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Feeling lucky? Here are the top 4 casinos for a fun night out!

Page 8

Aruba: the legend behind its name

Page 11

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO	ANDERSON BAHAMON	JEAN PAUL	MAILLEYN ALVARADO	MARRYBELL MADURO	MAILLEYN ALVARADO	RICKY THOMAS
SINGER	SINGER	SAXOPHONIST	VIOLINIST	SINGER	VIOLINIST	GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.	6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

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Women express frustration, concern over Nvidia boss Jensen Huang's return

San Francisco, United States

News of Jensen Huang's shocking return to Nvidia had barely landed when President Donald Trump posted an AI-generated image of the Nvidia co-founder holding up a red bra, surrounded by security personnel whisking him offstage, blood streaked across his face.

The image was based on a real photo taken in 2024 when Trump survived an assassination attempt during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, and implied that Huang, too, had survived a bid to take him out.

For many women, though, the image spoke insultingly to longstanding frustrations about sexism, double standards and a lack of accountability for men in power -- across politics and business.

Meanwhile, many "tech bros" rushed to Huang's defense over the past couple of weeks. Billionaire Elon Musk was among many people who signed a petition calling for Huang's reinstatement.

Venture capitalist Jason Calacanis described Huang as a "hero" and downplayed the scandal that led to Huang's resignation as less important than the United States winning the AI race against China.

"They're standing up for the idea that certain men can do whatever they want," Cleo Capital Managing Director Sarah Kunst told AFP.

Part of the problem might be "hero worship," she said.

It also reflects the tech industry's mythology around "founder mode" -- the belief that companies thrive when founders stay hands-on rather than cede control to executives.

Huang resigned on November 12 from Nvidia, the company he cofounded and has led for more than three decades, amid allegations that he had multiple extramarital affairs, including one with a woman that U.S. officials suspect was working for Chinese intelligence, triggering national security concerns.

Another of Huang's alleged lovers was a subordinate at Nvidia.

"This is a great example of why integrity matters," Kunst said. "As soon as I heard about the honeypot element, it was clear to me that there were lapses in judgment that were really big."

On November 17, board Chairman Harvey Jones said the company "does not intend to reinstate Jensen as CEO." Then President Donald Trump intervened.

"I made the deal," Trump told CNBC, referring to Huang's reinstatement.

Trump himself was found liable in 2023 for sexual assault and defamation and ordered to pay millions as punishment.

-Dreaded "glass cliff"-

For an industry with very few women as executives, Huang's departure became a brief opportunity for the company's chief financial officer to step into one of the most prominent roles in tech. Nvidia's advanced chips are used to train and run the AI models reshaping modern life.

The board appointed Chief Financial Officer Colette Kress as interim CEO on November 12 while they searched for a permanent chief.

It's unclear if Kress wanted the job permanently, but women are often thrown into leadership positions during times of crisis and frequently blamed for any subsequent failure or replaced after things improve.

Nvidia declined to comment.

Australian National University Professor Michelle Ryan coined a term over two decades ago that describes this situation: the "glass cliff" -- women or other underrepresented people being appointed to senior roles during a crisis, when risk of failure is high.



This handout photo posted on the official X account of Nvidia on November 23, 2026, shows reinstated CEO of Nvidia Jensen Huang reacting to the ovation from employees upon his return to the company headqurters in Santa Clara, California.

Ryan is also the director of the university's Global Institute for Women's Leadership.

A "glass cliff" situation can also come with intense scrutiny, Ryan told AFP last week, before Huang's reinstatement.

"When you're dealing with a crisis, there's a whole lot of things that you have to be dealing with. It's not just sort of everyday business and just get on with being a CEO," Ryan said.

Kress tried to reassure analysts and investors that it was "business as usual" during Nvidia's quarterly earning call on November 17, when the company reported blockbuster results.

"Our momentum is real. Our demand is accelerating, our supply is growing, our customers and our partners are with us, and employees are committed. We've got this," Kress said on the call.

The results turned out to be a brief salve for Nvidia's share price, which dropped nearly three percent the following day after already losing more than a quarter of its market value since the initial revelations concerning Huang in late October.

"I can say with a high degree of certainty that what the interim CEO will face, and is facing, is a question of legitimacy," Berkeley Professor Laura Kray told AFP last week. Her research includes the intersection of gender and business management.❑

Musk says will give two SpaceX shares to 'every child in America'



Elon Musk speaks via video conference during the NY Times Dealbook Summit at Jazz at Lincoln Center on November 18, 2026 in New York City.

Washington, United States

Tech billionaire Elon Musk said Wednesday he would give every child in the United States two shares in his SpaceX rocket company, doubling an offer he made last month.

"Every child in America will receive two SpaceX shares, one from the company and one from me personally," Musk said in a post on X, the social media platform he also owns.

The world's richest person said the share from SpaceX would be transferred next month, while the share from him personally would be transferred in June next year.

He did not provide any further details about how the scheme would work.

"I recommend holding on to your shares," Musk said, claiming that SpaceX could "be worth about a million times the current global economy" if it "succeeds in making life multiplanetary and harnessing even a millionth of the Sun's energy."

"These are obviously absurdly difficult goals, but there is a path to achieving them," he said.

In October, Musk promised that every child in the U.S. would receive one SpaceX share, adding that it would be "the first of many."

There are around 73 million people under the age of 18 in the country, according to 2024 data from the Census Bureau.

The closing price of one SpaceX share was $127.44 on Wednesday, meaning Musk's gift would be worth a combined $18.6 billion.

SpaceX made its stock market debut in June, raising about $85.7 billion.

The company's Starship megarocket reached orbit for the first time in September, a milestone for the spacecraft central to Musk's ambition to colonize Mars.❑

'It's scary': California battles West Nile virus surge

Burbank, United States

For two months, Mandi Budd has been unable to use her legs -- she is paralyzed because of a mosquito bite that nearly took her life.

The culprit was West Nile virus, a disease which is spiking in California at levels not seen in more than a decade.

In 2026 the state has logged its second-deadliest year on record, with 45 deaths and 617 infections so far.

"I'm happy to be on the right side of the dirt," Budd told AFP with a sigh.

"I could have been one of the casualties of this virus, and that's a terrifying thought."

California has experienced unseasonably high heat and humidity in recent months, which are favorable conditions for mosquito breeding.

West Nile virus was first discovered in Uganda and did not reach the United States until 1999. Mosquitos are infected after biting birds carrying the disease, and subsequently transmit it to humans.

It remains poorly understood, with no vaccine or specific treatment.

Most people who contract it do not show symptoms, or experience little more than a mild, flu-like illness.

But some people are unlucky: in approximately one percent of cases, West Nile can cause a potentially fatal brain infection, triggering neurological complications like cognitive impairment and paralysis.



Mandi Budd (L) speaks about the paralysis she is experiencing as a result of West Nile virus during an interview from her hospital bed alongside her husband Derek Nuhfer (R) as she receives treatment in Burbank, California on November 23, 2026.

That's what happened to Budd, a consultant for humanitarian organizations, in September. She experienced hip pain that she initially mistook as sciatica.

Eventually, she collapsed when her legs could no longer support her.

Once at the hospital in Burbank, near Los Angeles, her fever spiked to 103F (39.5C), and doctors battled to keep her alive.

"It's scary," she told AFP in between physical therapy sessions at the hospital as she learns to stand again.

Budd said that after living most of her life in Florida -- a southeastern state with a tropical climate, where mosquitoes are common -- she never imagined she would contract a disease like West Nile virus on the west coast.

"I didn't anticipate that I'd be getting this here in California, with its perfect weather," Budd said.

- Climate change impacts -

The range of West Nile virus continues to grow, an expansion driven in part by climate change, said Ryan Harrigan, a biologist at the University of California, Los Angeles Center for Tropical Research.

"As the climate warms, these diseases that we historically considered more tropical in nature are moving northward," the researcher said.

"You see the same thing in Europe as well, this sort of northward march of West Nile virus into temperate regions."

This year, more than 2,000 cases of West Nile virus have been detected across 20 European countries, a record high.

The most impacted countries are Italy, Greece and France, where the virus is now spreading well beyond Mediterranean regions.

California meanwhile experienced a record-breaking heatwave in the spring, and a sweltering summer fueled by the El Nino phenomenon. The unseasonably warm autumn also included a tropical storm.

It created the ideal scenario for mosquitos, which breed in stagnant water.

