



**Massive
Cyber
Attack On
Russian
Airline
Page 16**



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VOL 35 NO. 050

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Ocan marks 40 years advocating for equal citizenship for Caribbean Dutch

THE HAGUE--“We are citizens of the Kingdom, but in practice, visible and tangible differences remain,” said Lionel Martijn, director of the Caribbean Dutch advocacy organisation Ocan. As the group marks its 40th anniversary, Martijn emphasised that the fight for equal rights and opportunities for Caribbean Dutch citizens is far from over.

Ocan was founded on July 25, 1985, as the National Advisory

Council for Antilleans, later becoming part of the National Minority Consultation (LOM). The Dutch government had hoped to engage more directly with migrant groups to ensure inclusive policy development. Over the years, organisations like Ocan raised critical issues affecting their communities.

“In the past four decades, we’ve tackled a range of challenges –

Continued on page 6

VVD party proposes easing path to independence for Caribbean islands

THE HAGUE--The Dutch liberal People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy VVD has proposed amending the Kingdom Charter to make it easier for Caribbean territories to pursue independence, should they choose to do so. The proposal is part of the party’s newly released election manifesto titled “Stronger After the Storm”.

The manifesto outlines VVD’s vision for governance and future relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Under the section “Good Governance in the Caribbean Parts of the Kingdom”, VVD suggests explicitly enshrining the right to self-determina-

tion in the Charter.

“A provision will be added stating that, in addition to Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten can also declare independence. Likewise, Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba can express their wish for independence,” the manifesto reads.

The proposal revives a 2019 initiative by former VVD Member of Parliament André Bosman, who sought to introduce legislation allowing the islands to exit the Kingdom unilaterally, without the need for a referendum. While the idea has garnered support among VVD members, it has not advanced in parliament.

For Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba – special municipalities of the Netherlands – VVD is calling for stricter anti-corruption measures and accelerated reforms to improve public governance. This would include a revision of the WolBES and FinBES legislation governing administrative and financial structures on the islands.

Continued on page 7



Sargassum weed in Oyster Pond.

French side anti-Sargassum collective launches petition

MARIGOT--French-side residents are urging the local authorities and the State to do more to find solutions to tackle the ongoing Sargassum weed invasion that is causing health concerns and impacting the local economy. To that end, a petition has been launched which reads as follows:

“We, the residents of Saint-Martin, particularly those living in Cul-de-Sac, Mont Vernon, Oyster Pond and Orient Bay, are facing a serious environmental and health problem due to the massive accumulation of Sargassum seaweed on our shores and near our homes.

“As these brown algae decompose, they release extremely harmful gases into the air, such as: hydrogen sulphide (H₂S), which has a very unpleasant, irritating odour and can be toxic in high concentrations, and ammonia (NH₃), a corrosive gas that attacks the respiratory tract.

“These fumes cause frequent headaches; nausea and a feeling of unease; irritation of the eyes, nose and throat; respiratory problems, particularly in children, the elderly and asthmatics; and extreme daily fatigue due to continuous exposure to these gases.

“The worst thing is that this pol-

lution is invisible, but very real. And it gets worse at night, when the air is heavier, forcing residents to live with their windows closed despite the heat. Despite repeated reports, local authorities remain either inactive or overwhelmed, leaving residents alone to face this danger.

“We demand:

“The rapid and systematic col-

lection of Sargassum from our beaches and inhabited areas.

*Installation of air quality sensors that are accessible to the public.

*An independent health impact study, with transparent information for residents.

*A coordinated emergency plan to prevent further accumulation

Continued on page 8

10.8 percent jump in passenger arrivals in first quarter of 2025

PHILIPSBURG--Passenger arrivals to St. Maarten rose by 10.8% in the first quarter of 2025. These new data were released by Princess Juliana International Airport’s operating company, PJIAE, on Monday.

The increase comes as the airport marks a major milestone in the automation of immigration data collection, following the November 2024 launch of its revamped Arrival Hall and digital border control systems.

Between January and March 2025, PJIAE recorded 256,923 arriving passengers – up from 231,900 in the same period last year. Total passenger movements, including both arrivals and depar-

tures, reached 533,990, compared to 518,658 in the first quarter of 2024.

Of the total arrivals recorded in the first quarter of 2025, a significant 67% originated from North America, with the majority – 54% – coming from the United States and 13% from Canada. European travellers accounted for 25% of arrivals, reflecting continued strong interest from traditional markets. These figures underscore the importance of maintaining and expanding airlift from key regions to support sustained tourism growth.

This growth is credited not only to increased visitor demand but

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IN BRIEF

Philipsburg RETRIEVE SCOOTERS

St. Maarten Police Force urges scooter owners whose vehicles were confiscated earlier this year to retrieve them before the final deadline of Wednesday, July 30. Page 3.

Kralendijk PROPERTY VALUATIONS

The Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority has announced it will begin property valuations on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba in the coming months. Page 3.

St. Eustatius CARNIVAL COMPETITION

Golden Revellers Eux has won this year’s troupe competition for Statia’s carnival. Page 11.

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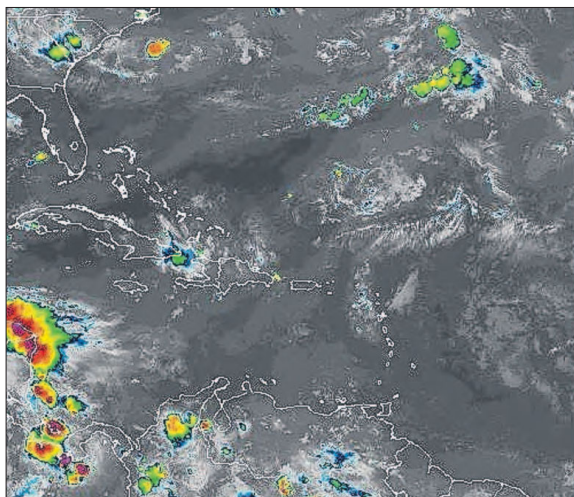
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Weather

Today: Fair to partly cloudy and slightly hazy, with a low chance of showers.

Winds: East to southeast, 4-15mph.

Sea conditions: Light.

Seas: 2-4 feet.

Forecast high: 32°C 90°F

Forecast low: 27°C 81°F

SYNOPSIS: An increase in both moisture and instability overnight supported showers overnight. A drier airmass will enter the area accompanied by a plume of Saharan dust. Expect stable weather and slightly hazy, daytime conditions. Those with allergies and/or respiratory issues should take necessary precautions. Light sea conditions will prevail over the upcoming days..

SPECIAL FEATURE: Remaining names for this year's hurricane season (now to November 30): Dexter, Erin, Fernand, Gabrielle, Humberto, Imelda, Jerry, Karen, Lorenzo, Melissa, Nestor, Olga, Pablo, Rebekah, Sebastien, Tanya, Van, Wendy.

The Meteorological Department St. Maarten (MDS) will monitor the development of all tropical systems closely and issue watches or warnings when it becomes necessary.

Outlook through Wednesday evening: Fair to partly cloudy, with brief showers.

Sunrise: 5:50am.

Sunset: 6:48pm.

CRUISE SHIPS IN PORT TODAY

Date	Vessel	Place Arrival	Departure
July 30:	No cruise ships in port.		

