



Top 3 shipwrecks to explore



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Turtle at Antilla Wreck Aruba
Credit: Serge Melki

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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Surging costs of living top U.S. voter concerns

Fort Lauderdale, United States

Soaring prices for gas, medicine and other cost of living essentials are pre-occupying Americans as they start to cast their ballots ahead of next week's midterm elections.

A whopping 84 percent of voters who have cast their ballots early listed the economy as their biggest concern this election cycle, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey.

Kyler Daugherty, a 43-year-old health care worker, summed up the sentiment as he filled up his gas tank in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"It's ridiculous. I mean, everything's gone up, from food to transportation to gas prices," he told AFP.

Fuel costs have skyrocketed around the world since the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran in February.

U.S. gas prices rose 9.1 percent in September alone, according to official figures, a headache for residents in a state like Florida, where most people rely on cars to get around.

"It affects transportation, it affects goods, it affects everything," Matthew Moore, a 63-year-old attorney, said after he cast his ballot early.



Gasoline and diesel prices are displayed on a sign outside a Speedster gas station in Los Angeles, California, on October 30, 2026.

"We transport a lot by truck. Air prices have gone up. My tickets home for Christmas have doubled since last year," he said.

- Broken promises -

U.S. President Donald Trump won reelection in 2024 in part because of his campaign promise to lower prices, which had also increased during the term of his predecessor Joe Biden. "I didn't believe that promise then and I probably won't continue to believe (it)," said Melissa Reer, a

49-year-old social worker worried by her car and home insurance costs.

"But I think there's a lot more changes have to happen before prices can go down," she said.

William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution think tank, said two of Trump's decisions this term have directly contributed to cost pressures: launching the war on Iran and slapping tariffs on trade partners.

"It's within the president's power to remove most

of the tariffs that he's imposed. It's within the president's power to end the war that he began," Galston told AFP.

For some voters, however, it's too late.

"My vote was cast based upon my feelings about how they've handled the stewardship that the voters have given them," said Michael Childs, 62.

The White House for its part insists that Trump's policies are revitalizing the US economy and making life more affordable for Ameri-

cans.

- Basic expenses -

But millions of households across the United States find it harder than ever to make ends meet.

"The financial hardship is creeping up in America, particularly the middle class," said Symeria Hudson, the CEO of United Way Miami, a non-profit non-partisan organization focused on improving the health, education and financial well-being of local communities.

United Way's ALICE metric which stands for an Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed person -- measures working people whose income does not cover basic expenses, such as food, housing and health care.

Nearly 41 percent of the 132 million households in the United States fall below the threshold.

"We continue to encourage those policymakers to really understand the data," Hudson told AFP.

Many U.S. voters are running out of ways to cut spending.

"I'm literally cutting back on certain meds because I'm like, 'I can't afford them.' I don't know what to do next," Daugherty said. □

U.S. midterm early voting hits record 48 million

Washington, United States

A record 47.9 million Americans have already voted in next week's US midterm elections, with participation surging in key battleground states and regis-

tered Democrats outpacing Republicans, figures showed Friday.

The University of Florida's Election Lab had recorded 47,922,669 early votes nationwide by midday, sur-

passing the previous midterm record of 45.9 million cast ahead of Election Day in 2022.

The surge is especially pronounced in states with fiercely contested Senate races that could determine control of the chamber during the final two years of President Donald Trump's presidency.

In Texas, more than six million people had voted early by Wednesday, according to official figures, with in-person turnout running around 50 percent ahead of the same stage in 2022. North Carolina's election board reported early voting up nearly 37 percent on the same point four years ago, while South Carolina surpassed its en-

tire 2022 early vote total on Monday, with five days of early voting still to go.

In Kansas, where Republican Senator Roger Marshall faces a tough re-election fight, advance ballots were running around two-thirds ahead of 2022 last week, according to the secretary of state's office. In states that record voters' party affiliation, registered Democrats have accounted for a substantially larger share of early ballots than Republicans.

Election Lab figures showed Democrats making up around 44 percent of early voters in those states, compared with 31 percent for Republicans and 25 percent for unaffiliated or minor-party voters.

University of Florida political scientist Michael McDonald, who oversees the Election Lab, has pointed to rising participation among Black and Hispanic voters in states that report racial and ethnic data, with particularly strong turnout in heavily Hispanic communities along the Texas-Mexico border.

In Georgia, where early in-person voting broke the state's midterm record on Thursday, women accounted for 56 percent of ballots cast by that day, compared with 44 percent for men.

"Georgians continue to head to the polls in record numbers because they trust the system," top elections official Brad Raffensperger said Thursday. □



Workers process absentee ballots for Detroit residents in the 2026 General Election at Huntington Place on October 30, 2026 in Detroit, Michigan.

Nvidia's web of AI bets: smart strategy or bubble risk?

New York, United States

Nvidia's \$3 billion investment in Meta's share sale, announced Tuesday, is the latest addition to a portfolio of stakes, loans and guarantees that has made the chip giant what some analysts describe as the central bank of the artificial intelligence boom.

The galaxy of deals has helped keep demand running high for Nvidia's processors, which power vast data centers around the world and are the central ingredient of the AI revolution.

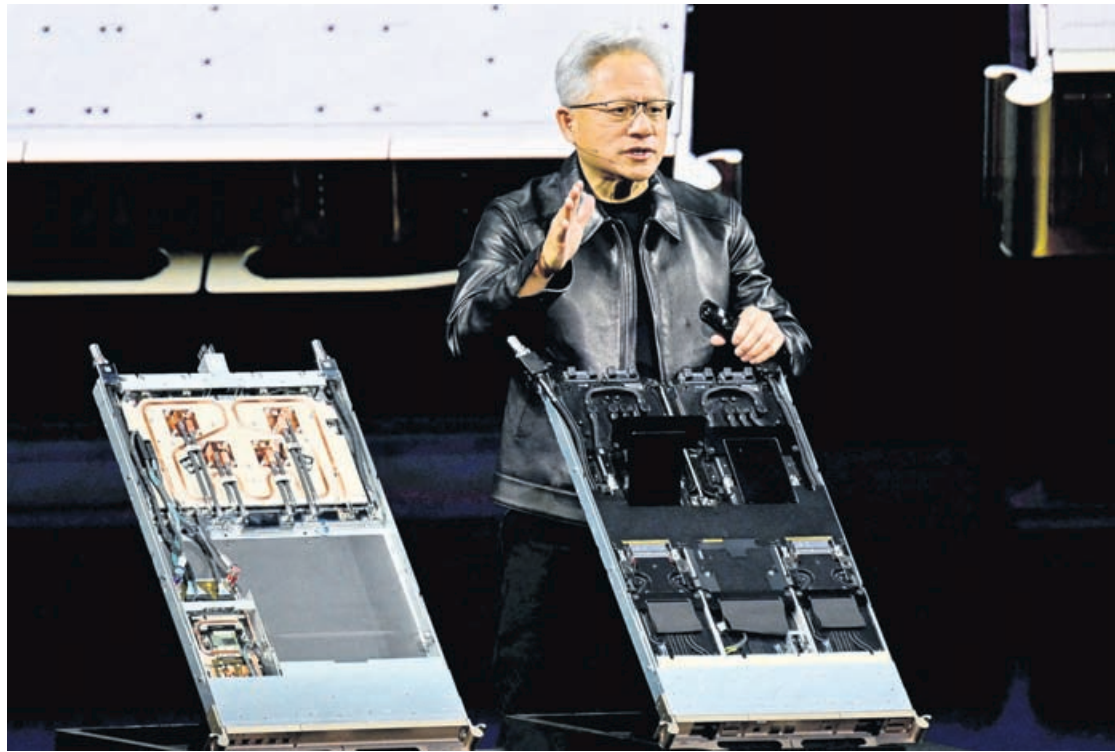
That demand has made Nvidia the world's most valuable company by market capitalization and turned chief executive Jensen Huang into AI's king-maker.