"We're seeing suitable conditions for a lot of these vectors, as soon as the spring and well into the winter. That extends the amplification cycles of West Nile virus," Harrigan told AFP.

In Los Angeles County, where the outbreak is most severe, the first infected mosquito was detected in May, much earlier than usual.

That's two months ahead of schedule, said Susanne Kluh, manager of the local mosquito control authority.

Her teams take steps to inhibit mosquito reproductive cycles, including treating storm drains with larvicide every month and releasing sterile male mosquitos into the wild.

They also work to thwart breeding grounds on poorly maintained properties or in neglected swimming pools.❑

Hundreds of thousands out of power in U.S. after Thanksgiving storm

Washington, United States

Hundreds of thousands of Americans remained without power Friday after a Thanksgiving storm battered the eastern U.S., forcing a rare disruption to New York's famed Macy's parade.

Thursday's storm brought heavy rain and high winds to one of the busiest holiday travel periods of the year, downing trees and power lines from New Hampshire to North Carolina. Nearly a half million customers still had no power Friday, according to PowerOutage.us.

Some flight disruptions also lingered, with about 1,600 delays and more than 500 cancellations, according to the tracking service FlightAware.

Pennsylvania was most affected by the power outages, with about 122,000 people without electricity.

In Missouri, about 72,000 people still had power outages due to a storm that dumped as much as 15 inches of snow in the eastern part of the state.

Nearly 45,000 people were still lacking power in New York, where the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade was shifted to Saturday after being postponed due to weather for the first time in its 100-year history.

The parade, an annual spectacle that draws global viewership, sees brightly colored balloons travel through the heart of Manhattan. The festivities also kick off the holiday shopping season for the US.

The last major disruption to the parade was in 1971, when cold, wet and windy weather forced the grounding of Donald Duck and other pop culture-themed balloons. In 1997, gusting winds sent a "Cat in the Hat" inflatable into a lamppost that fell on a woman and put her into a nearly month-long coma.

The parade was cancelled outright from 1942 to 1945 due to a helium shortage during World War II.❑



The Manhattan skyline and Hudson River, seen from Weehawken, New Jersey on November 26, 2026.

War, fear drive Sudanese writer Baraka Sakin's fiction

Khartoum, Sudan

A lifetime of war and persecution has shaped the writing of Sudanese novelist Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin, who has turned the fear and longing that are so central to his experience into his main drive.

The 63-year-old fled Sudan for Europe in 2012 and then returned, dreaming of an end to his forced exile.

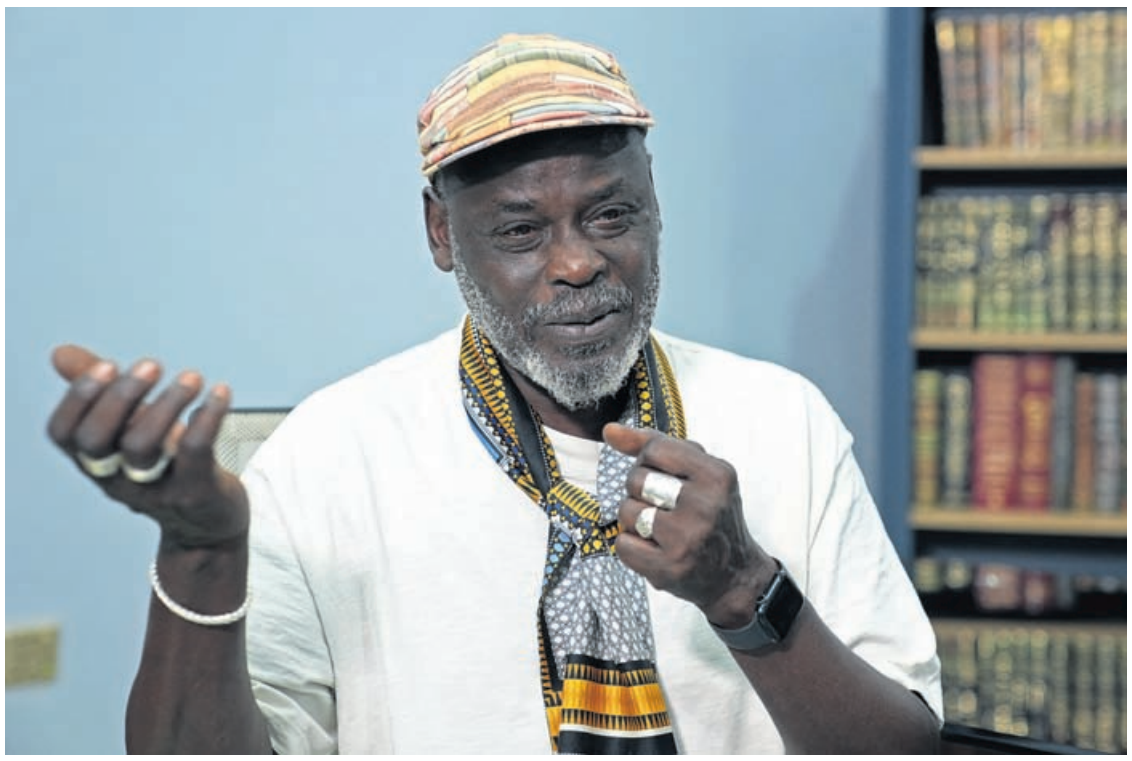
But the war that erupted in 2023 and killed more than 200,000 people pushed him out again. Still, he keeps writing. "Fear is one of the main motivations for my writing, particularly fear associated with war," he told AFP in an interview during a short trip to Khartoum, where he attended a literary event.

"Most of my writing is a product of war."

Baraka Sakin was forced to leave his homeland after authorities confiscated his books at the 2012 Khartoum Book Fair while banning almost all his work including "The Jungo: Stakes of the Earth" and "A Woman from Kamukadis".

His family has roots in Darfur, a region of western Sudan that has endured decades of violence and again been devastated by the war between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

"We were born into a time of war. We have lived our entire lives amid wars in Sudan, and perhaps we will continue to do so until we die," he said.



Sudanese novelist Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin speaks during an interview with AFP in Khartoum on November 17, 2026.

- Forced flight -

A central theme of his writing is the experience of living in exile.

Despite the safety he found in Europe, he said leaving Sudan was "one of the worst things" that ever happened to him.

Baraka Sakin lived in Austria as a refugee from 2012 until 2023, before moving to Paris where he received the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres award in 2023, the BBC Arab World Short Story Award and the Arab Literature Prize.

But recognition and success did little to ease his sense of alienation.

Baraka Sakin recalled the pain of forced displacement, living in a place he barely knew and so far away from the land he was so attached to.

"I felt imprisoned. I knew nothing about Europe," he said.

After nearly 15 years away, Baraka Sakin returned to Sudan for just two days, to join a group of people seeking to promote dialogue in wartime.

His attachment to his homeland remains strong, and dreams of returning for good if he can be sure he will not endure persecution once more.

"I didn't need to leave," he said.

- 'Strong woman' -

Resilience is another recurring theme in Baraka Sakin's books, portrayed in the example of his mother, who raised him and his siblings alone after his father died.

She was, in his words, "an extremely strong woman".

His love and admiration for his mother, and for women survivors of the war, inspired the novel published in 2024, "The Ashwas Whose Dreams Soared Like a Migratory Bird".

The story is set in a remote Sudanese village threatened by a militia known as the Ashwas, a reference to the paramilitary RSF.

As most villagers flee, a small group stays put, including three women referred to as "the three aunties".

Faced with fighters who loot homes and threaten the population, the women find ways to outsmart the violent fighters.

Through dark humour, Baraka Sakin turns the brutality of war into a story of the power of women and girls even in the darkest times.

The U.N. has documented widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence in the war in Sudan, including attacks targeting women and girls on ethnic grounds.

Between April 2023 and mid-April 2026, the U.N. Human Rights Office verified 546 incidents of conflict-related sexual violence across 16 of Sudan's 18 states, affecting at least 838 people, including 539 women and 284 girls.

"Destroying women and children means destroying the family itself," Baraka Sakin said.

He described the conflict as "an assault on that diversity and the memories that bind communities together".

"The warring parties destroy universities and offices, attack people's homes and destroy their memories... musical instruments, music archives and radio stations," he said, hoping that Sudan can one day know peace.

"This is a war against the memory of Sudanese peoples."❑

Marie-Antoinette's 'nipple bowl' auctioned for record $3.1 million



This photograph shows a breast-shaped porcelain bowl, known as jatte-teton, from the Royal Porcelain Manufactory of Sevres, commissioned in 1787 for Marie-Antoinette's dairy in Rambouillet, at Hotel Drouot in Paris on November 23, 2026, ahead of an auction on November 26, with an estimate of between 1 and 2 million euros.