ST. MAARTEN

POLICE STATION

Philipsburg tel. 542-2222

Simpson Bay tel. 545-5500

HOT LINE 108

EMERGENCY 911

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Tel. 542-6001 or 919

HOSPITAL

Medical Center, Cay Hill

24-hour Emergency Service

tel. 543-1111 or 910

AMBULANCE

Philipsburg tel. 542-2111 or 912

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

For medical emergencies, patients can

visit the Emergency Room of the

Maarten Medical Center. Tel.: 543-1111

(ext. 1)

SXM Animal Welfare Foundation

Ambulance Team 520-8887

CRIME STOPPERS ANONYMOUS TIP LINE:

543-TIPS(8477)

TELEPHONE INFO

Tel-em: 542-2211

WEATHER INFO: 123

ST. MAARTEN TOURIST OFFICE

Krippa Building, Juancho Yrausquin Blvd.

#6, tel. +1 721-5490200, fax. +1 721-

542-0664

COLE BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL:

meeting 1st. Thursday of month at Sun

Flower Kinder Garden School, Union Rd.

Cole Bay at 7:30pm

SERVICE CLUBS

THE ROTARY CLUB OF ST. MAARTEN

meets every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. at

79 Bush Rd., Unit#10 (Le Grand Marche

Complex). Rotary Mid Isle meets every

Tuesday 7 p.m. at Pineapple Pete's,

Simpson Bay. Rotary Sunrise meets every

Tuesday at 7am at Gingerbread Cafe

located in Belair Beach Hotel Terrace

Restaurant. Rotary Club St. Martin Nord

meet at the Grand Case Beach Club Sun-

day at 7:30 p.m.

THE ROTARACT CLUB OF ST.

MAARTEN SUNRISE meets every 2nd

and 4th Saturday of the month at 7pm at

The University of St. Martin.

Email: rotaractsunrise@outlook.com

LIONS meeting at the Upper Princess

Quarter Community Centre Lions Den in

Sucker Garden every 1st and 3rd Tuesday

of the month at 7 p.m.

ST. MAARTEN LEO CLUB meeting at the

Lions Den every 1st, 3rd Saturday every

month at 11:00 am.

JCI St. Maarten (JAYCEES) meeting at

the Philipsburg Jubilee Library every last

Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Bus-

ness attire required.

PHILIPSBURG TOASTMASTERS CLUB

bi-monthly sessions every first and third

Thursday of every month at the Library

conference room at 8:00 p.m.

ST. MARTIN MUSEUM

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Agenda St. Maarten / St. Martin

Monday - Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday & Sundays: closed.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Mon., Wed., Fri. 6:00pm. Red Cross Build-

ing, Airport Road, Sunday at Guana Bay

Beach 8:30am. Tel. 520-5169

Zoom meetings everyday from 8:30am to

9:30am and from 6pm to 7pm. Zoom ID -

6960282745 and the password - 767909

St. Maarten AIDS Foundation 55 Welfare

Road tel +5532626/+5884636

Tel. 544-4267, Fax. 544-4268. Facebook:

sxmidsfoundation

NATURE FOUNDATION ST. MAARTEN

Wellsburg Street 1A, units 25-26, Cole Bay.

Tel. 544-4267, Fax. 544-4268. Email:

info@naturefoundation.sxm.org

ANIMALS R. FRIENDS

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Bay. Email: arf_sxm@yahoo.com, www.

arf.sxm.org

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Sat 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

2. Cay Hill Satellite, Jackal Road #4, at the

Hillside Christian School - Asha Stevens

Complex, Cay Hill. Opening hours: Mon-Fri:

2.30 p.m. - 6 p.m. Info@sxmlibrary.org

3. Belvedere Satellite, Low Estate Road

#3 at the Belvedere Community Center in

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2304/5452333, Fax. 545-5263. Cell. 586-

5330 (24/7) Email: info@redcross-sxm.org,

stmaartenredcross@gmail.com

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Bay, P.O. Box 5184 Tel/fax: 5445424 (721)

544-5424 / 554-7524. Email: doneslapaix@

hotmail.com, dones_lapaix@car.salvation-

army.org.

ST. MAARTEN CHAPTER OF BUSINESS

AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN holds

their general monthly meetings every third

Monday at the Delta Hotel at 7:00 p.m.

DIABETES FOUNDATION OF ST.

MAARTEN. Free blood-glucose testing ev-

ery Thursday from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. at the

Philipsburg Pharmacy Voges Street, Phi-

lipsburg (opposite Library). Tel.: 542-3001

USO St. Maarten/St. Martin (USA mili-

tary), contact Janet Lambert 5577616 or

00590 590 294406.

SKALCLUB ST. MAARTEN/ST. MARTIN

meets 1st Tuesday of the month. For loca-

tion call: 5424432 (Jennifer).

St. Maarten/St. Martin Alliance For

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ST. MARTIN

POLICE MUNICIPALE

tel. (00590) 590 87.61.55

GENDARMERIE

tel. (00590) 590 52.30.00/02

FIRE DEPARTMENT

tel. (00590) 590 52.30.40



Police stress that the presence of abandoned scooters near the station could pose a public safety hazard.

Two days left to retrieve scooters held by police

PHILIPSBURG--St. Maarten Police Force KPSM is urging scooter owners whose vehicles were confiscated earlier this year to retrieve them before the final deadline of Wednesday, July 30, 2025.

The call comes as dozens of scooters remain unclaimed at the Philipsburg Police Station, many of which were impounded during traffic checks for lacking proper documentation or posing safety concerns.

Despite repeated public notices issued earlier this year, most of the impounded scooters have not been collected. Owners are now being warned that unclaimed scooters will be permanently disposed of after the deadline. KPSM intends to request that the remaining vehicles be removed and destroyed.

Police stress that the presence of abandoned scooters near the station could pose a public safety hazard, particularly during hurricane season.

Owners whose scooters

were seized between late January and June 2025 are asked to report to the Philipsburg Police Station during regular office hours and speak with Mr. J. Abreu.

To reclaim their vehicle, owners must present proof of ownership, valid insurance documents, a road tax receipt, an inspection card, and a valid driver's licence.

KPSM encourages anyone with questions to contact the station at +1 (721) 542-2222.

Tax authority launches 2026-2030 property valuations on BES islands

KRALENDIJK--The Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority (Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland) has announced it will begin property valuations on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba (the BES islands) in the coming months.

The assessments are being carried out in preparation for the next five-year property tax period, which runs from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030.

Property values for tax purposes are reviewed every five years. For the upcoming tax period, valuations will be based on property values as of January 1, 2026.

The valuations will be conducted by independent, certified appraisers commissioned by the Tax Authority. The process will include assessments of various types of real estate, including commercial properties, hotels, educational and healthcare institutions, utility facilities, and similar buildings.

Valuations will be performed primarily through visual inspections from public roads, supported by data from the land registry (Kadaster), construction documentation, and other

public sources.

The Tax Authority underscored several important points regarding the valuation process. All information collected during the assessments will be treated with strict confidentiality. Appraisers conducting the valuations will carry valid identification and will not make prior contact with property owners or occupants. Additionally, the process does not involve entering homes, buildings, or private properties, as all inspections will be carried

out from public areas.

These activities are part of the Tax Authority's routine valuation process to ensure accurate and transparent tax assessments. The property values being determined are solely for taxation purposes and are not related to inspections or enforcement measures.

For more information, residents can contact the Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority at +599-715-8585 or via email at balie@belastingdienst-cn.nl.