But the investments have raised a nagging question among some doubters on Wall Street: is Nvidia helping to inflate an AI bubble?

- What is Nvidia investing in? -

Nvidia has taken stakes in leading AI developers including OpenAI, Anthropic and Elon Musk's xAI, now part of SpaceX.

It has also invested in "neo-cloud" companies such as CoreWeave and Nebius, which rent out computing power built on Nvidia chips. Its bets extend well beyond the United States. In Europe, Nvidia has backed French AI developer Mis-



Co-founder, President and CEO of US technology company Nvidia, Jensen Huang delivers his keynote speech next to computer components during the Nvidia GTC Berlin 2026 Artificial Intelligence conference, on October 21, 2026 in Berlin.

tral and British self-driving startup Wayve. In Asia, it has teamed up with South Korea's SK Group to build data centers.

Beyond equity, the company has offered financial backstops, acting as a customer of last resort.

In CoreWeave's case, Nvidia committed to buy up to \$6.3 billion of unused computing capacity if no other customer takes it.

Nvidia also has around \$36 billion in cloud backstops and a guarantee of up to \$105 billion linked to an OpenAI data center, according to US media.

- Why is Nvidia doing this? -

Experts say Nvidia's enormous profits give it few better options.

"They're essentially becoming a bank," said Michael Cusumano, a professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

"Channeling it back to infrastructure investment tied to purchases of Nvidia equipment is a smart thing." He said the alternatives were less attractive.

Running its own data centers would put Nvidia in competition with its biggest customers "and that might also trigger a whole bunch of antitrust complaints," Cusumano added.

Gil Luria, head of technol-

ogy research at D.A. Davidson, said Nvidia identifies parts of the AI ecosystem that are not investing enough and puts money into them to fill the gaps.

"It's unprecedented, but it appears to be working," he said.

Huang has defended the approach, arguing that frontier AI labs are the first generation of startups that need tens of billions of dollars to get started, not just millions.

Nvidia's investments effectively give those companies more time to succeed.

- Is it 'circular' financing? -

Critics have compared the

deals to the dot-com era, when companies inflated their growth by investing in startups that then bought their products.

"There is nothing intrinsically wrong with Nvidia helping its clients," said Paulo Carvão, a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School.

"But the closer these relationships are, the harder it is for one to assess true sustainable demand."

Luria said not all demand was equal.

"If Nvidia gives CoreWeave money to turn around and buy Nvidia chips, that's not as good as Microsoft buying Nvidia chips because they have a customer in OpenAI that has a customer in an enterprise technology that's willing to pay for it," he said.

- What are the risks? -

The main concern is concentration. Two direct customers accounted for 22 percent and 14 percent of Nvidia's revenue in its 2026 fiscal year, according to the company's annual report.

Carvão said the web of overlapping investments increases the risk of contagion if a weaker company such as CoreWeave runs into trouble.

"If AI demand disappoints, spending cuts could hit chipmakers, data-center builders and their financiers at once," he said. □

U.S. jury hands win to Bayer in weedkiller cancer case

Washington, United States

A U.S. jury has sided with multinational giant Bayer over three women's claims its Roundup weed killer caused their cancer, the latest blow to plaintiffs in thousands of similar cases. The jury in the midwestern state of Missouri on Thursday rejected claims that Roundup was defectively designed and should not have been sold.

Bayer has spent more than \$10 billion settling thousands of cases linked to glyphosate-based herbicides since it acquired the US agrichemical group

Monsanto, developer of the popular Roundup weed killer, in 2018.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer considers glyphosate a probable human carcinogen.

But the German agrochemical firm has pointed to scientific studies as well as regulatory approvals in the United States and European Union as evidence the weed killer is safe.

The company successfully argued in June before the US Supreme Court that it should be shielded from so-called failure-to-warn legal

claims in US states since the US Environmental Protection Agency ruled that Roundup could be sold without any warning label. Bayer's US general counsel and global head of litigation Bill Doderer said Thursday's verdict "should send a strong signal that plaintiffs who wish to pursue claims in the court system" following the Supreme Court ruling "will face significant challenges."

The plaintiffs in the Missouri case, Theresa Aretino, Cynthia Fernandez and Betty Larkin, claimed they developed non-Hodgkin lym-

phoma from using Roundup.

Bayer is hoping to bring

the saga to a close with a \$7.25-billion class action settlement. □



"The People vs the Poison" protesters gather at the US Supreme Court on April 27, 2026 in Washington, DC.

Romanian writer Cartarescu hails books as balm in turmoil

Bucharest, Romania

In an age of “overwhelming evil” and “generalized lies”, Romanian novelist Mircea Cartarescu, a weaver of literary fantasies born from a childhood under a totalitarian regime, bets on writing to resist.

Literature is “like a bandage on a wound” in “frightening” times, Cartarescu told AFP at the launch of his latest book, a collection of aphorisms on writing, in Romania.

“These are times when we are threatened from so many sides that we no longer know what to guard against,” he said, mentioning wars, social unrest, global warming and “ideological confusion”.

Cartarescu, who turned 70 this year, is the most translated contemporary Romanian writer and has won many accolades, including the International Dublin Literary Award in 2024.

Real life and the imaginary merge in his novels, creating a universe that Cartarescu admits is an exercise in navel gazing.

“I write to be able to un-



Romanian novelist Mircea Cartarescu, 70, speaks during the launching of a new book at a library in Bucharest on October 22, 2026.

derstand who I am,” he has said.

- Childhood trauma -

Cartarescu, whose favorite writers are J. D. Salinger and Franz Kafka, has likened his writing process to termites building their nests without knowing the result in advance.

“I never wrote literature to

publish books, but to live in them,” he once said about his most recent novel, the 632-page “Theodoros”, published in 2022.

Set in the 19th century, “Theodoros” tells the story of a servant’s son who rises to become emperor.

Cartarescu has since been in no rush to finish another novel, but he has started

on one though he told AFP it is “not a novel in the strict sense”.

“It’s something I’ve never written before, and I don’t think anyone else has either,” he said, refusing to go into further details.

Born in Bucharest in 1956 during a period he has previously described as

“marked by poverty and terrible famine”, the introverted boy was fascinated by literature from an early age.

As a student and then a teacher at the University of Bucharest, he lived only “through and for literature”.

A huge fan of Bob Dylan, Cartarescu has translated 100 of the US folk singer’s songs into Romanian and has described himself as a “beatnik, a liberal in the widest sense of the term”. But it was his childhood that marked him most and that he tries to rediscover, if not to relive, in his writings.

“It is the most obscure period, that which intrigues me most,” he has said, pointing to the trauma of losing his twin brother at the age of 18 months.

“Nearly all that I write is linked to that. I have always felt that something was missing, as if I looked in a mirror and saw no one,” he said in an interview with the Adevarul newspaper.

He blamed that death on the “awful conditions” in which his family lived they had just moved into a single filthy room in a working-class district of Bucharest.