Paris, France

A rare porcelain cup in the shape of a woman's breast which once belonged to French Queen Marie-Antoinette fetched a record 2.9 million euros ($3.1 million) at auction on Thursday.

Complete with a moulded pink-tinged ceramic nipple, the late 18th-century masterpiece from the renowned Sèvres porcelain factory was thought lost for two centuries before its chance rediscovery in the inventory of the Meyer Gallery in Paris.

The "jatte-teton", meaning nipple bowl, was one of four such pieces which King Louis XVI once ordered for Marie-Antoinette's dairy creamery at the royal residence in Rambouillet, southwest of the capital.

The Austrian-born royal was notorious for her extravagant spending, contributing to the souring of public opinion against the monarchy ahead of her execution by guillotine in October 1793 at the age of 37.

Hôtel Drouot, which auctioned off the shapely china, said the 2.9-million fee was a record for a Sèvres porcelain under the hammer.

The auctioneer, which had estimated that the nipple bowl would sell between one and two million euros, did not reveal who had managed to get their hands on the extravagant piece.

Both Hôtel Drouot and the Coutau-Bégarie house, which organised the sale, decided to donate part of the auction's proceeds to the Pink Ribbon breast cancer charity.❑



Mexico, U.S. combat cartels together as Trump pressure looms large

Mexico City, Mexico

Mexico's recent string of cartel kingpin takedowns aided by US intelligence suggest closer cooperation with Washington as President Claudia Sheinbaum comes under pressure to advance the so-called war on drugs.

A swarm of heavily armed helicopters involved in the arrest of cartel boss Fausto Isidro Meza -- alias "Chapo Isidro," one of the FBI's 10 most wanted men -- served as a reminder of that ever-closer relationship last Saturday.

It also marks leftist Sheinbaum's move away from the "Hugs, not bullets" policy of her predecessor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, which avoided direct confrontation with Mexico's drug-trafficking cartels.

Unlike Sheinbaum, the previous administration also avoided acknowledging such cooperation with the United States.

Mexican officials "have been very cooperative, way more cooperative than the last administration," U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin told Congress in June.

Sheinbaum has set conditions, however.

While U.S. intelligence is welcome, foreign agents on Mexican soil -- as President Donald Trump has proposed -- are not.



This combination of pictures created on November 27, 2024 shows Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum (L) on November 20, 2024, and Former U.S. President and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump on September 17, 2024.

"The Mexicans have done more than they've ever done before to go after these groups, but it is still not nearly enough," U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in September.

Trump has threatened to conduct strikes on cartels if the Mexican government itself fails to act.

- What about politics? -

U.S.-Mexico cooperation is "contradictory," according to national security expert Raul Benitez Manaut.

"Mexico cooperates extensively in capturing, imprisoning, investigating narcos... but not narcopoliticians," he told AFP. In April, Washington accused then-governor of Sinaloa, Ruben Rocha Moya, of links to the drug trade.

Rocha, a member of ruling party Morena, left office but has not been prosecuted, with Sheinbaum insisting there is no evidence to arrest him.

The government's Operation Swarm has arrested more than 100 public officials, targeting politicians linked to criminal groups. All are municipal-level officials.

Sheinbaum's own Security Secretary Omar Garcia Harfuch says cartels have been able to act "with impunity because there were authorities who allowed themselves to be corrupted."

– Like in Hollywood –

The capture of Chapo Isidro last Saturday was a flashy operation designed to capture the world's attention.

A video published by the army shows armed soldiers entering the kingpin's home at night, later depicting him handcuffed on a couch.

His arrest triggered retaliation in the form of burnt-out vehicles blocking the roads in Sinaloa, which also suffered multiple shootouts.

Twenty people died that night: four soldiers and 16 alleged criminals.

Mexico asked Washington to help "so that we could have more intelligence," Sheinbaum told a press conference, adding that she had authorized US drones to enter Mexican territory, locate the target and strike.

- 'Good friend' -

The U.S. has also provided intelligence in recent operations against the notorious Jalisco New Generation Cartel, including one that led to the death of its leader Nemesio "El Mencho" Oseguera in February.

Mexico has consistently expressed gratitude for the information sharing, while US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) chief Terry Cole has described Garcia Harfuch as a "trusted partner and a good friend of the United States."

"He knows the importance of sharing intelligence (and) targeting criminals," Cole told a press conference in Buenos Aires.

The DEA, however, rankled Mexico by opening a direct tip line for reports related to the Sinaloa cartel, a move Sheinbaum described as "interference."

The Mexican leader had already protested the presence of two CIA agents in an anti-drug operation in her country, which only came to light after they died in a traffic accident.❑

Costa Rica bars entry to U.N. rapporteur over 'links to terrorist acts'

San José, Costa Rica

Costa Rica's government said Thursday it had denied entry to U.N. rapporteur Francesca Albanese, who has accused Israel of genocide, because she was the subject of an "international alert over links to terrorist acts".

Albanese, the U.N. special rapporteur on the Palestinian territories, arrived Thursday at the airport serving the capital San Jose to receive an honorary degree from the University of Costa Rica, a public university.

The Italian independent expert has faced harsh pushback from Israel and some of its allies over her longstanding accusations that Israel has committed genocide and other war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

Albanese "is the subject of an international alert over links to terrorist acts," Omer Badilla, director general of Costa Rica's immigration authority, which falls under the interior ministry, said in a video posted on social media.

"I hope this clears up any doubts and makes clear the threat this woman poses to national security," he added.

Albanese branded the entry refusal "a disgrace," while speaking to a radio station at the country's leading university while at the airport which she remained Thursday.

"What happened is very regrettable," she added.

The rector's office at the university, the country's most important and prestigious, said immigration authorities were "blocking" Albanese's entry and asked the government to explain the decision.

The government of Costa Rican President Laura Fernandez is a close ally of US President Donald Trump and has pursued closer trade ties with Israel since she took office in May.

Albanese had condemned a free trade agreement between Costa Rica and Israel last December and called for its ratification to be put on hold, prompting a rebuke from the government, which accused her of interfering in domestic affairs.❑



This combination of pictures created on November 27, 2026 shows Costa Rica's president-elect Laura Fernandez during a press conference by President Rodrigo Chaves after his final State of the Nation address at the Legislative Assembly in San Jose on May 4, 2026, and United Nations (U.N.) Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese during a press conference on the human rights situation in Gaza in Geneva on September 15, 2025.

'Proof it happened': Photographers reflect on Duterte's drug war

Manila, Philippines

Noel Celis's pulse still races whenever a motorcyclist pulls up alongside him at a red light, a legacy of countless nights photographing Philippine ex-president Rodrigo Duterte's bloody drug war.

"They call it riding in tandem," the freelance photographer told AFP of the two-man teams that once roamed the capital, Manila, dealing out death, conceding it remained "scary" after years of death threats tied to his work.

Duterte goes on trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) on November 30 for the "crime against humanity of murder", over killings that took place between 2011 and 2019.

For photographers like Celis, it is as if that period happened yesterday.

The 43-year-old, who worked for AFP at the time, photographed about 200 drug war killings.

One picture showed a young woman cradling the bloody body of her boyfriend shortly after he was gunned down at a busy intersection.

To the mainly Catholic nation, it bore a disturbing resemblance to Michelangelo's "La Pieta", a sculpture of the Virgin Mary cradling Christ after his crucifixion. It swiftly became the defining image of the crackdown.



Graphic content / (FILES) A woman hugs her husband, next to a placard which reads "I'm a pusher", who was shot dead by an unidentified gunman in Manila on July 23, 2016.

Those working the drug war beat took to calling themselves "nightcrawlers", after a Hollywood film about Los Angeles camera crews chasing late-night mayhem.

- Mental map of death -

At first, the journalists said, the police had no qualms about tipping them off about the killings.

But they clammed up as the public outcry grew, and the photographers resorted to chasing after mortuary vans summoned by police to collect the dead.

It all came flooding back for Dondi Tawatao, 46, when he returned with AFP to a garbage-strewn street where, on a rainy night 10 years ago, he took pictures of two bodies beneath the exposed roots of a banyan tree.

Near them were two handguns he believed were planted there.

"It was very dark, very sinister. It's supposed to be the tree of life, but on that night, it became the tree of death," he told AFP.