Hurricane Pass application process closed until 2026

PHILIPSBURG--The Office of Disaster Management (ODM) has announced that the application process for Hurricane Passes for the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season is now officially closed until 2026.

The application window, which opened in mid-April 2025, closed on May 30. The process included two types of passes: the Disaster Pass and the Hurricane Pass.

ODM, which operates under the Ministry of General Affairs, manages the issuance of these passes on behalf of the Prime Minister.

The Hurricane Passes is-

sued this year are valid for both the 2025 and 2026 hurricane seasons and remain the property of the Government of St. Maarten.

The pass system plays a vital role in ensuring public order and safety during emergency situations. After a disaster, the Prime Minister – working in coordination with emergency management entities – may assess the extent of damage and implement a curfew if necessary to protect the community.

For further updates, the public is advised to follow official government communication channels.

Tax Office back on track after ransomware attack

WILLEMSTAD--Following the ransomware attack on Curaçao's Tax and Customs Administration last Thursday, an extensive technical investigation is underway to determine the nature and impact of the attack, it was announced in a press release. They expected it would take at least several days before full operations are restored.

A limited number of services resumed as of Monday. This includes the Motor Vehicle Tax MRB department and transfer of license plates, existing agreements with tax collectors, and electronic payments at the cash registers. These can be made at the building on Regentesselaan in Em-

mastad.

The MRB department and cash registers are open from 8:00am to 12:00pm and from 2:00pm to 3:30pm.

Other departments like customer service and the call centre remained unavailable. Management is doing everything possible to safely and securely restart the affected systems.

The online portals for filing tax returns are still accessible and functional. Payment of taxes due can also be made as usual.

As soon as more clarity is available about the restart of other services, further communication will follow through the official channels of the Tax and Customs Ad-

ministration, according to the agency.

A ransomware attack is a cyberattack in which malicious software (ransomware) is used to block or encrypt access to a victim's files or systems, and demands a ransom in exchange for restoring access. The attackers often threaten to release stolen data if the ransom is not paid.

Whether payment was made in the case of the Tax and Customs Administration is unknown but seems unlikely. When the target has good backups, authorities also advise against paying the ransom, as there is no guarantee that the attackers will keep their promise.

Precautions include

implementing security measures, such as up-to-date software, strong passwords and backups.

The office was closed on Thursday and Friday. Finance Minister Javier Sylvania said earlier he had requested technical support from the Netherlands to investigate and restore the system.

The Joint Court of Justice also suffered a persistent computer outage last week, resulting in all its offices remaining closed on Thursday. The scheduled hearings for that day and Friday in principle went ahead, while judgements from that week were postponed to this week, according to the court.

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Experts urge review of burn-out diagnoses in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM--Psychiatrists and occupational health experts are calling for a review of how the Netherlands diagnoses and treats burn-out, after Sweden announced it would drop the term following updated guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO), newspaper "De Volkskrant" reported on Monday.

The Netherlands and Sweden were the only two countries that still recognise burn-out as a formal diagnosis.

While symptoms such as exhaustion, concentration problems and sleep issues are real, critics argue the label lacks scientific precision and may delay access to more targeted treatment.

Psychiatrist Christiaan Vinkers, professor of stress and resilience at Amsterdam UMC teaching hospital, told the paper that many patients now diagnosed with burn-out could be more effectively helped if diagnosed with conditions such as depression or anxiety.

"Burn-out is poorly defined and creates a separate treatment market outside psychiatry," he said.

The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) dropped the term in 2023, and WHO's guidelines now define burnout as an "occupational phenomenon rather than a medical

condition."

However, occupational health and family doctors say the current approach works well. They use structured criteria to assess symptoms and suggest tailored interventions such as sleep routines, exercise or therapy.

The Hague family doctor Richard Starman told the paper the diagnosis is meaningful to patients and gives direction to care.

Although he agrees that treatments are often based on experience rather than hard evidence, he stressed that most patients recover within six months.

Meanwhile, Vinkers is now leading a new study on early detection of stress symptoms, aiming to bring together general practitioners, psychiatrists, occupational doctors and psychologists to design better coordinated care.

"We need to break down silos and understand what this kind of stress really involves," he said.

Dutch research institute TNO said in 2023 that one in four employees between 18 and 34 years old reported burn-out symptoms.

That report, commissioned by the Dutch ministry of social affairs and employment, found burn-out cases were becoming more common and more severe, with the biggest increase among young women.



Cicilia and Den Heyer

Two commissioners resigned in Bonaire

KRALENDIJK--Commissioners Anjelica Cicilia and Nina den Heyer on Saturday, personally presented their resignation letters to acting Island Governor Ingrid Sealy in her capacity as chair of Bonaire's Island Council.

Both stepped down effective immediately. It is rare for two Executive Council members to do so simultaneously, especially while their term of office is far from over.

No official announcement had yet been made about the reason for their departure. According to insiders, it is due to the fact that the commissioners, who were appointed for their expertise and not based on political

affiliation, no longer felt supported by fellow commissioner Clark Abraham to counterbalance the political wishes of the parties they represent.

Abraham is also the leader of the largest coalition party "Partido Demokratiko Boneriano" (PDB). Collaboration has reportedly been difficult for some time.

The expectation is that successors, this time party-affiliated, will soon be named. Daisy Coffie of M21 has reportedly been pushing for a political member on the Executive Council for some time.

There has been some public disappointment over the departure of these two commissioners, who were

reportedly valued for their no-nonsense approach, social engagement and extensive professional expertise.

Cicilia (born 1977) managed the Spatial Planning & Development Department. In 2023, after working for over twenty years in the Dutch construction and real estate sector, she returned to her native island.

With a bachelor's degree in architecture and civil engineering and a master's degree in urban planning from Delft University of Technology, she brought a wealth of knowledge. Cicilia worked on topics including environmentally friendly housing, road safety and climate adaptation.

She also advocated for heritage preservation and greater transparency within the administration. Her departure means a loss of professional expertise within the Executive Council.

Den Heyer (born 1978) is an experienced administrator who served for many years in social and adminis-

trative roles within the Caribbean Netherlands. She was, among other things, deputy head of the RCN Social Affairs Unit and later worked for the RCN as well as the Tax and Customs Administration.

Since 2016, Den Heyer has served several terms as a member of the Executive Council, responsible for portfolios such as social affairs, youth, culture, education and healthcare. She was appreciated for her commitment to poverty reduction, youth care and equal educational opportunities.

In 2019, she was on the "Movimentu di Pueblo Boneriano" (MPB) list and became the first woman ever to receive the most votes on the island. In 2022, Den Heyer transferred to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science OCW Caribbean Netherlands as head of the department but returned at the end of 2023 as a non-political member of the Executive Council.

Dutch tourists spark search after jumping in Italian lake

TREMEZZINI, Italy--Two Dutch tourists are facing legal action after sparking an unnecessary search by Italian emergency services when they jumped off a ferry on Lake Como last Friday, local media reported.

The pair -- 23 and 26 years old -- jumped off the ferry and swam to the 18th-century village of Laglio.

Once out of sight, it was unclear whether they had

reached the shore and emergency services were called.

The two were later sighted at Laglio and received a visit from local police at the campsite where they were staying in Tremezzini, some 30 minutes from Laglio.

They have been charged with causing a search and rescue operation without reason.



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Silvania blasts Capriles Clinic

WILLEMSTAD--Curaçao Minister of Public Health Javier Silvania has strongly criticised the management of Capriles Clinic for unilaterally closing two key facilities without informing the Ministry or the Health Inspectorate in advance. According to him, this has serious consequences for public safety and the mental health care system on the island.