Made with munitions from the Falklands War, a ‘Chalice of Peace’ for the pope

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Combining the remnants of shell casings and other items from the Falklands War, Argentine silversmith Juan Carlos Pallarols is crafting a “Chalice of Peace” to give to Pope Leo XIV when he visits Argentina next month.

It has taken Pallarols, one of Argentina’s most renowned silversmiths, 10 months to make the piece ahead of the pope’s November 8-11 trip.

“We’re making it for him and we’re going to present it to him,” Pallarols, 83, said in his workshop in the historic center of Buenos Aires.

The cluttered workshop, where the smell of metal fills the air, is packed with gold, silver and bronze pieces and equipment presses, hammers and engraving tools.

“It’s a very complete work-

shop,” he laughed.

Aiming to convert items used in war into an object of peace, Pallarols made the chalice from melted munitions as well as rings, bracelets and other personal items donated by veterans of the 1982 Falklands War, fought between Argentina and the

United Kingdom over the islands called Las Malvinas in Argentina.

The 10-week war claimed the lives of 649 Argentines and 255 British troops.

Control of the Falklands is a highly emotive issue in Argentina, even though the islanders themselves voted

overwhelmingly in 2013 to remain British.

Argentine right-wing President Javier Milei has renewed his country’s claim on the archipelago, but Britain has insisted the island remains British.

Argentina rejects that, arguing that the principle of self-determination does not apply in this case because most islanders are descendants of people brought by Britain in the 1800s.

To make the chalice a gift from the Argentine people, the pacifist Pallarols traveled around the country, letting thousands of people use a small hammer to strike the metal piece.

A descendant of Catalan silversmiths, Pallarols said the family tradition goes back to 1715 and that his ancestors have been making pieces for pontiffs since the 19th century. □



Argentine silversmith Juan Carlos Pallarols displays a paten and a chalice he crafted at his workshop in Buenos Aires on October 20, 2026, ahead of their presentation to Pope Leo XIV during his visit to Argentina.

- ‘Collective madness’ -

After years of deprivation, Cartarescu said December 22, 1989, when the totalitarian regime of Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown, was “for all Romanians the happiest day”.

Later, Cartarescu often advocated for the independence of the justice system, and took part in protests.

But in time he said he lost hope, especially after the pandemic, so he now prefers to stick to his writing.

In a published journal, he criticized the surge of a far-right candidate in the 2024 Romanian presidential elections as “collective madness”.

He likens current times worldwide to those before World War II, but with added risks related to artificial intelligence, “the greatest threat to humanity”. □



A view of Armenia's Shikahogh nature reserve in the vicinity of the village of Srashen on October 22, 2026.

Forest destruction tests Armenia-Azerbaijan peace push

Srashen, Armenia

From a hillside above Armenia's Shikahogh nature reserve, local official Marat Harutyunyan pointed to forests cleared for Azerbaijan's military, construction Yerevan says threatens rare wildlife and the livelihoods of local villagers.

The battle over the fate of the forest exposes the deep, lingering tensions between the two countries as they seek to broker a lasting peace after three decades of hostility and multiple wars.

In advances in 2021-2022, Azerbaijan captured parts of the reserve that lies along the countries' shared border.

The conflict culminated in 2023 when it retook Karabakh from Armenian separatists, prompting the entire Armenian population some 100,000 people to flee.

The two countries have since tried to broker a permanent peace deal and last year initialled an agreement in Washington, seen as a major step towards ratification.

But while the capitals talk of detente, in the rural southern Armenian region of Syunik, residents are still on edge.

Nearby Azerbaijani military positions and landmines cause them to fear for their safety.

"All the land is directly in the enemy's sights," said Harut Aghatelyan, a 35-year-old biologist who has worked at the reserve for the past 15 years.

He has repeatedly found dead animals with missing legs blown up in landmine blasts that echo through the woods.

- 'Cut down everything' -

After seizing part of the area, Azerbaijan's military is now building wide forest paths to improve access and supply lines.

Above Srashen village, pale roads snake through the autumn woodland, and a police checkpoint blocks the old route towards the reserve.

Hilltop Armenian and Azerbaijani flags mark competing positions, sometimes only a few hundred metres apart.

Azerbaijan's advances have left a nearby village, Nerkin-Hand, surrounded on three sides, as its troops "occupy more than 2,700 hectares of the reserve and several hundred hectares of agricultural land", Harutyunyan, the Armenia official, said.

"They cut down everything, without checking whether a species is in the Red Book or not," he added, referring to Armenia's register of endangered species.

Armenia has highlighted the issue as it hosts the UN's COP17 biodiversity summit in Yerevan, where states gather to review global efforts to protect species and their habitats.

- 'Large-scale ecocide' -

Azerbaijan has rejected accusations of occupying Armenian territory, saying that the border in the area has not been formally demarcated.

Established in 1958, Shikahogh covers roughly 12,400 hectares of oak and beech forests, plane tree groves and yew an endangered species.

It also shelters Caucasian leopards, brown bears and bezoar goats.

Harutyunyan fears tree felling and engineering work could trigger landslides, mudflows and rockfalls.

But the military presence and landmines have made assessing the consequences on the ground impossible, residents and specialists say. "Nobody knows the true extent of the damage," said forest expert Ayser Ghazaryan.

His analysis of satellite images indicates earthworks across about 90 hectares, including some 60 hectares of forest, and the felling of an estimated 14,000 to 16,000 cubic metres of timber. □



Pope Leo XIV waves to faithful as he leaves after the weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on October 28, 2026.

Pope Leo makes history with U.S. midterm vote

Vatican City, Holy See

Pope Leo XIV, the Catholic Church's first U.S.-born pontiff, has voted in the United States midterm elections, the first known time a pope has voted in a political election. The head of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, who has clashed with US President Donald Trump, submitted his mail-in ballot in Chicago, the Vatican said Friday.

The Chicago-born pontiff "has exercised his right to vote as a United States citizen, whenever he was eligible to do so" and believes in "the right and the duty of citizens to participate in democratic processes," it said.

A rift earlier this year between U.S. President Donald Trump and the pope sparked global headlines.

Leo and Trump repeatedly clashed over papal criticism of the harsh crackdown on immigration in the United States and of the war on Iran, with Trump calling the pontiff "weak" on crime and "terrible" on foreign policy. The pope said he was "not afraid" of Trump.

In April, after Trump's threat to destroy Iran, Leo called on everyone to do their part for peace, urging them to "contact the authorities political leaders, congressmen to ask them, to tell them, to work for peace and to reject war and violence."

The crucial U.S. midterm elections are scheduled to be held on November 3.

In September, Leo urged the faithful to shake off "all passivity and indifference" toward current events.

"We cannot remain as unengaged spectators; rather, we must listen with our hearts, allow ourselves to be challenged, and become involved," he said during the weekly general audience in St Peter's Square.

Robert Francis Prevost, as he was known before his papal election, voted in Democratic primaries in 2008 and 2010 and in three Republican primaries in the years that followed, according to the New York Times, citing state and local records.

In primary elections in Illinois, voters may choose any party's ballot at the polls, and Prevost varied in his selection, it said.

Prevost spent nearly two decades as a missionary in Peru and has both U.S. and Peruvian citizenship.