After shooting the drug war for four years, the killings became "normalized" to the point where he stopped visiting crime scenes unless they involved at least three corpses.

The long nights rearranged how he saw Manila, he said.

"You sort of have a mental map of where the killings took place. Like randomly, you would be walking, then you realize, 'this was where so-and-so was killed'."

He later left the profession, "primarily to take a rest mentally".

- 'We went to apologize' -

Freelancer Kimberly dela Cruz, 36, found her first victim on Manila's rail tracks, and another atop a major bridge.

"It was a full moon, and I thought, 'What a beautiful evening it would have been -- except somebody died'," she told AFP of the first.

The head of the man at the second scene was wrapped in packaging tape. He lay next to a cardboard poster that read: "I'm a drug pusher, don't emulate me."

Some of her colleagues would require professional counseling. One suffered from recurring nightmares about the drug war dead coming back to life.

Celis's memories centre on the heart-wrenching keening of victims' wives and mothers, and the sharp, metallic smell of blood.

Residents of the mainly slum-area killing grounds could fear journalists as much as they did police, dela Cruz said.

"I was an outsider. They thought I was an (intelligence operative), police, or somebody that would bring evil," she said.

Celis said photographers wrestled with feelings of guilt over not being able to help, and accusations of "profiting from the suffering of other people".

When he and a colleague attended the wake of the "La Pieta" victim, they half-dreaded a lynching by angry relatives.

"We went there to apologize for not being able to help," he said, telling the victim's girlfriend the pictures could be evidence were charges ever brought.❑

U.N. refugee agency seeks $7.1B in 2027



Participants including Barham Salih, United Nations high Commissioner for Refugees, attend the Vienna Migration Conference hosted by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) on November 16, 2026 in the Austrian capital Vienna.

Geneva, Switzerland

The United Nations' refugee agency said on Friday it was seeking a much-reduced $7.1 billion to protect stateless people and respond to emergencies in 2027.

UNHCR chief Barham Salih warned last month that his agency was being "asked to do the impossible", overstretched by a huge funding shortfall and near record-high population displacements around the world.

UNHCR's 2026 appeal targeted $8.5 billion -- of which only $2.9 billion has been raised to date.

"The appeal comes amid immense humanitarian needs and an exceptionally difficult funding environment. As a result, UNHCR's 2027 budget prioritizes the most urgent needs," the agency said.

If fully funded, UNHCR would use the money next year to provide protection services for 13.6 million refugees and asylum seekers and 6.7 million internally displaced people (IDPs).

"We also aim to provide financial assistance to 3.9 million refugees and two million IDPs, and shelter and housing assistance for 1.8 million refugees and 850,000 IDPs," the agency said.

Some 117.8 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced from their homes at the end of 2025, according to UNHCR -- down slightly from 2024's record 123.2 million.

Of those 117.8 million, 35.6 million were refugees under UNHCR's mandate, with two-thirds coming from Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Venezuela.

Despite those elevated numbers, the agency has had to slash its workforce due to budget cuts.

The United States -- traditionally the world's top donor -- has cut foreign aid under President Donald Trump, while other major donors have also tightened their belts.

Since 2024, nearly 8,000 employees have left UNHCR, with its workforce falling from nearly 20,000 to just under 12,000.

In 2025 UNHCR sought $10.6 billion and ended up with $3.8 billion to spend; in 2024 it sought $10.8 billion and got $5.3 billion.

UNHCR spokesman Matthew Saltmarsh told reporters that the agency's strategy remained "protecting people forced to flee, reacting very quickly to emergencies when they arise but also, crucially, to help refugees to move beyond aid". ❑

The Aruban way of life: Creating community with Cas di Torto

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban people understand that a happy life is spent in great ambience with your loved ones. Passed down from one generation to the other, building community has been a key aspect in forging our traditions and customs. The Cas di Torto (mud house) played a big role in cultivating community, bridging families together and forming close bonds with your neighbors—something we highly value today.

Cas di Torto: History and construction

The origin of the Cas di Torto is said to date back to the early 19th century in the Paraguana Peninsula in Venezuela. Refugees who sought sanctuary on Aruba introduced this building method to the island.

The uprights of the walls were made with sturdy and straight wayaca or kwihi wood, or from thin mangrove struts. Then, the wattle walls were weaved in using branches and twigs from the warero and sisal plant, daubed with a mixture of grass and mud. Finally, the walls got a coat of white plaster to seal everything in.

For roofing, corn stalks, palm fonds and straws were used, allowing air to flow freely through the house. This method of roofing was known throughout the ABC islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), but the use of cornstalks in Aruba eventually got replaced with use of mud and white plaster for the roofs. The white plaster all around made the houses looks like cake, hence the name "Torto" (Spanish for "cake").

Building community

Building Torto houses was often a community effort. Young couples who were about to get married had to have their house built before they could tie the knot and start their own family. This is where the help of the community comes into play.

Neighbors, extended family and friends would all help in the construction of a Torto House. And everyone had a role: The men oversaw the building of the house, and the women were tasked with collecting wood and straws, cooking and taking care of the little ones.

The couple's family were primarily responsible for feeding everyone who helped build the house. Before construction, someone usually had the task to prepare the meal; going fishing or slaughter farm animals like goats, chicken or sheep. Even the older kids had their tasks; the older children of the family usually helped with collecting water and mixing the mud.

The average duration of constructing a Cas di Torto was 4 months.

At the end of a long day of work, everyone would gather around and enjoy a feast of hearty food. This type of help from friends and family became a tradition and was called "paga lomba": You help me today; I'll help you tomorrow.





Nowadays, traditional Cas di Torto are rare, especially those that are still inhabited. Houses that do exist probably date back more than a century.❑

Picture credits: Aruba National Library (BNA) and the Monumentbureau archive on Coleccion.aw

Adriaan Laclé: One of Aruba's richest men in the twentieth century

(Oranjestad)—The name Adriaan Laclé may ring a bell to locals as one of the main roads on the island, but about a century ago, Adriaan Laclé was a rich businessman, well-known for his generosity, wealth, and taste.

Adriaan was born in 1866 and was the eldest of six children. Not much is known about his childhood upbringing or any of his earlier business ordeals, but during his hay day he often helped people get loans, was a well-established trader, and owned several plots of land. In fact, he commissioned the construction of the famous La Quinta Carmen manor—now a restaurant. Though he himself never lived in the beautiful manor, his own house also reflected his success and good taste.





Currently, renovations are taking place to restore the Lacle house. It can found in the back streets of main street Oranjestad.

Regarding his personal life, it has been said that he was married twice during his lifetime. He had his first daughter during his first marriage but lost his wife soon after her birth. During his second marriage, he fathered 16 children. However, it has been said that only 11 of those 17 made it past 18 years of age. Perhaps two of his most well-known daughters are Maria Monica Laclé and Maria Veneranda Laclé, who went on to marry successful brothers Eloy Arends and Maximilian Arends, respectively. Their houses are still standing; Eloy and Maria Monica's mansion functions as the townhall, used to host civil marriages, while Maximilian and Maria Veneranda's house stands on the opposite side of the road to them—though currently under renovation after years left in ruin.❑

Source: De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba) by Evert Bongers.



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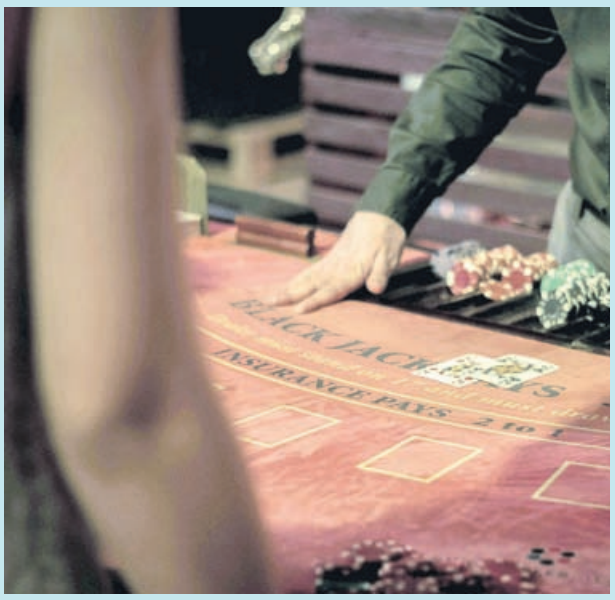
Feeling lucky? Here are the top 4 casinos for a fun night out!