Silvania pointed out that in 2021, the clinic shut down the "Nachtopvang Dios Yudami" (night shelter for addicts) and most recently in July 2025, closed the "Un Miho Mañan" (rehabilitation facility), again without any prior notice to authorities.

The minister expressed concern about the visible increase in disturbances on the streets of Punda following these closures. According to him, groups of addicts and individuals with mental health issues now enter the area as early as 6am, harassing locals and tourists, and return between 5pm and 7:30pm, causing further public nuisance.

An abandoned building in the area has reportedly become a shelter for homeless addicts, and the minister fears the situation is spiralling out of control.

Silvania also took issue with the clinic's frequent use of the term "uitbehandeld" (treatment completed) for chronic addicts with psychiatric conditions.

He questioned how the mental hospital measures treatment effectiveness and asked for an explanation from the director about what "uitbehandeld" really means in the context of long-term psychiatric patients.

The minister said he has received calls from distressed families who claim that once their loved ones are labelled "uitbehandeld" and discharged, they quickly relapse due to lack of follow-up care and medication, leading to aggressive or unstable behaviour in public spaces.

Silvania noted with disappointment that Capriles Clinic received an extra 3.4 million guilders in 2023 to support its operations, yet still claims to lack sufficient space for patients. He also expressed regret that the clinic closed two essential care units without any consultation with the ministry.

"These unilateral decisions have created a ticking time bomb," he said. "When the situation explodes, the public, the media and Parliament all turn their attention to the ministry, even though we were left out of the decision-making process."

Silvania emphasised the need for transparency, accountability and coordination between mental health institutions and government to protect both vulnerable patients and the broader community.



The St. Maarten Library recognised and celebrated Daniel Helligar on his 15th work anniversary on July 12. The library's board, general manager and staff congratulated Helligar for his dedication, service and commitment to the institution. "His contributions have made a lasting impact on the library and the community it serves," the library said in a press release.

APS is moving!

Same Commitment
New Location



Office Closure Notice

APS will be closed to the public from July 30 through August 1, 2025, as we relocate to our new location. During this period, we are reachable via email and social media and will respond as soon as we can, prioritizing based on urgency.

As of August 4, 2025, our phone lines will be back in service and we will accommodate scheduled appointments only.

Normal operations will resume on August 11, 2025.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition.

- 📍 New location, same commitment!
- 📞 All other contact details remain unchanged.

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Man confessed to beheading his own mother, court hears

DORDRECHT - A 31-year-old man has confessed to beheading his mother with an axe in Hellevoetsluis, prosecutors told a court in Dordrecht on Monday.

Jesse R. was arrested on April 16 after fleeing the crime scene in his mother's car.

Police found a bag in the vehicle containing both the axe and the woman's head. Her body was discovered in the home by a friend, who saw R. running away.

Prosecutors said R. was probably in a psychotic state at the time of the killing. He is due to undergo psychiatric examination at Pieter Baan Centre, but the assessment is unlikely to begin before November due to waiting lists.

R.'s lawyer Job Knoester told the court that his client had long been in contact with mental health services.

"It is slowly starting to sink in what he's done, and he finds it horrific," Knoester said.

The defence has requested that a mental health worker who spoke to R. shortly before the killing be called as a witness. Knoester said the testimony could shed light on his client's mental state at the time.

R. previously described himself on social media as manic depressive.

The next pro-forma hearing is scheduled for October 21.

R. will remain in custody while the investigation continues.



Lionel Martijn (second from left) and staff during a small celebration for the 40th anniversary of Ocan.

Ocan marks 40 years

Continued from page 1.

whether contesting offensive terminology, unfair use of statistical data, pension rights, or opposing mandatory integration requirements once proposed for Caribbean youth by former Minister Rita Verdonk," Martijn explains. He has led the organisation since 2022.

While many Caribbean Dutch citizens are thriving in Dutch society – pursuing higher education and building successful careers – Martijn points out that some struggle economically, socially, or emotionally. "We need to stand beside those who are more vulnerable. They must be treated fairly – not as second-class citizens," he says.

Ocan remains actively involved in shaping legislation and policy. Martijn describes their role as "a green checkmark" in the process. The group contributed to the national dialogue leading up to the Netherlands' apology for slavery and to decisions on the Slavery Memorial Fund. Yet, he says, policy development often lacks nuance when addressing Caribbean communities.

"Mainstream solutions aren't always effective," Martijn notes. "Take language courses, for instance. Caribbean Dutch citizens with limited Dutch

are placed alongside others who are illiterate or from vastly different backgrounds. This discourages participation."

Martijn stresses that true language fluency goes beyond vocabulary. "Understanding the tone and context in which something is said is just as important. Misinterpretation can lead to frustration or conflict – while the actual message might be harmless."

Language also presents challenges for older Caribbean migrants, particularly those who joined family members in the Netherlands in recent years. Many struggle with isolation and limited access to care.

"Imagine a grandmother describing her illness to a Dutch doctor by saying, 'My head is biting me.' How do you interpret that?" Martijn says, illustrating the cultural and linguistic gap.

Ocan works closely with both national and local governments to address policy blind spots, especially around youth and elderly care. Recent collaborations include HPV awareness campaigns for Caribbean teens and fall prevention programmes for older residents, in partnership with the Ministry of Health. International bodies such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in

Europe (OSCE), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union's (EU) anti-racism commission also seek Ocan's input.

Beyond advocacy, Ocan runs its own outreach programmes, often with help from volunteers. These include support with pension applications, debt relief, and benefits guidance. If Ocan cannot provide direct assistance, clients are referred to trusted experts. Projects like BelWel foster intergenerational connections between youth and seniors.

What's missing, Martijn says, is a unified national approach. "We run many small projects, but they end when the funding ends. What we need is a national programme with a long-term goal: improving the well-being of Caribbean Dutch citizens."

Looking ahead, Martijn hopes that in another 40 years, Caribbean and European Dutch citizens will enjoy equal opportunities across all sectors of society. If that happens, he says, Ocan could shift its focus toward preserving Caribbean heritage and culture. "But until that day comes, our work for equal citizenship must continue," Martijn stated.

Gendarmerie issues a missing teenager alert

MARIGOT--The Gendarmerie disclosed Monday that a minor was reported missing between the night and morning of July 17-18. The 14-year-old minor named Isaline Victor, born in St. Martin on October 7, 2010, ran away from her foster family living at 32 Yellow Tail Street (Sandy Ground) in Saint-Martin. The teenager does not have a mobile phone.

The public is asked to call the Gendarmerie emergency number 17 if they have any knowledge of the teenager's whereabouts, if she has been found, or to obtain more information.



Isaline Victor

THERE'S
NO EXCUSE
FOR
ANIMAL
ABUSE



The first chairman Anthony Begina (centre) and his successor Roy Pieters (left) at the founding of the National Consultative Body for Antilleans (Landelijk Inpraakorgaan Antillianen, LIA).



United States President Donald Trump shaking hands with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Photo by Brendan Smialowski via DutchNews.nl.

US, EU trade deal results are 'not ideal,' say Dutch

BRUSSELS--The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) have struck a last-minute trade agreement that averts an escalation in tariffs, but key Dutch sectors still face significant hurdles.

US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen shook hands on the agreement in Scotland on Sunday evening, in which the US will impose a 15% import tariff on goods from the EU, although some products are exempt.