"The Holy Father has also confirmed that, during his years of residence in Peru he exercised his right to vote whenever he was eligible to do so," the Vatican said. □

Philippine island fights rising seas with nature, not concrete

Malolos, Philippines

For years, residents of a flood-prone Philippine island north of Manila have elevated their homes atop layer upon layer of concrete, only to see floodwaters threaten them again. Burdened by strong storm surges, land subsidence and rising seas exacerbated by climate change, the 3,000 residents of tiny Pamarawan Island have turned to bamboo poles and discarded oyster shells to build a barrier aimed at weakening waves and managing floods.

The unusual approach offers a nature-based alternative for a country still grappling with a multibillion-dollar scandal that drove public fury over substandard and at times nonexistent concrete flood-control projects.

"We were terrified whenever there were typhoons. We couldn't sleep at night," fisherman Edgar Javier told AFP on a recent visit, recalling how strong waves once brought down one of his home's concrete walls. "Whenever the waves hit, the wall shakes."

The project began when the city government of Malolos, home to the island, launched a study with a Dutch engineering consultancy.

"(Concrete infrastructure) projects won't suffice,"



In this photo taken on October 13, 2026, workers lay coconut-fibre bags next to oyster shells on a breakwater at Pamarawan Island in Malolos City, Bulacan province.

Mayor Christian Natividad told AFP.

While the project, the first of its kind in the country, initially faced resistance from officials and residents working without a blueprint, Natividad said they had "nothing to lose".

"It's like you accept daily flooding or you do something else with risk," he said. "I chose risk."

- Slowing the waves -

By May last year, workers, many of them residents, had begun installing bamboo poles packed with brushwood along the coast. They are designed to slow water flow and trap sediment, with the goal of

gradually raising the seabed and supporting mangrove growth.

When AFP journalists visited the site, workers were building an oyster-shell breakwater about 100 metres (330 feet) offshore.

Under the searing heat, men in caps pounded wooden stakes used to secure coconut-fibre bags filled with shells on an artificial shore first created with sea sand.

"This breakwater's main purpose is to lessen the impact of the wave before it can reach the community," project manager Lyana Galang told AFP, adding that the oyster-shell barriers work in concert with

bamboo sediment traps.

Filipino scientist Antonio Contreras said the Philippines had long relied heavily on concrete dykes and seawalls, many undertaken without adequate study.

"We have altered the environment so much that we tend to work against nature when in fact we should work with it," Contreras told AFP, noting that some design flaws linked to corruption had cost lives.

But nature-based solutions were not a universal answer, he warned, particularly during catastrophic floods, and should complement conventional infrastructure.

Contreras said the approach in Pamarawan could be replicated elsewhere, provided local environmental conditions were carefully taken into account.

Bamboo and oyster shells also need to be sourced sustainably, he warned, as bamboo deteriorates over time and releases carbon as it decomposes.

The nature-based installations, which cover about 14 hectares along Manila Bay, cost 70 million pesos (\$1.1 million), including maintenance, compared with around 90 million pesos for a concrete seawall, Mayor Natividad said.

He estimated bamboo will need to be replaced once every five years.

- 'Our feet are dry' -

With its first phase completed in late 2025, the installation has already brought some comfort to residents. Fisherman Edgar Javier said the breakwaters had softened waves and helped keep floodwaters at bay during typhoons and monsoon rains this year.

"This has made a huge difference for us. We can still feel the waves, but they have significantly weakened. (They're) almost nothing now," he said.

Arsenia Cabigao, 58, said flooding had previously disrupted her livelihood by submerging areas where she dried fish. □

'Diabolical' Halloween festivities banned in Honduran towns

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

At least six municipalities in Honduras have banned Halloween celebrations this year on the grounds that they promote wickedness.

"Permits for events whose activities, themes, or content promote or incite terror or diabolical practices" will not be issued, authorities in the town of San Juan said in a statement.

Similarly, the northwestern municipality of La Libertad justified its ban as a "rejection of symbols such as witches, ghosts and mon-



sters linked to the occult." Shopping centers must also "refrain from promoting and selling items" related to Halloween. Violators

will be fined, it said.

While the October 31 holiday does not have deep roots in Honduras which is predominantly Christian,

like other Central American nations it has gained popularity in recent years among young people.

Controversy over the holiday even reached Congress, where opposition lawmaker Dunia Jimenez has proposed banning such celebrations at schools nationwide.

The proposed ban would restrict "costume contests, decorations and recreational activities" related to Halloween.

Jimenez told AFP that some members of the public have expressed concern about such celebrations

"as they consider that they do not contribute to the spiritual, ethical and moral values that they hope to promote in their children's upbringing."

Others, however, have criticized such measures as an attack on freedom of expression.

"Halloween is not a native celebration," Naydeli Alvarado, a historian and cultural manager, told AFP. "However, people who celebrate it privately should not be punished because it undermines the secular state and restricts the freedom of citizens." □

Planning on visiting Aruba? Make sure you have your ED card!

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to any country, it's important to make sure you have the right documents with you. For Aruba, one document that always seems to confuse people is the ED card. Scammers have taken advantage of the confusion, with dozen of fake and identical website overcharging visitors. To avoid this happening to you, here's a brief guide on how to obtain the ED card the right way: What website to use and how much it actually costs.

The Embarkation/ Disembarkation (ED) card is a pre-registration form required to enter Aruba. The ED Card has been in a requirement for visitors for decades and in 2020 it was digitalized. In 2024, the government of Aruba implemented a sustainability fee for all visitors of the island, which include a \$20 contribution for the improvement, updating

and maintenance of the local waste water plant. First things first, make sure you have the right website. The official website for the ED card is www.edcarda-ruba.aw. It is important to note that there are NO alternatives for this website; this website is the ONLY way you can obtain an official

ED card. Other website that may look similar are not official and may possibly be a scam. Be careful not to fall for the trap! Next up, make sure you have the right information with you when you apply for an ED card. You should have on hand:

1. A valid passport

2. Personal details
3. Contact information
4. Travel information
5. A valid credit card (Visa, Mastercard or Discover)

We mentioned a \$20 contribution mandatory for every visitor. Keep in mind that this is a YEARLY fee; so if you

plan on visiting Aruba more than once this calendar year, you would only have to pay the first time around.

Other important info

We should clarify that the ED card is not a substitute for a visa. Visitors who need a visa for Aruba must apply for both a visa and an online ED card. You can also start applying for the ED card 6 days before your flight.

If you extend your trip, you don't have to reapply for or edit your ED card. However, you must reapply if you missed your flight and/or your flight got canceled and your traveling to the island on another flight.

For more info, visit the official website for ED card of contact the immigration office of Aruba at (+297) 523 7404 or email them at info@dga.aw □

Aruba Online ED Card

The Aruban Government welcomes you and your family to Aruba.

The online Embarkation/ Disembarkation (ED) card is a pre-registration form required to enter Aruba. As per the country's immigration policy, all incoming tourists must fully complete the online ED card application. It's an essential entry requirement that you can complete quickly and easily online. Simply enter your details into the relevant fields, and upon a successful submission you'll receive an affirmation by email. A passenger that claims to be exempted from completion of the ED Card application due to citizenship, must provide basic information to confirm his status. Pursuant to his status he will receive a confirmation by email.

What you'll need:

1. A valid passport
2. Personal details
3. Contact information
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What you should note:

1. The online ED card is not a visa.
2. The successful submission of your online ED card does not guarantee entry into Aruba. On arrival to Aruba, your eligibility for entry will be assessed on its own merits. It is crucial that all information you provide, or on your behalf by a designated third party, must be true and correct, as this is a key factor in your entry assessment.