(Oranjestad)—Did you wake up today feeling very lucky and want to spice up your evening plans? How about you try your luck at one of these three casinos on the island, where the vibes are great and the slots are enticing!

Alhambra Casino

If you're staying at the Costa Linda Beach Resort or Aruba Beach Club, the closest casino you can get to is in the Alhambra shopping mall. With its outer design inspired by the Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain, this casino was established in 1984 and is one of the most visited and beloved casinos on the island—by both tourists and locals!

Alhambra has more than 450 slots, video poker and multi-game machines with denominations beginning at 1¢. There are also various weekly promotions like Daily Free Spin, Wilder Wednesdays or 50/30 Fridays where from 7pm to Midnight you can get a chance every 30 minutes to receive $50 Free Slot Play!

Alhambra is also known for hosting its huge Bingo events like Bonus Bingo Thursday, Super Bingo Saturday and Sunday Funday Bingo. Oh, and you also have a chance to win a free T-shirt on Sundays when you earn 250 Base Slot Points with your Players' Club card!

For more info, call (+297) 288-9000 or email at info@divisino.com. Tables are open from 5pm to 3am.

The Casino Aruba at Hilton

Located in the heart of the high-rise hotel area, this Vegas-style casino has a variety of slot machines and table games, in addition to video poker machines and sport books.

For poker fans, The Casino Aruba at Hilton is the place to be for regular poker tournaments, including the The Caribbean Poker Series! Next tournament is expected in September 2027.

Be sure to look out for the daily promotions in their poker rooms like the Early Bird special where the first 5 players to buy in $200 min can receive an additional $100 extra. Player's Club members can also get in on the action with a selection of daily promotions, including the Progressive Mystery Jackpot!

Call +297 526 6930 or email at playersclub@tcaruba.com for more information. Working hours for slots, rooms and tables vary, so check out www.tcaruba.com and never miss out on the fun!

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton

One of Aruba's more luxurious casinos, The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton offers 16 table games, namely Blackjack, Craps, Roulette, Caribbean Stud Poker, Three Card Prime, Let It Ride, and Heads up Hold 'Em, as well as 200 different slot games, and sports betting. Oh, and don't forget to grab your complimentary drinks while you're playing!

Located in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel at the far end of the Palm Beach hotel strip (near Fisherman's Hut), this 15,000 square-foot space offers an elevated experience, especially for Loyalty Program members. Members from different tiers can reap extraordinary benefits and complimentary services. Tiers programs include Crystal (0 - 1,999 Tier Points), Ruby (2,000 - 4,999 Tier Points), Diamond (5,000 - 9,999 Tier Points) and for the real casino lovers, Cobalt (10,000 - 34,999 Tier Points).

Make your glamorous night an unforgettable one at The Casino at Ritz-Carlton.

Call +297-527-2276 or email at rcarubacasinoguestrelations@marriott.com for more info! The Casino is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm. Tables open at 6 pm. "Cheers to winning!"

Orchid Casino

Ever wondered what it's like to play in paradise? At Orchid Casino you may get a taste of exactly that.

A casino oasis situated in Palm Beach, Orchid Casino offers a selection of 500 slot games started from a penny to $25. Try your luck at one of their 12 action-packed table games including Double Deck Blackjack, 3 Card Poker, Roulette and Dice to name a few. Orchid also offers comfortable betting rooms, complete with enough seating and HD screens. You want to kick back and enjoy the play-offs? Orchid's got you there you!

And let's not forget their renowned poker room! Voted "Best Poker Room in Aruba" in a row by All In Magazine, Orchid's poker room has hosted some of poker's greatest players. New to poker, don't worry! There's an expert and dedicated staff on hand during all casino hours.

For more info, call Orchid Casino at +297 525-7777 or email at info@orchidcasinoaruba.com.

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Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
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Snakes of Aruba

Arikok National Park is home to various unique plant and animal species such as Aruba's rare endemic rattlesnake Crotalus unicolor). This rattlesnake is locally known as the 'Cascabel'. But Aruba has two more snake species living on the island: the Santanero and the Boa.



Cascabel (Crotalus unicolor)

The small Cascabel or Aruba Island Rattlesnake averages 70 cm in length. The body color is often uniform gray or light brown. There may be a faint pattern of diamond shaped markings on the back. This pattern is most noticeable on younger snakes. The most distinctive feature of this snake is the rattle at the end of its tail which makes a buzzing sound when the snake is alarmed. Cascabels are shy and not aggressive, but their venom can be dangerous to humans. It is best to leave this snake alone. Do not attempt to catch or kill it.

Cascabels hunt by waiting under bushes and fruiting trees to catch passing lizards, mice, rats, small rabbits, and an occasional bird. This is often considered to be one of the rarest rattlesnakes in the world. The range of the Cascabel is restricted to the rugged and mountainous areas of the island mostly within Arikok National Park. The Arikok National Park was designated in the early 1980s to include most of the rattlesnake's population, providing a safe refuge in which the snake can be protected and monitored. The government has also implemented outreach and education initiatives to change local perception of the snake and highlight its ecological and economic importance – it is now being promoted as a national symbol.

Arikok's partnership with the Toledo zoo has safeguarded the rattlesnake ex-situ and led to a number of research projects collecting critical data on the Cascabel's abundance, life history and habitat requirement to help guide future conservation efforts.

Santanero

The slender Santanero or Aruban Cat-eyed Snake is typically less than 50 cm long. This snake is recognizable by the large scales on the top of its head and by its pattern of dark brown bands alternating with light brown bands. The belly is plain white or cream colored without any markings. This snake is shy and not aggressive. However, it has enlarged teeth at the back of its mouth and mild venom which is not dangerous to humans. However, the venom can paralyze small lizards and frogs. Santaneros are most active at night when they search for food. During the day, they hide under rocks or leaves. They frequently climb trees and cactus. Santaneros eat toads, frogs, insects, and lizards. You may find Santaneros near dams during periods of rainy weather or crossing roads at night. This snake is found island wide. A Santanero in your garden will keep away the unwanted insects. If you encounter a Santanero around your garden, please do not harm this species.

Boa (Boa constrictor)

Boas are Aruba's largest snakes. The longest Boa found on the island was slightly less than 3 m. Newborn Boas average 35 cm. Boas are not venomous. The most distinctive feature of a Boa is its pattern of dark brown and tan blotches which become red toward the tail. The belly in white or cream colored with numerous black spots. Boas are excellent climbers and may be found in trees and cactus. Boas also hide in the leaves under bushes waiting to catch prey that pass. Boas catch their prey with their teeth and then constrict it in their coils. The Boa's diet consists of birds, lizards, rats, mice, and rabbits. Large Boas have been known to eat small goats and chickens. When threatened, Boas will hiss loudly. Boas are a non-native species. The first Boas were reported on the island in 1999. Since that time they have been found across the entire island in all types of habitats. ❑

BOA
(Boa constrictor)



CASCABEL
(Crotalus unicolor)



SANTANERO
(Leptodeira bakeri)



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.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes.❑

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris

Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.





Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas – more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

If you are looking for history San Nicolas has it.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

The Community Museum holds a remarkable collection that spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. ❑



Aruba: the legend behind its name

(Oranjestad)—Most folkloric tales and legends in Aruba revolve around our indigenous ancestors, who came from mainland Venezuela, and discovered the island and made it into their new home. This particular legend tells the story of the birth of the Aruba name.



The legend follows the life of Arua, an indigenous Cacique originally from Aroa in the Falcon state in Venezuela in the year 50 AD. Arua had a son around the year 70 AD with his wife Shira, who they named Corobori. When Corobori was old enough, he joined his father on the usual boat trip to the islands of Curacao and Bonaire to gather salt.

On their way back to Mainland Venezuela, they were caught up in a heavy rain storm—a side effect from a passing, but far away, hurricane. Of course, because of the lack of motors and sail, their boat was left in the mercy of the heavy winds. After a while, the storm started to pass, and the clouds began to clear up. Finally able to see around them, the Cacique spotted land approximately an hour away. So, they started to row in that direction until they reached the coast.

Once they arrived on what they thought was Venezuela, they decided to stay the night and fix their kayak. The next morning, the Cacique ordered his son and a few warriors to go find any sign of population in the area: "Corobori," Arua said. "Don't come back without news. It's in your hands how long we stay here till we find our family. So, if you need to take a week to gather information, we will wait for you."