Caretaker Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said on social media that while "no tariffs would have been better," the deal provides greater clarity for Dutch companies and more stability in the markets.

"The next step is to implement the agreement as quickly as possible," he said.

Caretaker Dutch State

Secretary of Foreign Trade Hanneke Boerma said the agreement is "not ideal" and "could still have a big impact on many Dutch and European businesses."

She said the Dutch government is urging the European Commission to continue negotiating with the US on lowering tariffs and improving economic cooperation.

The deal leaves in place a 50% tariff on European steel and aluminium, which Trump said would not be reduced and is likely to have a significant impact on Tata Steel in IJmuiden.

However, Von der Leyen told reporters there would be a quota system in place.

Employers' federation VNO-NCW described the deal as a temporary reprieve.

"It ends the uncertainty for now, but a general 15% tariff on all European products remains a painful mea-

sure for entrepreneurs," the lobby group said.

ING economist Bert Colijn told public broadcaster NOS that the deal brings welcome certainty after weeks of volatility, but warned that the outcome was still a step back compared to the situation before April.

"For companies, the agreement offers more predictability," he said. "We saw trade data fluctuate wildly due to the uncertainty. Deals were cancelled and projects postponed."

Products exempt from the 15% tariff include aircraft and aircraft parts, chip-making equipment, certain types of agricultural machinery, and selected chemicals.

Von der Leyen said after the talks that she would work to expand the list of exemptions.

The Netherlands has had a structural trade deficit with the US for years, according to figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Meanwhile, oil and gas imports have become more important since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

US crude oil imports now account for 23% of the Dutch total, making the US the most important supplier.

The US is also the biggest supplier of medical instruments and pharmaceutical products to the Netherlands.

Germany, France, Ireland, and Italy all have significant trade surpluses with the US, while Belgium, like the Netherlands, has a deficit.

10.8 PERCENT JUMP IN PASSENGER ARRIVALS

Continued from page 1.

also to the full implementation of automated immigration systems, including electronic gates and self-service passport kiosks. The collaboration between PJIAE, the Ministry of Justice's Immigration and Border Protection Services (IBPS), and the Department of Statistics (STAT) now enables secure, GDPR-compliant data collection and real-time reporting.

"The automation of immigration data transforms how we assess, plan, and respond to travellers," said Erling Hoeve, policy advisor and programme manager for border security innovation at the Ministry of Justice. "St. Maarten is now at the forefront of border security innovation in the region, with tools that enhance both safety and efficiency."

Before automation, immigration statistics were compiled manually, relying on flight manifests and limited software solutions such as the now-defunct Tourism Statistical Information System (TSIS). The introduction of the Radex border control system, paired with ABC e-Gates, now allows for instantaneous and accurate registration of passenger data.

"This leap in automation is not just about technology – it's about capacity, transparency, and national security," said Damien Schmidt, Digitisation Project Coordinator at PJIAE. "We're building a future-ready airport in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of TEATT."

The automation aligns with PJIAE's broader modernisation efforts, including the final stages of its terminal reconstruction project. The new Arrival Hall was designed to improve passenger flows and better accommodate the airport's

regional hub function for neighbouring islands like Saba, St. Eustatius, Anguilla, St. Barthélemy, and Tortola.

Earlier this year, PJIAE also participated in the Routes Americas 2025 conference to expand airline partnerships and support future growth. The airport is projecting 1.8 million to-

tal passengers for the year, aided by its investment in digital infrastructure and data-driven policy.

The first-quarter figures not only reflect renewed traveller confidence but also highlight St. Maarten's strategic progress in airport-border collaboration and regional leadership in aviation innovation.

Seven arrests for domestic abuse so far in this month

WILLEMSTAD--At least seven individuals have been detained in Curaçao for domestic abuse up to now during July. In addition, there have been multiple other incidents where no arrests were made, raising serious concerns about the prevalence of relational violence on the island.

One of the most recent cases occurred overnight from Friday to Saturday, when a 31-year-old man was held after entering his ex-partner's home at night and striking her on the head with a mobile phone. Just a day later, on Saturday around 11:00pm, a 39-year-old man was taken into custody for assaulting his ex-partner in her home.

A subsequent search of the latter's residence un-

covered a firearm, which was seized by police. Both suspects remain in custody as the investigation continues.

The Bar Association of Curaçao earlier this year called on political leaders to make domestic violence a policy priority, citing the widespread nature of the issue. In nearly all reported cases, the perpetrators are men targeting their current or former partners.

Authorities and advocacy groups warn that the situation is growing increasingly urgent and emphasise the need for stricter enforcement, better protection for victims, and more public awareness to combat domestic violence in all its forms.

Scooter rider hurt in crash

ST. EUSTATIUS--A scooter rider was injured and had to be taken to hospital after colliding with a car on Dr. H.A. Korthalsweg in St. Eustatius last Saturday afternoon.

According to the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force KPCN, its central control room received a

report about a crash at 2:40pm.

An ambulance took the rider to hospital, but KPCN did not disclose the extent of their injuries.

KPCN also did not mention anything about the cause of the collision or details about the car and its occupants.

EASING PATH TO INDEPENDENCE

Continued from page 1.

Regarding Aruba, Curaçao, and St. Maarten, the autonomous countries in the Kingdom, the party stresses the importance of cooperation in promoting good governance, sound fiscal policy, anti-corruption initiatives, and long-term economic and educational development. VVD calls for concrete agreements with the countries to improve financial oversight and accountability.

The manifesto also underscores the strategic importance of the Caribbean territories from a defence standpoint. "The islands

are strategically located and align with our ambition to maintain a global presence. We therefore maintain a credible military presence to protect our interests and to monitor migration and drug trafficking from the South American continent," it states.

Despite advocating for new pathways to independence, VVD maintains that the relationship with the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom remains "valuable," mirroring the position of the outgoing Dutch cabinet.





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Positive CFT advice for investment loan

WILLEMSTAD--The government of Curaçao received a positive recommendation from the Committee for Financial Supervision CFT on a loan of over 115 million Caribbean guilders, intended for strategic investments in infrastructure, public safety, education and digitalisation. The approved amount is part of the Dutch Caribbean

country's 2025 draft budget.

The total loan request was 159 million guilders, but the remaining 33 million will only become available pending formal approval of a budget amendment by Parliament.

The largest portion – 50 million guilders – is earmarked for road maintenance and management. Another 25

million will be used to connect Curaçao to the CELIA Subsea Cable System, enhancing the island's digital resilience and connectivity.

Additional funds are allocated for:

- * Renovation of government buildings

- * Educational materials such as textbooks

- * Equipment for the Coast Guard and Fire Department, including new emergency vehicles

- * Construction of a crisis management centre

According to CFT, the proposed investments meet the criteria of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and do not breach debt service limits. The Ministry of Finance has confirmed that all interest and repayment obligations have been fully incorporated into the national budget.

The ministry also emphasised its ongoing oversight of project implementation, ensuring that funds are effectively and responsibly used. The loan is expected to play a crucial role in modernising Curaçao's infrastructure and public services while also boosting long-term economic resilience.



Middelhof (centre) with Gastra and Keijzer-Balde

142 Curaçao students left for the Netherlands

WILLEMSTAD--A group of 142 students from Curaçao departed for the Netherlands on Sunday evening to begin their studies there with the support of study financing from "Stichting Studiefinanciering Curaçao" (SSC).