START

Forgotten gems: Open air movie theaters

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

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

American migrants who worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies"



were first streamed, movies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on

entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's

Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

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

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

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A Scary Halloween Night By David P. Carroll

On a scary dark
Halloween night
There was a terrible
bang tonight
And the little children are
running
With fright and shadows
dance and whisper
under the glowing
moonlight and
The scary creatures
Roam the streets on
Halloween night and
There throting through
the streets with a gleeful
glow
And children there's no
place to go and the
Echo through alleys
where shadows prowl
And the ghosts come
alive with a shuddering
sigh and from the
Haunted houses with
creaky floors and the
To the graveyard gates
with their rusty doors and
Each step taken echoes
with dread
As tales of the night start
swirling in red
And on this
Halloween night
you'll get a
terrible fright and
the scary
skeletons
With bony

hands are dancing in the
Cold dark graveyard
tonight and it's
A chilling sight beyond
compare
And on Halloween night
you'll get
A terrible scare tonight
and we're trapped in
the terror of Halloween's
fright and
The little children are
hiding all through the
scary night and
A chilling fog crept
across the ground
As secrets of darkness
spread all around
And the wind howl's and
the trees creak
And on Halloween night
its dark and bleak
And with monsters
lurking bathed in pale
moonlight the hairy
werewolves
Are howling all through
the dark night
And it's an endless fright
on this haunted
Halloween night and the
shadows
Stretch a scary
Halloween night and you
better take care little
children because it'll be
a very scary and spooky
Halloween night.



Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the island's past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches during breeding season? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches.



A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill

from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands).

The afore mentioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □



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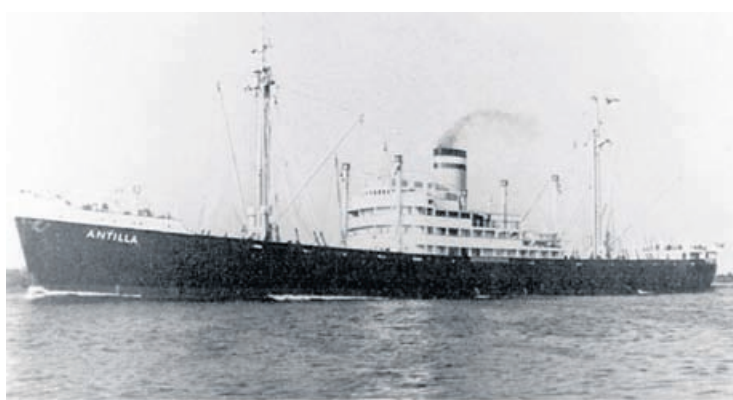
Up for a snorkeling adventure in Aruba? Top 3 shipwrecks to explore

(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



The NARAG freighter Antilla

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 tar-

get practice. Eventually, the ship became a snorkeling site that has attracted many visitors throughout the years.

Pedernales lies on the northwest 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. How-

ever, several years went by and no one came forward to claim the ship, so dive operators decided to sink her as an artificial reef. This happened in 1988. Jane Sea earned the nick name Jane C, because of the illicit white powder discovered on board.

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

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

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

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. □



Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.



Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cucularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very

good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.



Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found,



but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.



Coneu (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by In-

dian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Coneu, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Coneu can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Coneu has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Coneu is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Coneu is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Coneu can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. □

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. □

Meet Aruba's biggest hero, Boy Ecury



(Oranjestad)—As part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and due to its strategic geolocation, Aruba was unexpectedly involved in the Second World War. As is known around the globe, this chapter in world history is one of the most tragic yet, and many soldiers and rebels have died on the front line during this time.

One of those rebels who have fought against the Nazi regime, was an Aruban named Segundo Jorge Adelberto "Boy" Ecury. Born in Aruba on April 23rd, 1922, Boy spent his childhood on the island, before being sent to The Netherlands by his father when he was 15 years

old to continue his studies abroad. This was in 1937, three years before WWII broke out.

During the war, he actively participated in the rebellion in The Netherlands against the Nazi regime, but his rebellious streak and constant drive to fight for justice began even before the war broke out. Being a person of color with a Haitian heritage living in The Netherlands made him vulnerable to discrimination, and this inspired him to be an activist, to stand up and fight against discrimination and oppression.

After seeing the horrific bombings of Rotterdam firsthand, he decided to join the resistance. At the same time, he was still studying and living with family in Tilburg. It was there where he met people who printed and distributed the rebellion newspaper. This would be the first of three rebellion groups that he would join throughout his 4-year service to the resistance.

Boy's primary task as mem-

ber of the group was to distract the German soldiers while others ran into hiding into alleyways. This he was able to do because of his skin color and confronting demeanor. Boy also participated in the multiple sabotaging operations against the German military occupying The Netherlands. These included bombings on German military trucks and trains. The group also helped people go into hiding, as well as opened fire against allies of the Nazi regime. In these operations, Boy really stood out for his cold bloodedness. In 1943, he received a notice to be placed for work in Germany. This he refused, of course, and went into hiding using multiple addresses in multiple cities. Because he was a wanted man, he of course could not continue to be active as a rebel. However, stubborn and naturally rebellious as he was, he always tried to join in on the operations regardless.

In 1944, after his friend Luis de Lannoy, a fellow rebel from Curacao, was arrested

and executed, he moved to Delft, where he joined his third and last group in Rotterdam. During this time, he wrote a goodbye letter for his family, possibly knowing the risks of him being active again in the big cities.

Eventually, he proved himself right. On November 5th, 1944, Boy Ecury was arrested by German soldiers. He was placed in the "Oranjehotel" prison in Scheveningen, The Hague, where he was questioned. Despite being sold out by an acquaintance, he himself never gave away the names of his comrades. Famously, he told his cell mate: "I will die with a smile on my face."

On November 6th, 1944, Ecury was executed. He was only 22 years old.

Ecury was buried with military honor. In 1949, the Aruban Government erected a monumental bust of him in front of what is now the linear park trail, and in 1984 he received the Resistance Memorial Cross postmortem.



Boy's life motto was this: "In my father's house, there is no place for a traitor." Source: "De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)" by Evert Bongers. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

44. Squeezes
1. Trolley's kin (out)

5. May
honorees

9. "Superman"
star

10. Districts

12. Urge

forward

13. Chutzpah

14. Thrifty

16. Young

buck

17. High

trains

18. Flying

high

20. Makeup

exam

22. Pay to

play

23. "Star

Wars" name

25. High point

28. Like some

garages

32. Generous

virtue

34. Stephen

of "The Crying

Game"

35. Avarice,

e.g.

36. Intensely

hot

38. Contact,

in a way

40. Zellweger

of "Chicago"

41. Keyed up

42. Painter

Edgar

43. Blocks up

DOWN

1. Place of

worship

2. Meal

3. Declare

4. Singer

Etheridge

5. Japanese

comic books

6. Valuable

rock

7. Arthur's aide

8. Wise one

9. Stair part

11. Marshy

grass

15. Contrary to

the hour

good manners

27. Tomorrow, brief

19. in Tijuana

29. Cower

30. Virgil

hero

31. Storms

33. Resort

spots

37. Smell

awful

39. Belief, in

brief

24. Fencing

25. Useful

26. Sounded

21. Exceptional

22. Continually

23. Cry

24. Ability

25. Sounded

26. Sounded

27. Tomorrow, brief

28. Like some

garages

32. Generous

virtue

34. Stephen

of "The Crying

Game"

35. Avarice,

e.g.