"Don't worry," Corobori replied. "As soon as we have any information, we will let you know." Armed with arrows and spears, backpacks filled with food and water containers, they set off. They climbed several small hills, but no sign of a village. They crossed different dry riverbeds, but no sign of anything. When the sun finally descended, they found themselves near a fairly tall hill and decided to climb it for a better view of a village. This hill was called Pan Dushi or Orcuyo, which today we call Hooiberg.

The next morning, they could clearly see that they have landed on an island, but an unfamiliar one at that. When Corobori went back to where his father was waiting, he told him the news: "Father Arua, you have just discovered an island, but it is not Curacao or Bonaire. Far in the south, we saw the big mountains of our homeland Venezuela, which we could have never seen on the other island. This leads us to believe we are on a new island. But that's not all. When the sun came up, we saw in the distance a glowing plain, which we think may be salt."

The Cacique was pleased to hear of his son's findings. He decided to stay a couple days on the newly-discovered island in search for salt. The next morning they ascended Hooiberg again and stayed to see if they could find nearby smoke, indicating an inhabitant village. But they found nothing. So they went back to their initial arrival settlement, now known as Santo Largo in Savaneta. The next morning they hiked along the Spaans Lagoen near the Mangel Halto Beach and reached the area of Bushiri. There, they boarded they kayaks and heading to what we know now as Malmok, where they found rocks of salt. After a couple days of exploring the island and gathering some salt rocks, they left for Venezuela, where they were reunited with their families.

Throughout the year, they travelled back and forth to Aruba, collecting salt. After a while they settled on the island, generations of families living along the coast. Corobori was the first indigenous inhabitant in our history to explore the entirety of the island.

Arua, after decades as the leader of his tribe, spent his last days on the island. Having reached 80 years old, he called for his family on his death bed. In his hammock, he said: "My children, many years have passed, and I've asked my warrior to bring me back to the island so I can laid to rest. The God of living has given me the gift of life to see my son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. But now he is calling me home. Corobori, my torch is now passed to you. Guide our people, and be the leader you were always meant to become. If one day you leave my island, do not forget that it is also yours. This is my last wish: When I die, bury me in our maize plantation."

And so when the Cacique passed away, his wishes were granted and he was laid to rest in the area we now know as the Paradera Cemetery. Where he used to live, they built the Paradera Church.

And that is the tale of what inspired the Aruba name. In the generations that lived or travelled back and forth to the island, there were many familiar names*, like Guadiriki, a warrior who was there when the island got discovered and his son, whom he called Huliba; Corobori and his children, Corodori, Camacuri and Turibana, Masiduri; and Malmok, the 13-year-old boy who alerted the Cacique when the Caribes attacked.

Familiar names: all these names are familiar to Arubans, as these are the names of places and plants on the island.❑

Source: Un storia di e Indjan Arua (A story of the Indian Arua) by Adolf (Dufi) Kock.

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — Are you back or still enjoying your vacation?… We would like to give you a shout-out by inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island!

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ……. Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive?

Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.❑



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

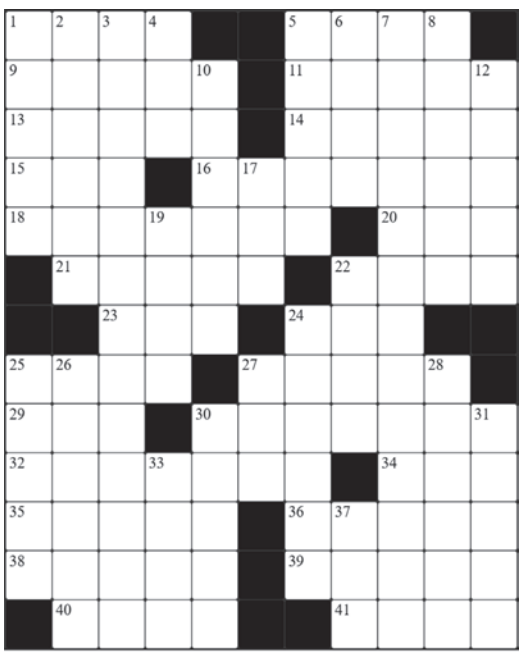
1. Days gone by
5. Encircle
9. Knight wear
11. Orchestra members
13. Nary a soul
14. Lean
15. Moody music
16. Florida neighbor
18. Prepares to shave
20. That lady
21. Avoids
22. Sibilant summons
23. Harden
24. -- canto
25. Heavy metal
27. Women's quarters
29. French friend
30. Tricked
32. Fast-growing cereal grains
34. Genetic stuff
35. Saucer occupant
36. Bird-related
38. Trig functions
39. Chop up
40. Beast
41. A long time

DOWN

1. Seminar group
2. Kitchen come-ons
3. Something easy
4. Great weight
5. "Vacation" singers
6. Structural support
7. Something hard
8. Refuses
10. King's stand-in
12. Kick off
17. Hosp. sections
19. Tinted
22. Llama's land
24. Fragrant wood
25. Eastern monks
26. Designer Pucci
27. -- up (agitated)
28. Threat
30. Slow-witted
31. Hamlet extras
33. Lewd look
37. Through



Yesterday's answer



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the 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.

11-27 CRYPTOQUOTE

V Z B T R W U H X H T U , P B T .

T S V B U S S L L B D V S N A

P D J B T V W . — R A X H T C B P A W

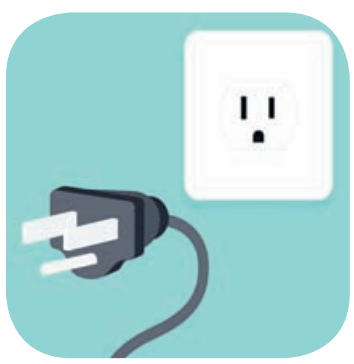
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LET US BE GRATEFUL TO THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE US HAPPY. THEY ARE THE CHARMING GARDENERS WHO MAKE OUR SOULS BLOSSOM. — MARCEL PROUST

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 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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★ 11/28

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Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★ 11/27

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Japan unveils rover prototype for Moon water mission



A driving test model of the Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) rover is demonstrated at the headquarters of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in Tokyo on November 25, 2026.

Tokyo, Japan

Japan's space agency unveiled Wednesday a test model of a rover that will travel to the Moon's south pole in a search for water, which could potentially be used for rocket fuel.

Dubbed LUPEX -- Lunar Polar Exploration -- the mission aims to send a Japanese rover to the Moon in 2028 in collaboration with India, which successfully landed a spacecraft near the lunar south pole last year.

The Moon's polar regions contain areas known as permanent shadows, which never see sunlight, and scientists say it is highly likely that water exists there near the lunar surface.

The LUPEX team hopes the rover will gather data on the quantity and quality of the water, helping to determine if it could one day be used to make space exploration more sustainable.

"We ultimately want to use lunar water for rocket fuel," project manager Takeshi Hoshino told reporters on Wednesday.

On the International Space Station, more than 90 percent of water is recycled.

But when rockets fly by burning oxygen and hydrogen, that water produced cannot be recovered for reuse, Hoshino explained.

"That's why a key objective is to produce fuel on the Moon for future missions, whether returning to Earth or heading onward to Mars," he said.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) unveiled the four-legged test model that will form part of the LUPEX rover to reporters in Tokyo.

Scientists have been testing its performance under a variety of conditions, including "climbing slopes using a single leg, continuous driving using two legs, and mobility trials under vacuum conditions", Hoshino said.

The rover is expected to identify potential water sources once it lands and drill into the site to collect samples, according to JAXA.

Last year, Japan and India agreed to jointly pursue the LUPEX mission, with India developing the lander and Japan supplying the rover.

Amid an intensifying space race globally, JAXA landed in 2024 an unmanned probe on the Moon -- albeit at a crooked angle -- making it just the fifth country to achieve what is known as a "soft landing".

But Tokyo-based firm ispace last year failed in its attempt to become the first private firm outside the United States to achieve a controlled arrival on the Moon.