This year, a total of 160 received a loan. Some had already travelled earlier, while others are scheduled to leave at a later date.

In addition, 25 students have been granted loans to pursue studies within the region.

According to SSC director

Sidney "Bicho" Justiana, housing arrangements have been secured for all first-year students. However, the shortage of student housing for second-year students remains a significant concern.

SSC has already held discussions on the issue with the Permanent Committee for Kingdom Relations in Dutch Parliament and plans to address the matter during the upcoming Inter-Parliamentary Kingdom Consultation IPKO scheduled for September.

VACANCY



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Interested people should have a Dutch passport or valid working papers.

All interested candidates MUST submit their application to the National Employment Service Center (NESC) preferably via apply.nesc@sintmaartengov.org within two (2) weeks to the attention of Employment Services Center.

The applications should include an application letter, copy of identification, copy of diplomas and or certificates, where required. All suitable applicants will be contacted for an interview to be held with a representative of the business and a Business Service Officer representing NESC.

Minister talks sustainable energy in the Netherlands

THE HAGUE--During his recent visit to the Netherlands, Curaçao's Minister of Economic Development MEO Roderick Middelhof held his first official meeting with Secretary-General at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs EZ Sandor Gastra and newly appointed Secretary-General at the Dutch Ministry of Climate and Green Growth KGG Gerdyne Keijzer-Balde.

Discussions focused on a range of critical economic topics and future development plans for Curaçao, with a particular emphasis on sustainable energy and the Netherlands' support for a transition to greener, more resilient energy infrastructure. A key topic was the Dutch Caribbean country's hydrogen chain programme, which is seen as a central pillar of its energy transformation.

According to a government release, the encounter provided Middelhof with an opportunity to formally introduce himself and engage in dialogue on areas of mutual interest. With the energy transition programme having recently shifted from EZ to KGG, Middelhof expressed his gratitude to Gastra for his continued support of the hydrogen project.

At the start of the current Dutch government's term

(now in a caretaker phase), the Energy Fund, initially set at 200 million euros, was significantly reduced, and Curaçao was excluded from the remaining allocations. However, last year, EZ made 1 million euros available, and following discussions with Middelhof, the Netherlands has now allocated an additional 4 million euros for necessary feasibility studies related to the development of the "Maritime Wind Park" – a project vital to Curaçao's sustainable future.

The minister described his talks as open and constructive, exploring how both EZ and KGG can assist

Curaçao in developing and implementing solutions in areas such as renewable energy, transition management, and industry development. These goals align with Middelhof's broader vision of diversifying Curaçao's economic structure while protecting the island's vulnerable environment in the face of climate change.

"Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to ongoing cooperation on these vital issues, recognising their shared objectives in promoting economic stability and environmental stewardship," added the statement.

ANTI-SARGASSUM COLLECTIVE

Continued from page 1.

and protect our health.

"We cannot continue to live with this toxic odour, under an invisible but constant threat," the petition concludes.

The petition can be signed at <https://www.onparticipe.fr/p/jFJuO7ga>

However, one Facebook reader disagreed that few resources are being deployed locally. Contractors working for the Collectivité are removing Sargassum from the beaches on a daily basis, specifically at Cul-de-Sac Bay and Orient Beach

North and other areas, representing a significant effort in terms of finance, human resources, equipment and organisation.

"These resources put in place are unfortunately very insufficient compared to the intensity of the Sargassum observed during periods of massive arrivals," the reader said. "It is also legitimate to push decision-makers to study, test and implement more effective measures, and to define and present long-term solutions."



The panel with Bertrand in centre

Curaçao lawyer at seminar on piracy

WILLEMSTAD--Attorney Karyl Bertrand represented Curaçao on July 16th and 17th at the Vision and Innovation in Intellectual Property seminar held in Anguilla. Bertrand was the only speaker from the Dutch Caribbean region and part of a panel that included the vice-chair of the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC), representatives from Ralph Lauren USA, and officials of the Antigua & Barbuda Customs Service.

The gathering was held by the Latin American organisation "Cámara de Lucha contra la Piratería y el Con-

trabando" CALPYC, and the Cervieri Monsuárez law firm, which specialises in intellectual property law. The event is part of an international training programme held in more than 27 countries in Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean.

In her presentation, Bertrand discussed strategies that can be applied within Curaçao's local legislation to combat brand piracy and also made recommendations for measures that can be implemented in the Caribbean. Furthermore, she emphasised the importance of cooperation between au-

thorities and sectors at the local, regional and international levels.

At Bertrand's initiative, the organisation extended an invitation to the Curaçao Intellectual Property Crimes Task Force. The latter was represented by Marlon Wernet (Interpol Curaçao), Serving Keli (Ministry of Health, Environment and Nature GMN), Wilbert Geertuida (Curaçao Police Force KPC) and Ronny Cornelis (Ministry of Economic Development MEO).

This made Curaçao the largest delegation at the seminar. Bertrand also coordinated the participation of the St. Maarten Customs Department.

The seminar was attended by brand owners, representatives of intellectual property agencies, academics, enforcement authorities and representatives of public sectors such as health and economics from various Caribbean countries. According to organisers, Bertrand's contribution was considered one of the highlights.

Curaçao honours first inhabitants

WILLEMSTAD--More than 70 people gathered last Saturday at "Parke Lucha pa Libertat" in Curaçao to commemorate the Caquetío, the island's first inhabitants. They did so in a ceremony that combined ancestral tribute with a call for recognition, protection and education. The gathering served as a counter-narrative to the commonly taught history that begins with the arrival of the Spanish in 1499.

Accompanied by ancestral drums, cultural advocates Marlon Regales, Richenel Anzano, Amy Victorina and Tico Vos addressed the legacy of the Caquetío during the seaside ceremony, which took place near a vibrant totem pole that symbolises their enduring presence. "We still carry their spirit. They have not disappeared; they live within us," one person declared, setting the tone for a day of collective reflection.

The speakers emphasised that there is extensive – and in some cases still unexamined – evidence pointing to the continued presence of the Caquetío on the island. The ceremony featured talks on culture, agriculture, spirituality and the pre-colonial sovereignty that existed long before European contact.

Public engagement was high during the interactive segment, where several attendees questioned why Caquetío heritage has no formal place in the island's education system and why construction projects are not required to conduct heritage impact assessments. There was also a plea to protect archaeological sites that remain unexplored.

Communication specialist Vos issued a warning about the direction of development on the island: "Educated travellers come here seeking cul-

tural depth – not cement. If we destroy our roots in the rush to modernise, we lose the very story that makes this island unique."

Victorina highlighted the valuable role that institutions like the National Archaeological Anthropological Museum (NAAM) can play. "NAAM has a treasure trove of knowledge, much of it accessible through its website. We have top professionals who can help developers create a real win-win: advancing their projects while protecting our cultural and historical legacy."

She urged policymakers to view NAAM as a strategic partner in shaping the island's

future while preserving what is yet to be discovered.

Closing the ceremony, Regales delivered a striking re-definition of colonial history: "The Spaniards could not 'discover' or claim what was already inhabited, cherished and named by the Caquetío. Today, we reclaim that truth – for ourselves and for future generations."

The July 26 commemoration, traditionally associated with the 1499 arrival of Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda, thus became a moment of re-framing history – asserting that the island was not discovered but already known and beloved as "Kurassau."