36. Intensely

hot

38. Contact,

in a way

40. Zellweger

of "Chicago"

41. Keyed up

42. Painter

Edgar

43. Blocks up

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.

10-29

CRYPTOQUOTE

V IZGZGXZI VR MA TURTXZI

K M H A M I Z M N C M H A

IZGIZGXZIZK, UNTLKNZAA,

GMBNZ-DNMETIZK, RFZ MVI

PTNK MJK AT UNZMJ VR

OLVEZIA. --- NZVD ZJPZI

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: BE HEALTHY AND
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, BUT BE HAPPY
WITH THE BEAUTIFUL THINGS THAT MAKE
YOU YOU.. --- BEYONCE



Yesterday's answer

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.

found in homes and establishments.

10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

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

Safety



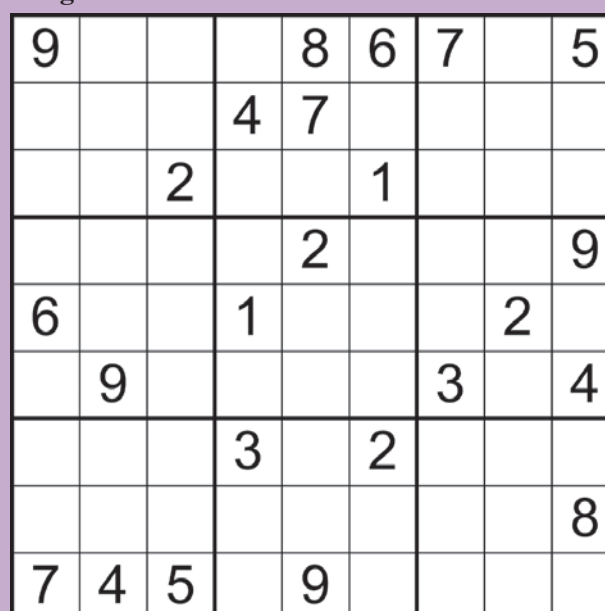
Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



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: ★★★★★

10/31

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

10/30

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Binance heist: How were cryptocurrency billions stolen?

London, United Kingdom

Binance, the world's biggest cryptocurrency exchange, estimates that assets worth \$6.3 billion were impacted by a hacking attack against the trading platform.

But how was such a theft possible, and what does it reveal about the security of cryptocurrencies? AFP takes a look.

- Is Binance reliable? -

Binance, the world's largest platform by digital currency trading volume, claims to have 335 million users.

That compares to the reported 741 million cryptocurrency owners worldwide cited by Crypto.com. However, Binance has faced its fair share of scandals. Its former CEO, Changpeng Zhao, was convicted in the United States in 2024 for violating anti-money laundering laws, though he was later pardoned by President Donald Trump.

It has faced further U.S. legal troubles, including being accused of selling assets that qualify as unregistered securities.

In France, Binance is suspected of having failed to meet its obligations regarding the oversight of client funds.

Having failed to obtain authorisation under the European Markets in Crypto Assets (MiCA) regulation, Binance recently announced a partial suspension of its operations within the European Union.

- A secure technology? -

Cryptocurrencies are based on a technology called blockchain, a digital ledger that records transactions and is designed to make falsification particularly difficult.

Transfers are authorised using "private keys" long strings of characters kept secret. However, this does not fully protect funds from theft.

"Even when you think you are using one of the most robust exchanges



In this photo illustration, the Binance logo is displayed on a screen on June 06, 2023 in San Anselmo, California.

in the world, it can still be hacked," Stephane Ifrah, an analyst at Coinhouse, told AFP.

- How can hackers still get in? -

To gain access to private keys or the systems that authorise transfers, hackers can exploit a software vulnerability, deploy malicious software, or target individuals for instance through phishing. Some keys are stored on hardware wallets that are not connected to the internet.

However, these devices are not immune to attacks. Funds belonging to users of the French firm Ledger were stolen after malicious components were inserted into devices sold by a third-party retailer.

In the case of Binance, the investigation is pointing

toward a "compromised" laptop of one of its engineers, in addition to "points of breach", the platform said on X.

- Who are the hackers? -

While there has been no official confirmation, analyst firms TRM Labs, Chainalysis and Elliptic point to hackers linked to North Korea, specifically the group known as TraderTraitor or the "Lazarus Group".

The amount purportedly stolen is four times the sum that the same hackers according to the FBI siphoned from the platform Bybit in February 2025.

That theft totalled \$1.5 billion, which at the time was the largest ever cryptocurrency heist.

According to Elliptic and Chainalysis, some of the funds stolen from Binance have been traced to the

same pool of assets as those taken in a recent hack of the platform Bitget, which the victim attributed to Pyongyang.

- Is it possible to recover the money? -

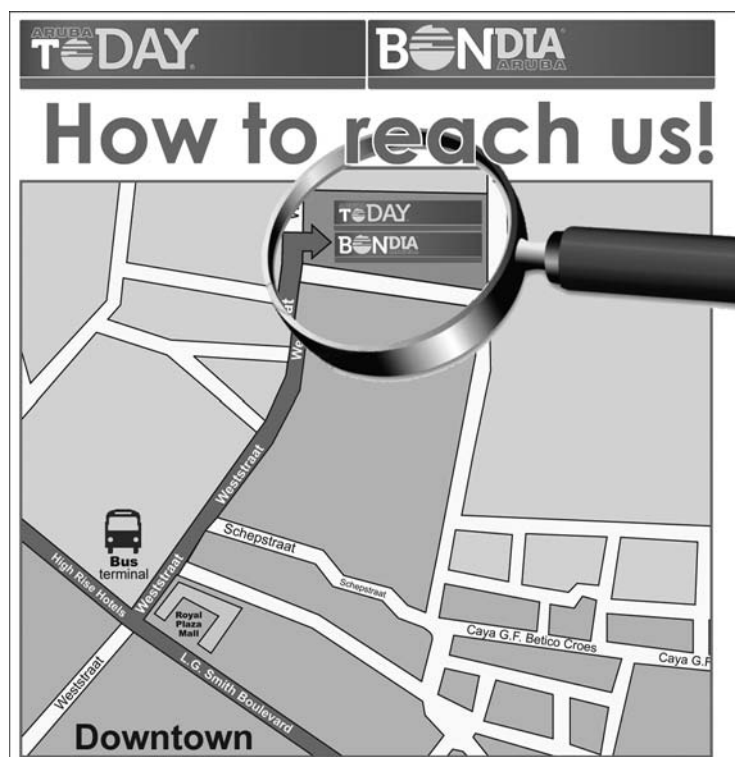
Binance says that around \$3 billion of the affected crypto nearly half the total amount affected has been frozen with help from issuers and infrastructure partners.

But the freezing of assets does not mean the funds have been recovered.

According to Ifrah, the attackers could employ anonymisation tools, such as cryptocurrency "mixers" or "tumblers", designed to make tracking the stolen assets more difficult.

Binance asserts that it will cover the losses resulting from the hack.

But as Ifrah states, "it is clear that there is no such thing as zero risk". □



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



Manager Pat Murphy #49 of the Milwaukee Brewers celebrates during the Trophy Presentation after defeating the Tampa Bay Rays in the 2026 World Series at Tropicana Field on October 28, 2026 in St Petersburg, Florida.