Last month, JAXA successfully launched a spacecraft to one of Mars's moons on a world-first mission to retrieve samples, potentially helping unlock the origins of the Solar System and life on Earth.❑

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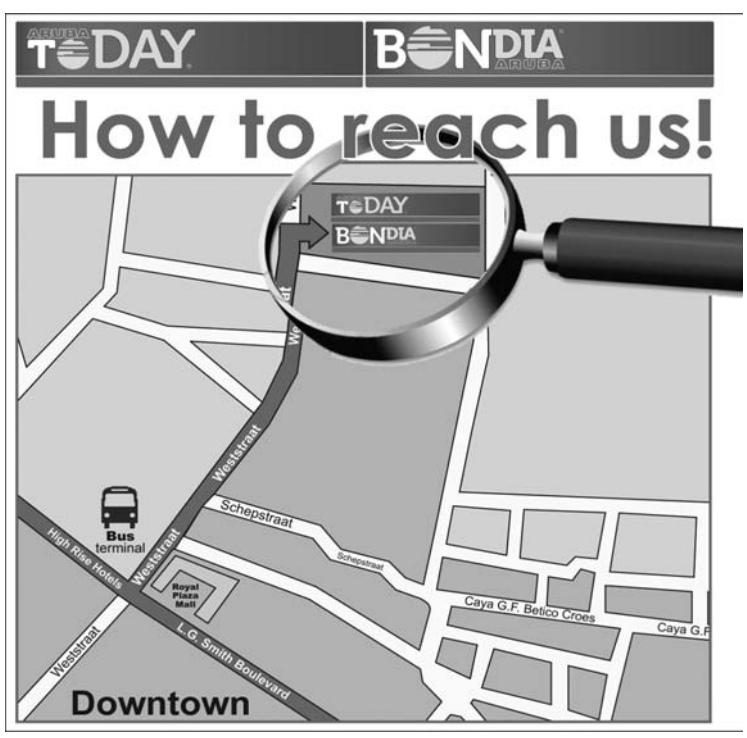

ARUBA TODAY

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

Editors
Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo
Oriana Geerman

Sales
Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds
classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection
accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website
Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
@ArubaTodayNews

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Robots roam Singapore's urban AI testing ground

Singapore, Singapore
When coffee is spilled at an office block in a futuristic enclave of Singapore, AI-powered cameras and sensors detect it and send a cleaning robot right away.
The wheeled robot receives a signal from an operations hub, rolls off its dock and takes a lift to the eighth floor, where it finds the mess and clears it up -- all without human intervention.
It was part of a staged demonstration in Punggol Digital District in suburban Singapore, where the city-state is carrying out real-world trials of tech that could become part of everyday life.
A district-wide "live test-bed" of this kind, allowing companies to experiment in an urban environment, is rare globally, said Tang Bing Wan, chief digital and technology officer at JTC Corporation, Singapore's industrial landlord.
The government-developed mini-city, PDD for short, spans 50 hectares (120 acres) -- a bit bigger than Vatican City -- and currently houses businesses and office blocks, as well as a mall, university campus and metro station.
"Companies that dabble in robotics, cybersecurity and even the financial services industry" are based there, with more set to join, Tang told AFP.
PDD, which borders residential areas, is not strikingly futuristic to walk around.



This photo taken on September 11, 2026 shows Lionbot R3 cleaning robots docked at charging point in an office building at Punggol Digital District in Singapore.

But behind the scenes, a centralized digital platform helps run infrastructure, from waste disposal to elevators. There are also plenty of robots around -- including machines designed to alleviate the ageing city-state's manpower crunch in areas such as cleaning and security.
A wheeled robot that can deliver food orders to offices is also being trialed.

- Central platform -
Despite the shrinking workforce, Singapore residents expect their surroundings to remain clean, safe and well-maintained, said Ong Chen Hui of the Infocomm Media Development Authority.
"Robotics offers a real part of the solution" by doing physically taxing routine tasks, freeing up workers for jobs requiring "human judgment, care, and skill", Ong said.
The district will be formally inaugurated next month in a grand ceremony headed by the prime minister.
A district-wide "open digital platform" coordinates the robots and connects different locations, gathering data from thousands of cameras and sensors on everything from air temperature to foot traffic.
Artificial intelligence analyses the data, enabling the system -- with the help of human operators -- to respond to problems, anticipate disruption, and reduce energy use and waste.
Elevator movements can be reduced during periods of low demand, while restaurants can anticipate busy hours to adjust staffing and food preparation.
Centralized air-conditioning controls can also be adjusted in real time, to use less power.
A digital replica of the district displayed on a giant screen at the operations centre gives staff there a real-time view of PDD and helps them spot or predict anomalies.
PDD probably has "the highest concentration of robots in Singapore where they can roam freely, because the estate is designed" that way, said James Tan, a director at government technology arm GovTech.

- 'Not dystopian' -
Companies use PDD to test their robots and other new tech before wider deployment, and JTC's Tang said safety rules are being crafted to prevent accidents.
"It's not a dystopian future. That's not what's happening here," he said.
Hospital worker Amanda Lim, 34, who lives nearby, said her children like the robots.
"They will chase and play with them," she said while strolling with her family at the mall. Despite increasing global concern over the potential risks of AI technology, no one AFP spoke to at PDD expressed concern over data privacy or surveillance.
Among the companies leading trials in the government-built district is homegrown LionsBot, which makes fleets of cleaning machines for what it envisions as the "cleaner of the future" who will no longer be holding a mop.
And Japan's Panasonic is testing a shared communications system for robots from different manufacturers, using PDD's digital infrastructure.
Takeshi Ando, managing director at Panasonic's innovation centre at PDD, said similar trials conducted in Japan took more time.❑



This aerial photograph shows the construction site of a Google data center in Farciennes, on November 27, 2026.

Belgian authorities force Google to halt data centre construction

Brussels, Belgium
Belgian authorities have ordered Google to suspend construction of a data centre in the south of the country because of a lack of proper planning permission, a regional official said Friday.
"We have identified a major offence: the illegal construction of a building covering three hectares," or 7.4 acres, Nicolas Yernaux, spokesman for the Wallonia regional authorities, told AFP.
The "stop-work" order at the former mining site covering some 50 hectares in total comes after NGO Greenpeace accused Google of carrying on construction despite lacking the correct permits.
The regional authority said that inspectors visited the site on Thursday to inform Google representatives to halt construction.
The mammoth project has been locked in legal litigation for months after Google applied to amend the terms of its planning permission.
The application sought to allow a cooling system for the facilities using water drawn from the nearby River Sambre, whereas the initial project had envisaged air cooling, Belgian media reported.

The move stirred local opposition as severe droughts since spring exacerbated fears about tapping the river -- and regional officials refused the application over the summer.
Google has challenged that decision in court and a hearing is scheduled for January.
But a report this week by Greenpeace Belgium said that drone footage showed work was still progressing in the meantime.
"The tech giant is currently continuing its work, even though in August the latest version of its planning permission to build this data centre was revoked," the environmental group said.
"The climate crisis will only intensify in our region. Against this backdrop, the construction of energy-guzzling behemoths cannot be allowed to go unnoticed."❑

Bears, Eagles and Bills win as NFL serves up Thanksgiving thrillers

Los Angeles, United States

Caleb Williams hit Rome Odunze for a winning touchdown with three seconds remaining to lift the Chicago Bears to a 39-35 victory over Detroit on Thursday as all three NFL Thanksgiving games came down to the wire.

The Buffalo Bills edged the Kansas City Chiefs 13-10 in a heavyweight AFC matchup thanks to a 57-yard Tyler Bass field goal as time expired.

In Dallas, Philadelphia's Jake Elliott drilled a 59-yard field goal with two seconds remaining to give the Eagles a 39-38 victory over the Cowboys in a classic NFC East division clash.

Bears quarterback Williams's six-yard pass to Odunze -- who managed to get both feet down in the back corner of the end zone -- gave Chicago their first lead of the game in Detroit, where victory lifted them to 9-2 and into the NFC North division lead over the 8-3 Lions.

"We knew we needed a big one," Odunze said. "Luckily the O-line held up for me. Caleb delivered the ball exactly where it needed to be, and I was able to make a play in the back of the end zone."

Williams connected on 30 of 44 passes for 345 yards and two touchdowns -- both to Odunze.



Tyler Bass #16 of the Buffalo Bills kicks a field goal as time expires to beat the Kansas City Chiefs 13-10 at Highmark Stadium on November 26, 2026 in Orchard Park, New York.

The Bears had two rushing touchdowns from Kyle Monangai and one from D'Andre Swift to help offset a monster game from Lions running back Jahmyr Gibbs, who ran for 205 yards and three TDs.

The Bears erased an early 10-point deficit, knotting it at 10-10 on Monangai's first touchdown with 4:07 left in the first half.

Jared Goff hit Sam LaPorta with an 11-yard scoring pass to push Detroit's lead to 19-10 going into halftime, but Monangai's two-yard TD had the Bears back within two, minutes into the third quarter.

Gibbs motored 70 yards for a touchdown that gave Detroit a 35-24 lead with 8:20 remaining.