Government called on to pay teachers better

WILLEMSTAD--In light of ongoing teacher shortages in Curaçao, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport OWCS should take urgent steps to make the profession more financially attractive. That is the view of Roylea Pierre, Director of the Roman Catholic Central School Board RKCS.

Pierre emphasised that many qualified professionals are opting to work in the private sector, where salaries are significantly higher. By increasing teachers' pay, more individuals may be encouraged to choose a career in education, she argued, expressing hope that this proposal will be seriously considered by the Council of Ministers.

Currently, many young professionals are leaving the island to work in the Netherlands or Bonaire, where working conditions and compensation are more favourable. According to Pierre, Curaçao is not able to compete with those salaries at this time, making it difficult to retain and attract qualified educators.

The call comes amid growing concern about the long-term impact of teacher shortages on the island's education system.

Search for missing fishermen is ended

ORANJESTAD--Authorities in Aruba, Venezuela and Colombia have officially ended the search for four missing fishermen and their vessel "Energy," fifteen days after they disappeared.

On Saturday, July 12, Marcelo Heyden, Jarred Croes, Davey Croes and Aischell Tromp departed from the former Surfside Pier for what was intended to be a routine day of fishing. They were expected to return by the afternoon – but never did.

The alarm was not raised until late in the evening, which significantly hampered immediate response efforts. By that time, it was too late to deploy search boats or aircraft to the area the boat had reportedly travelled to.

It later emerged that the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard had received a call from one of the fishermen earlier that day, but the message was not classified as an emergency.

A large-scale search operation began the next morning, Sunday, July 13, with coordinated efforts from multiple agencies targeting the area of the last known signal. Despite extensive aerial and sea searches, no trace of the vessel or the men was found. The operation was paused at sunset.

Efforts resumed on Monday, July 14, with additional support from the coastguard, which deployed helicopters and surveillance planes. However, the intensified efforts once again yielded no results.

Last week, the Aruban police enlisted the help of Interpol, which issued a "Yellow Notice" – an international alert used to help locate missing persons. So far, this has not led to any breakthroughs.

Disappearance of fishermen in the Caribbean is unfortunately not uncommon. In August 2024, the bodies of two missing fishermen washed ashore in Aruba after days at sea. The exact circumstances of their demise remain unclear.

Fishing in local waters poses serious risks, including sudden weather changes, access to remote sea areas, drug trafficking routes and the threat of Venezuelan pirates, who have increasingly targeted small boats in the western Caribbean.

As the search comes to an end, families of the missing fishermen are left without answers and with heavy hearts. Authorities have not ruled out continuing investigations if new information surfaces.

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HURRICANE SEASON 2025 "IT ONLY TAKES ONE! ARE YOU PREPARED?"

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS SINT MAARTEN

AB 2025, no. 29

Regulation of the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Traffic and Telecommunication of July 23, 2025, to determine the maximum wholesale price and maximum retail prices for petroleum products (Regulation maximum prices petroleum products)

Datum inwerking/treding is 25 juli 2025

To read this regulation in full, please visit:
[Official Publications \(sintmaartengov.org\)](http://OfficialPublications(sintmaartengov.org))

Copy of this regulation is available via the Department of Legal Affairs & Legislation upon request.

Please email: jzw@sintmaartengov.org for more information.



ST. MAARTEN

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Traffic and Telecommunications

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- Competitive salary between Cg 1.989,00 – Cg 4.177,00 based on experience and qualifications;
- Opportunities for professional growth and training;
- A dynamic and supportive work environment;



MINISTRY OF FINANCE ST. MAARTEN

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Minister of Finance, Marinka J. Gumbs, would like to remind the general public that retailers and merchants:

1. Are not allowed to charge additional fees for using POS machines.
2. Can not impose a minimum purchase limit.
3. Must accept both Mastercard and VISA.
4. Are required to visibly display signage that indicates acceptance of credit and debit cards.

This is in alignment with the press release from the St. Maarten Bankers Association regarding the adherence of the POS Terms and Conditions

AANKONDIGING

Op grond van artikel 5, zevende lid, van het Wetboek van Burgerlijke Rechtsvordering van Sint-Maarten. Bij exploit van **29 mei 2025**, waarvan een afschrift is gelaten aan de Ambtenaar van het Openbaar Ministerie op Sint Maarten, heb ik, Nadjesca Gumbs deurwaarder der belastingen te St. Maarten op verzoek van de **Ontvanger, aan CERANT, VINES** voorheen wonende te zonder bekende woon- of verblijfplaats op Sint Maarten of elders, een dwangschrift betekend, welke uitgevaardigd is op d.d. **27 mei 2025**, door de Ontvanger te St. Maarten, met bevel om binnen twee dagen aan de inhoud daarvan te voldoen.

De deurwaarder voornoemd,
Nadjesca Gumbs,
Deurwaarder der belastingen

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Tune in to the Official Government Station SXMGOV Radio 107.9 FM



PNP on AOV hike: 'Where there's a will there's a way'

WILLEMSTAD--Debate over the long-delayed adjustment to the basic old-age pension AOV continues to dominate Curaçao's political discourse, with "Partido Nashonal di Pueblo" (PNP) now calling on Finance Minister Javier Sylvania (MFK) to take immediate and decisive action. Despite frequent discussions and blame-shifting between parliamentary factions about who is responsible for the inaction, the current opposition party has chosen to bypass the technical/financial arguments, instead focusing on the rising cost of living that affects all citizens, especially retirees.

According to PNP, the law already mandates that the AOV be increased in times

of economic growth – something Curaçao experienced after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that still hasn't happened due to various governmental technicalities.

The party led by former Minister of Social Development, Labour and Welfare Ruthmilda Harmonie-Cecilia is now urging Sylvania to leave bickering over the past behind and act as a creative, compassionate and solution-oriented leader.

PNP pointed out that for many pensioners, the AOV is their sole source of income. In some cases, retirees even use it to support other family members, such as grandchildren or nieces and nephews.

Sylvania has previously stated that it would take more than a year to implement the increase responsibly, including a full commission study on how best to proceed.

While PNP agrees that such due diligence is necessary for significant increases – such as raising pensions to the levels seen in Aruba or St. Maarten – they argue that this case is different. "This is a simple adjustment, not a major overhaul," the party emphasised. "Waiting over a year for that is unjustifiable."

PNP also took issue with the minister's claim that International Monetary Fund (IMF) advice is required. "The IMF is a financial institution that only looks at numbers, not the social realities of our people," the party stated, adding that the IMF is not elected by the people and should not dictate domestic social policy.

They pointed to previous decisions made by Sylvania during the election campaign – decisions that involved large expenditures and did not require IMF consultation or commission approval. "If those decisions were made to ease the pain of some citizens, why not do the same now for retirees who are simply asking for what they are entitled to?"

PNP concluded with a clear recommendation: ask the commission to propose the fastest and most efficient route for implementing the pension adjustment, so retirees don't have to wait another year while struggling with high food prices and inflation.

"Minister, we all know that 'where there's a will, there's a way,'" the party declared. "Let's get this done. Our pensioners cannot walk into a store and ask for a 25% discount while they wait for a commission to finish its study. You have the power – just do it."



The Amsterdam Zuid branch of the gym. Photo by Ramon van Flymen via DutchNews.nl.

A'dam gym suspends bosses amid cleaning staff scandal

AMSTERDAM--Managers responsible for cleaning four luxury gyms in Amsterdam have been suspended pending an investigation into worker exploitation, owner Tom Moos said in a video message.