Small-market Brewers upend big-spenders as baseball lockout looms

Los Angeles, United States

The Milwaukee Brewers' historic World Series triumph has delivered a stunning riposte to Major League Baseball's biggest spenders, just as America's pastime braces for a labor showdown that could reshape its financial landscape. Milwaukee, the smallest market among MLB's 30 franchises, ended a 57-year wait for a championship on Tuesday, defeating the Tampa Bay Rays 4-1 in the World Series. The Brewers' dazzling march to the title was achieved through a combination of shrewd recruitment, patient player development and, significantly, a modest payroll. Wednesday's clinching victory over Tampa Bay capped a dominant campaign in which the Brewers posted an MLB-best 103 regular-season wins before going 11-2 in the playoffs. An eight-game postseason winning streak included a stunning 4-0 sweep of Shohei Ohtani's big-spending Los Angeles Dodgers, who had been chasing a third consecutive World Series crown. The Brewers' success has come at an inflection point for baseball, with owners and players heading towards a potentially bruising confrontation over a

new collective bargaining agreement.

At the heart of the dispute is the prospect of a salary cap that would rein in the spending power of wealthy franchises such as the Dodgers, New York Mets and New York Yankees.

For Milwaukee, however, the championship was a vindication of a strategy built around identifying and nurturing talent rather than competing with baseball's financial heavyweights.

While manager Pat Murphy and former MVP Christian Yelich provided experience, two 22-year-olds Jackson Chourio and rookie Cooper Pratt emerged as unlikely heroes of the Brewers' title run.

Chourio underlined his prodigious talent with a superb World Series debut, collecting 11 hits in five games the second-highest total in history over a player's first five Fall Classic appearances.

The Venezuelan has exceeded even Milwaukee's lofty expectations since signing an eight-year, \$82 million contract in 2023, the richest deal ever awarded to a player before his Major League debut.

Pratt, meanwhile, made his Major League debut only in June but went on to produce six consecutive hits, the longest such streak by

a rookie in World Series history.

William Contreras, named World Series Most Valuable Player, provided another example of Milwaukee's astute recruitment.

Acquired in a three-team trade in 2023, the Venezuelan catcher has developed into a dependable defensive presence, a transformation showcased during the championship series.

Milwaukee's scouting operation also struck gold with its pitching staff, notably through the drafting of Jacob Misiorowski, a leading contender for the National League Cy Young Award.

A formidable bullpen provided another cornerstone of a team that proved almost unstoppable throughout October.

- Lockout looming? -

The Brewers' triumph has challenged the conventional wisdom that financial muscle is the surest route to success in MLB, the only major North American professional sports league without a salary cap.

The gulf between baseball's haves and have-nots was starkly illustrated in the National League Championship Series, when Milwaukee's \$146 million payroll came up against a Dodgers roster costing \$340 million. □



Hellen Obiri of Kenya speaks during the New York City Marathon Media Day at Central Park West on October 29, 2026 in New York City.

Reigning champs chase history in New York Marathon

New York, United States

Defending champions Benson Kipruto and Hellen Obiri of Kenya will chase history and back-to-back titles in Sunday's New York Marathon.

About 60,000 runners from 140 nations are expected to compete over 26.2 miles (42.16km) through the five boroughs of New York.

Kipruto won the closest New York men's marathon in history last year, edging compatriot Alex Mutiso by three-hundredths of a second after both crossed the finish line in 2:08:09.

The 36-year-old Kenyan will try to become the first back-to-back New York men's winner since Geoffrey Mutai of Kenya in 2013.

Kipruto also won the 2021 Boston Marathon, 2022 Chicago Marathon and 2024 Tokyo Marathon titles and took third at the 2024 Paris Olympic marathon and this year's Boston Marathon.

Ethiopia's Deresa Geleta, sixth in this year's London Marathon, makes his North America marathon debut on the streets of New York.

There is also excitement about the marathon debut of 31-year-old Swede Andreas Almgren, who set a European half-marathon record of 58:06 last month at Copenhagen.

"I haven't felt nervous yet. Right now it's just excitement," Almgren said. "I don't know that I've ever been so excited for a race."

The data analyst also posted on social media: "I'm not saying good bye to track racing. I'm just saying hello to marathons." Obiri, 36, is well-acquainted with the distance. She won the Boston Marathon in 2023 and 2024 and New York Marathon in 2023 and 2025 as well as taking a bronze medal at the 2024 Paris Olympics marathon. Obiri took her second New York City Half-Marathon title earlier this year, winning in a course-record 1:06:33. She was this year's London Marathon runner-up, finishing 12 seconds off the women-only marathon world record of 2:15:41 set by Ethiopian Tigst Assefa.

Obiri will try to become only the fourth woman to win a third career New York title after Norway's Grete Waitz, Kenya's Mary Keitany and Britain's Paula Radcliffe.

Obiri seeks her third crown in four years after setting a course record of 2:19:51 last year.

She would be the first New York repeat women's winner since Keitany won from 2014-16.

Clear conditions and perfect running temperatures are expected for the 50th edition of the race since it switched to a course that includes each of the city's five boroughs, heralding the modern edition of the event. □

Sports chiefs face losing battle to keep sport separate from politics

Paris, France

IOC president Kirsty Coventry's desire is that "politics does not take over on the field of play", but Ukraine and former executives from her organisation have told AFP that politics and sport remain inseparable.

Coventry's view will be sorely tested when Ukrainian and Russian athletes -- the nations embroiled in a war sparked by Russian President Vladimir Putin launching an invasion of Ukraine in 2022 -- compete side-by-side in the Youth Olympics which start in the Senegalese capital Dakar on Saturday.

The 13 Russian athletes will be able to parade with their national flag and hear their national anthem at an Olympic event for the first time since the 2020 Winter Youth Games in Lausanne. The restoration of such symbols fits with the approach that Coventry indicated she would follow when she spoke at the EU Sporting Forum in Cyprus earlier this year.

"Athletes can only inspire us if they are able to compete," the Zimbabwean two-time Olympic swimming gold medallist said. "They can only do so if we keep sport strictly neutral ground, if politics does not take over on the field of play," she added.

Ukraine Sports Minister Mat-



President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Kirsty Coventry (R) looks on during her visit to the Olympic Village ahead of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Diamniadio, on October 29, 2026.

viy Bidnyi dismisses that view.

"Any conversation about returning Russian athletes to the international arena can only happen after the war ends, a just peace is established, every single abducted Ukrainian child is returned home, and international law is fully restored," he told AFP.

"Until that moment, isolation is not political it is a matter of basic human decency."

Former International Olympic Committee marketing executive Terrence Burns told AFP that globally speaking, "sport has never

been separate from politics".

"When I hear anyone use that phrase it sounds naive at best and cynical at worst," he said.

"The real principle is neutrality. The Olympic movement only works if it stays independent of governments."

Ukraine has not employed the political weapon of boycotting sporting events Russia have competed in, a strategy that was once fashionable three successive Summer Olympics from 1976 to 1984 were affected. In the latter two cases, the

IOC was more impacted than their intended targets. "The boycott agenda of the eighties very nearly destroyed the Olympic movement," Michael Payne, a former IOC marketing chief, told AFP.

"Eventually the politicians began to understand that maybe it was a good idea for the world to come together through sport."

Burns and Payne concede that the African boycott of the 1976 Montreal Games was effective because it highlighted a multilateral campaign to isolate apartheid South Africa from world sport.

