tight group. I think everybody new that came, they feel very welcome here. That's what we want," said Doncic.

Meanwhile James' Philadelphia 76ers, who had

won all three of their opening games, fell 106-93 to the Detroit Pistons.

Detroit who topped the Eastern Conference last season led wire-to-wire, pulling 21 points clear in the second quarter.

Tyrese Maxey tried his best to drag the Sixers back into the contest with 18 points in the fourth quarter, but the Pistons weathered the storm and also moved to 3-0.

"We're just staying steady. We're not getting ahead of ourselves," said Cade Cunningham, who top-scored for Detroit with 26 points.

- 'Feel bad' -

Elsewhere, the New York Knicks lost their third straight game, falling 111-102 to the Orlando Magic despite Jalen Brunson's 28 points.

It is the worst start to a season by defending NBA champions since the Dallas Mavericks in 2011.

"The reality of it is, giving up 40 points in the fourth quarter is way too much... When you're not shooting the ball well, like we are, you got to figure out different ways to win the ball-game," said Knicks coach Mike Brown. □

Naomi Osaka could quit tennis if daughter asks her to

Tokyo, Japan

Former world number one Naomi Osaka cast doubt on her future Sunday saying she would consider quitting tennis if her three-year-old daughter asked her to.

The four-time Grand Slam champion from Japan

took 15 months away from the sport after the birth of her daughter Shai, before returning in 2023.

She is in Tokyo to play at the Pan Pacific Open this week and said becoming a mother had reshaped her priorities.

"I wouldn't say I'm part-

timing it but my entire day doesn't consist of that," said the 29-year-old, now ranked 19 in the world.

"It's tough, sometimes I look towards my future and I often wonder how long I'm going to play.

"Because if my daughter did say she didn't want me to travel as much, I'm not the type of person to ignore that."

Osaka also stepped away from tennis in 2021 to prioritise her mental health.

She said her "mindset is changing a lot" with age. "My daughter is my biggest priority," she said.

"I try my best to put as much energy as I can into tennis.

"If I think about it in certain ways, I'm really proud of where I am now because it's not like I can dedicate my entire time to the sport."

- Online abuse -

Osaka said juggling her duties as a player and a mother was something she was "figuring out little by little".

She also offered support to the American Coco Gauff, who said she had received an "insane" amount of racist abuse on the internet at this month's China Open.

World number five Gauff, who is Black, said the experience had been "kind of draining".

Osaka, whose mother is Japanese and father from Haiti, said "nobody should have to go through that".

"It's sad but I'm used to it on my end," she said.

"I feel like for me, I've dealt with that my entire career through decisions that I make that seem to make some people upset. It's tough."

Osaka said efforts made

by women's tennis governing body the WTA to combat social media abuse did not "ever seem to fully work all the way".

"I know that some people are like, OK, if it bothers you that much, stay off social media," said Osaka.

"But sometimes that's the best way to connect with your fans.

"From my end, what I do about it is I don't really go on social media at all."

Osaka is seeded seven in Tokyo and plays Italy's Jasmine Paolini in the first round.

World number one Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan and Philippines sensation Alexandra Eala are also competing.

Osaka said she was "not far off" refining her best form and was "optimistic for next year". □



Japan's Naomi Osaka attends a press conference during the Japan Open tennis tournament at the Ariake Coliseum in Tokyo on October 25, 2026.