Chicago responded with a three-play, 71-yard drive capped by Williams's 41-yard scoring pass to Odunze.

Detroit came up empty on two possessions before the Bears put together their game-winning drive.

- Marquee matchup fizzles -

In Buffalo, cold, rainy weather put a damper on the marquee matchup between Kansas City quarterback Patrick Mahomes and Bills counterpart Josh Allen.

Allen connected on 10 of 21 passing attempts for 81 yards with two interceptions and no touchdowns.

But James Cook ran for 117 yards and a touchdown and Bass booted a pair of field goals as the Bills improved their AFC-best record to 10-1 and the Chiefs slipped to 8-3.

Mahomes threw for 174 yards, piloting a seven-play 56-yard drive capped by Emmett Johnson's one-yard TD run that put the Chiefs up 10-7 minutes into the second half.

The Bills tied it on Bass's first field goal. Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker, who booted a 26-yard field goal in the first half, missed a 46-yarder with six minutes to play before Bass came through again.

"I was just trying to stay fully present," Bass said. "Just telling myself: trust your preparation and go out there and soak it all in and have fun.

"It was fun being able to do that for my team."

- Milton's Eagles soar -

The Eagles erased a 21-point third-quarter deficit to hand the Cowboys another heartbreaking defeat.

Eagles quarterback Joe Milton threw for 331 yards and three touchdowns and ran for another TD.

Milton, claimed by the Eagles after he was cut from the Cowboys practice squad in October, said his meticulous work when he was still in Dallas had paid off.

"You never know when your opportunity is going to come," said Milton, who was brought in to shore up Philadelphia's quarterback ranks after Jalen Hurts was lost for the season with blood clots.❑

Majestic Malinin breaks short program world record

Tokyo, Japan

American Ilia Malinin said skating without expectations had helped him break the short program world record on Friday with a stunning score of 114.81.

The three-time world champion gave a majestic performance at the NHK Trophy in Japan to beat the previous highest score of 113.97, set by American Nathan Chen at the 2022 Beijing Olympics.

Malinin was the hot favorite for gold in his first Olympic appearance at this year's Milan-Cortina Games, but flamed out in a disastrous performance and finished eighth.

He said previous experience had taught him not to try too hard, and he reaped the benefits in Tokyo. "Coming to this competition, I just wanted to enjoy the moment of figure skating, enjoy the environment," said the 21-year-old, who is nicknamed "Quad God" for his audacious quadruple jumps.

"Because the last few seasons I've always been trying to do my best, trying to appreciate how high I could score.

"Here, I just came to enjoy figure skating and I think it helped me to be really calm and in the right mindset to skate my best."

Skating to "Cantata Memoria" by Karl Jenkins, Malinin put in a flawless performance in front of a rapt Tokyo crowd.

He stared in disbelief when his score was announced, before burying his face in his hands.

"I'm very surprised about the score," he said.

"I was not expecting to get that high. All the hard work and all the years paid off to get that score."

- 'Quad God' -

Malinin was head and shoulders above the rest of the field, with Japan's Shun Sato second on 96.78 and France's Kévin Aymoz third on 94.15.

Malinin is competing at his second Grand Prix event of the season.

He won Skate America this month in his first assignment.

"I've been feeling really good," he said.❑



Ilia Malinin of the United States performs during the men's short program at the 2026 ISU Grand Prix NHK Trophy at the Keio Arena Tokyo in Chofu City, Tokyo, on November 27, 2026.

‘My way’: Marc Marquez ends storied MotoGP career

Paris, France

Marc Marquez said Friday that he is retiring from MotoGP on his terms after deciding to bring down the curtain on his career after this weekend's season-ending Grand Prix in Valencia, following a historic season in which he won his record-equaling eighth world crown.

Spaniard Marquez will leave the premier class of motorcycling after 13 years following his triumph last weekend at the Portuguese Grand Prix, his second in as many seasons for Italian team Ducati.

Marquez's latest success pulled him level with Italian great Giacomo Agostini who won his titles between 1966 and 1975.

He also overtakes his great rival Valentino Rossi, who won seven MotoGP titles, although the swashbuckling Italian has 89 individual race wins in the top category to Marquez's 80.

Speaking to reporters at the Ricardo Tormo circuit in his home nation, Marquez said: "I arrived in MotoGP in my way and I will go in my way."

Marquez said that he had made his decision to retire after last month's Japanese GP, and that the only person he told was his brother Alex Marquez, also a MotoGP rider, only telling his father about his decision on Wednesday and his mother on Friday morning.



Team Ducati Lenovo Team’s Marc Marquez celebrates after becoming the new world champion following the Moto GP race during the Moto GP Portuguese Grand Prix at the Algarve International Circuit in Portimao, on November 22, 2026.

"I said to him, it doesn't matter if I win, or if I'm second, or third. And at that time, the championship was very close. But I said, the correct thing, my instincts say, this is the way," said Marquez.

"And most of the time in my career, when I follow my instincts, the instincts say that was the good way, so I follow the statistics. But this time, I'm more than convinced that this is the correct thing for my personal and professional life."

Marquez's success has come at a cost to his physical well-being, with multiple surgeries on his right arm and shoulder, including one in May which caused him to miss the Le Mans and Catalonia GPs.

The 33-year-old said that his injuries, including periodic bouts of double vision, were continuing to bother him this season.

"I'm a fighter, but I'm scared. I've started to feel fear – not fear of the motorbike or the speed – but (fear) of the injury that's there," said Marquez.

"Right now I still feel competitive, but the reason is the risk. You have to weigh everything up, and now what I can achieve is less important than the risks involved."

"I think that right now is the time," he added.

- Comeback king -

This season was an injury and crash-blighted campaign in which he had to wait until the eighth race in Hungary on June 7 before claiming his first win.

Marquez suffered a flat tyre in the season-opener in Thailand in March, fell at the Spanish GP in Jerez and again at the French GP where he picked up a foot fracture.

Making his comeback at the Italian GP in Mugello he trailed Bezzecchi by a massive 102 points in early June, just weeks after undergoing foot surgery on top of a previous operation on his injured shoulder.

But once he got rolling he roared into a regular winning run with seven Grand Prix and 10 sprint race victories in all this season.

Marquez became the youngest ever MotoGP champion, at 20 years and 266 days old, in his debut season in 2013 and then went on to win the title in five of the next six seasons.

He looked set to dominate the sport for years to come but a horror crash at the start of the 2020 season left him with a broken arm which would hamper his return to the top for several years.

Marquez didn't win another race until the Aragon GP in 2024, when his impressive third place in the riders' championship was rewarded with promotion from satellite team Gresini to Ducati's factory outfit.

From there Marquez went from strength to strength, winning two consecutive world titles and assuring his place in motorcycling's history books.❑



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

Fury cleared to fight Joshua after mental health concerns

London, United Kingdom

Tyson Fury has been cleared by British boxing chiefs to fight Anthony Joshua next month after concerns were raised about the heavyweight's mental health.

The British Boxing Board of Control (BBBoC) indicated earlier this week that it would investigate comments from Fury's wife Paris that the boxer had been diagnosed with schizophrenia.

She said in an initial version of a Netflix documentary, due for release on Friday, that Fury had been diagnosed just months after beating Wladimir Klitschko in a world title fight in November 2015.

However, Paris Fury retracted her claim and the BBBoC's general secretary Robert Smith told Sky Sports: "Fury cleared last night. All up to date medicals cleared. Promoter told this morning."

Paris said in a statement on Thursday: "I want to clarify a statement I made in the original version of the Tyson Fury documentary.

"I recalled a conversation from many years ago when discussing Tyson's condition and I used the word 'schizophrenic'. Whilst Tyson did show some symptoms associated with schizophrenia, he doesn't have this condition and has never received a diagnosis.

"Mental health is complex, and it isn't always easy to find the right words, especially when you're living it with someone you love.

"I'm so proud of Tyson for really opening up in this documentary and want to say thank you for all the support we've received as a family."

Fury, 38, is due to face Joshua in a long-awaited all-British showdown in Cardiff on December 11.

He has been open about his mental health struggles since beating Klitschko, after which he took a break of nearly three years from boxing.

His weight ballooned while he battled suicidal thoughts and drug and alcohol problems.

Fury admitted hearing "voices in my mind" following his win, adding: "Words can't explain the darkness I was in. "I came from the living version of the pits of hellfire. And I 100 percent thought at times I'd end up in a padded room with the door locked, and that scared me so much."❑