"The lesson is that a boycott works when it is sustained, collective and aimed squarely at the wrongdoer," Burns said.

- 'Terrifying signal' -

Payne says sport is again open to political interference.

"Over the last decade, politicians have again turned to using sport as a tool to sanction, declaring who can and who cannot participate," he said.

"I have argued in my book 'Fast Tracks and Dark Deals', that the biggest single threat facing the future of sport is the growing political weaponisation of sport."

Politics and sport have occasionally combined to offer hope.

Both involved North and South Korea, technically still at war, but who paraded together at the 2000 Sydney Games and fielded a joint ice hockey team at the 2018 Winter Games in Pyeongchang.

Though hopes of a lasting improvement in relations failed to materialise, Burns believes it was an example of how sport can offer a tantalising glimpse of what could be possible.

"Sport opens doors but it can't make anyone walk through them," said Burns.

"Still, I think an open door is worth a great deal when every other one is shut." □

World number one Rybakina withdraws in Tokyo with injury

Tokyo, Japan

Elena Rybakina withdrew from the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo with a neck injury on Friday, a day after she secured the year-end world number one ranking.

The Moscow-born Kazakh was due to face Canada's Leylah Fernandez in the quarter-finals, but instead she came onto the court to address the crowd and sign autographs.

She said she would return for next month's WTA Finals in Indian Wells.

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for coming today, but unfortunately I won't be able to play," said the 27-year-old.

"I've been struggling for a couple of days with a little injury.

"It's difficult for me to come and play at 100 percent since there is also a very important tournament coming up."

Rybakina clinched the year-end top rank-

ing with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Yulia Putintseva in her opening match in Tokyo.

She became world number one for the first time last month in winning the US Open, replacing Aryna Sabalenka at the summit. The achievement capped a year in which Rybakina also won the Australian Open in January and now has three Grand Slam titles.

She arrived in Tokyo after winning her fourth title of the season last week at the Ningbo Open in China, beating Fernandez in the final.

"Thank you so much for all the support throughout the year, especially here in Tokyo," she said.

"It's an amazing city. I really enjoy it every time I come, but unfortunately this time I won't be able to play.

"Thanks again and hope to see you all next year." □



Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina looks on as she speaks after retiring due to an injury from her quarter-final match against Canada's Leylah Fernandez during the WTA Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament at Ariake Coliseum in Tokyo on October 30, 2026.

Clash of styles as Vikings, Lions prepare for NFL showdown

Los Angeles, United States

The unbeaten Minnesota Vikings face a test of their Super Bowl credentials against the Detroit Lions on Sunday as the NFL season approaches its halfway point with the battle for playoff places beginning to take shape.

Minnesota head into week eight as the last remaining undefeated team in the NFL after the Kansas City Chiefs and San Francisco 49ers both suffered their first losses last weekend.

But the Vikings' perfect 6-0 record will be on the line in a potentially pivotal NFC North divisional clash in Detroit, one of several heavyweight encounters on a packed Sunday schedule.

The showdown in Detroit pits one of the most potent offenses in the league against the meanest defense. The Lions have averaged just over 30 points a game on their way to a 4-2 record, while the Vikings have given up just seven touchdowns in six games while conceding a miserly 12.3 points per game.

Detroit head coach Dan Campbell had nothing but praise for the Vikings defense as he prepares for "Minnesota are playing outstanding football," Campbell said.

"Everything is fueled by the defense. That's the start-



Jared Goff #16 of the Detroit Lions plays against the Green Bay Packers at Ford Field on October 25, 2026 in Detroit, Michigan.

ing point. This defense is as good as it gets...they just create havoc and chaos. And they force you to make massive errors. It's just wave after wave, and offenses are cracking.

"So poise is going to be big for us. Poise and patience." The Vikings' defensive guru, Brian Flores, meanwhile has been busy devising a plan to thwart a Lions offense led by quarterback Jared Goff.

- 'One of the best' -

"Statistically, he's been one of the best quarterbacks, not even statistically, pe-

riod," Flores said of Goff.

"He's been one of the best quarterbacks in the National Football League over, you know, a good amount of time. He's grown quite a bit. That's what you expect, as guys get more time under their belt.

"I think he's one of the best in the league and they've got a great skill group and he's he knows how to, you know, distribute the ball to all of them."

In other games on Sunday, Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills host the Baltimore Ravens in a showdown with major implications for the

AFC playoff race, while Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs attempt to bounce back from their first defeat of the campaign in a divisional duel with the Denver Broncos.

The Bills are sitting pretty at the top of the AFC East with a 5-1 record, ahead of the second-placed New England Patriots (4-3).

The Ravens by contrast are bottom of the AFC North with a 4-3 record and can ill-afford to lose further ground on divisional leaders Cleveland and Pittsburgh, who are both at 5-2. Cleveland and Pittsburgh

meanwhile will collide in a heavyweight showdown with top spot of the division at stake.

The Chiefs meanwhile look to bounce back against a Broncos team they trounced 31-10 on the opening weekend of the season.

Kansas City head coach Andy Reid said he is expecting to face an improved Denver team since that opening week victory.

"We turn the tape on and we look at what's real, and you can see how they've improved every week," Reid said.

"When you play a good team in their home, you better be prepared and ready to go."

Other week eight fixtures include the resurgent Chicago Bears taking on reigning Super Bowl champions Seattle on Monday.

The Bears have improved to 5-2 to remain hard on Minnesota's heels in the AFC North, but face a difficult road trip in the Pacific Northwest against a Seattle team buoyed by their defeat of Kansas City last weekend.

Elsewhere, a "battle for Los Angeles" will unfold at the SoFi Stadium, with the inconsistent Los Angeles Rams facing the winless Los Angeles Chargers. □

Mbilli 'ready to shock the world' against Canelo

Paris, France

French boxer Christian Mbilli said Thursday he is "coming for the win" when

he takes to the ring to defend his WBC super-middleweight title against Saul 'Canelo' Alvarez.



Mexico's Canelo Alvarez (L) and France's Christian Mbill attend a press conference ahead of their WBC Super Middleweight World Championship title fight in Riyadh on October 29, 2026.

He will meet the 36-year-old Mexican legend on Saturday in Riyadh.

"I can't wait to be in the ring. I am ready for this fight, I am ready to shock the world," Mbilli said.

"I have a big respect for Canelo and his whole career but on Saturday, it will be a different story and I am coming for the win," the 31-year-old added.

Formerly the king of the division, Canelo was dethroned by the American Terence Crawford in September 2025 during a memorable bout in Saudi Arabia.

Cameroon-born French boxer Mbilli first won the in-

terim WBC title by knocking out Poland's Maciej Sulecki in June 2025.

The full WBC belt then became vacant when Crawford lost the title following a dispute with the World Boxing Council. The WBC elevated Mbilli from interim to full WBC super-middleweight champion in January 2026.

For the first time since 2022, Canelo (63 wins, including 39 KOs, three defeats, two draws) will enter a fight as the challenger.

"I have been a champion many years and I want to be a champion again and I want to face the best," Canelo said.

"I am the challenger now, but always in my mind I am the champion, since I was a little kid."

The fight in Saudi Arabia, which had been the subject of numerous rumors of postponement or relocation, is set to go ahead despite drone and missile attacks targeting the kingdom.

The Houthis and the Saudi-backed, internationally recognized Yemeni government have exchanged daily attacks since a years-long truce fell apart over the summer. In recent weeks, the group has ramped up attacks on Saudi Arabia. □