Newspaper "Het Parool" reported last week that Dutch labour inspectors had found 23 undocumented cleaners working at the Saints and Stars chain. Their passports had also been seized by the company.

Some of them said they had been forced to share beds

with strangers at the Amsterdam house where they lived, while being told that their work permits were being finalised.

Moos said on Sunday that the gym's staff had been spat on and had received death threats since "Het Parool's" revelations.

The story, he said, was one-sided and drew conclusions even though the official investigation was still underway.

He said the gym had worked with the same cleaning company for years and that they

had been using people "who are allowed to work within the European Union" for three months due to staff shortages.

Moos said he was completely unaware that workers were being exploited.

The company, he said, had started its own investigation into the situation and will also fully cooperate with the labour inspectorate.

Well-wishers have since launched a crowdfunding campaign for the cleaners, which has raised 34,000 euros so far.

'Zomerkarnaval' marks 40 years

ROTTERDAM--The "Zomerkarnaval" in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, marked its 40th anniversary last weekend with vibrant parades, cultural pride and over 2,500 performers across 32 carnival groups, cheered on by tens of thousands of spectators. While the celebration was a powerful showcase of heritage and community, it was also marred by dozens of arrests and a violent incident in the city centre.

The parade wound its way through the heart of the port city on Saturday. With the sounds of brass bands and live music, groups rooted in Curaçao, Aruba, Suriname, Cabo Verde, Brazil and Spain lit up the streets with colourful costumes and expressive performances.

"Zomerkarnaval is more than a parade – it's a celebration of heritage, community, and cultural identity," said Ryansley Haize, chairman of "Stichting Zomerkarnaval Nederland."

In a first for the event, Carnival King and Queen were siblings: Celine and Oneal Rodgers, joined by Princess Eden, representing "De Havenloods Zomerkarnaval."

Many of the participating groups were multi-generational family associations that have been part of the event for decades.

While the parade itself was mostly festive, the evening saw a large brawl on Coolsingel, involving around 50 individuals. One man was seriously injured and taken to hospital.

Police made no arrests during the incident but had already detained nine people earlier in the day for offences including firearm possession, public intoxication and disorderly conduct.

In total, about 450 people were subjected to preventive searches, a precaution influenced by previous shooting incidents at the 2023 edition. Authorities confiscated eight knives, pepper spray and two guns. Two men from Amsterdam and Rotterdam were arrested.

Despite the incidents, police described the overall atmosphere as largely peaceful. Organisers had taken extra security measures, including the cancellation of related nighttime programmes, to ensure public safety.

Culturally, the 40th edition held added meaning. Following previous controversy over a ban on the "bubbling" dance style, the event's regulations were revised in consultation with anti-discrimination agency Radar.

"All restrictions on bubbling or dance in general have been removed," said Leal van Herwaarden, one of the new artistic directors. The change was celebrated with a bubbling battle during the after-party.

The event also paid tribute to late rapper Def Rhymz, who passed away in March. His 2001 hit video "Schudden" was recorded at the Summer Carnival.

This year also marked a leadership transition, as long-time chairman Karel Willems stepped down after nearly 30 years of involvement. "It's time for a new generation," he said.

Founded in 1984 in Rotterdam – after earlier versions were held as Antillean Carnival in Utrecht – "Zomerkarnaval" has grown into one of the largest cultural events in the Netherlands. Since 2023, it has been officially recognised as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.



First-place winners Golden Revelers Eux dancing on the road, with troupe leader Teena Lopes in front.



The second-place winners were the Multi-Mix troupe, led by Sjudi Redan.

Golden Revelers Eux wins carnival troupe competition

ST. EUSTATUS--Golden Revelers Eux has won this year's troupe competition for Statia Carnival, netting bragging rights, a trophy and a cash prize of US \$2,500.

Garnering 162 points, the troupe led by Teena Lopes edged out the second-place Multi-Mix troupe, which received 158 points. In a distant third was Carnival Survivors, the longest-running troupe in the island's summer festival, led by Joan Windefelde.

The second- and third-place winners received cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

The awards were announced by Carnival Committee chairperson Sjahairah Fleming on Sunday after the last day's parade. The three troupes were then welcomed to the stage and given the opportunity to display their choreographed dances for the large crowd at the Carnival Village.

Awarded as Best J'ouvert Troupe was the Bacchanal Crew, and as Most Creative J'ouvert Troupe was the Bacchanal Zombies. These troupes each received a trophy and \$250.

Sharday Bennett, leader of the Happy Feet troupe, received a trophy for five years of being involved in carnival.

Windefelde was also given a medal for her decades-long contribution to carnival as a troupe leader.



Third-place winners, Carnival Survivors, performing a choreographed dance.

Focus groups start in Saba for 'Where Culture Lives' project

SABA--The first set of focus group discussions in the "Where Culture Lives" research project have been completed at Saba Heritage Center in Windwardside, which the researchers say is a milestone in the project's mission to map and better understand cultural and heritage practices across the six Dutch Caribbean islands.

The focus groups in Saba brought together a cross-section of cultural practitioners, policy-makers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), educators, and experts who shared insights into the island's rich cultural ecosystem.

These sessions are the first in a series of in-depth focus groups that will take place across Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Eustatius, St. Maarten and Saba this summer. These conversations will assist in the design of surveys and aim to centre local voices and explore how culture is lived, practised

and supported at the community level. Three focus groups will take place on St. Eustatius this week.

"Speaking with some of Saba's jewellery designers, cultural entrepreneurs, music and art teachers about their practices, what they love and what they find challenging has been truly eye-opening," said lead researcher Ludmila Duncan. "It gave real insight into what makes Saba so special and how culture takes shape in everyday life. Their stories will help guide our understanding of cultural realities and future opportunities for the cultural sectors on the island."

In addition to the start of fieldwork, the project has completed its desk research phase. The team has reviewed and synthesised dozens of existing reports, policy papers, research models and data sources over the past two months.

The project team has also officially launched its Advisory Platform, a group of cultural stakeholders and experts from across the islands and the Netherlands who will provide feedback and guidance throughout the research.

"We're very encouraged by the momentum," said project coordinator Jorien Wuite. "From the desk research to our first focus group, everything is unfolding in alignment with our mission: to create an inclusive, locally-informed understanding of the cultural and heritage practices and sectors."

"Where Culture Lives" was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science OCV and coordinated by St. Maarten-based consultancy Lemonade BV. Residents of all six islands are encouraged to participate in the upcoming focus groups and later in the survey phase, which the research team says will be rolled out by the end of September.



The 49th Saba Carnival, under the theme 'Small Island, Big Vibes, Endless Fete' was opened Monday evening with a jump-up from St. John's to The Bottom. In photo: Culture Commissioner Evi-ton Heyliger and last year's Junior Carnival Queen Naima Smith opened the gates to the Festival village.

Nevis Island Administration reports strong fiscal performance for first half of 2025

NEVIS--The Nevis Island Administration (NIA) is reporting a strong start to the 2025 fiscal year, with key financial indicators pointing to solid economic momentum and prudent fiscal management.

Reports prepared by the Ministry of Finance for the first two quarters show that tax and non-tax revenues are trending upward, and both the primary and overall balances are in a surplus position, outpacing results for the same period in 2024 and 2023.

At his monthly press conference on July 22, Premier Mark Brantley, who also serves as minister of finance, outlined the NIA's fiscal performance from January to June 2025.

"The period January to June 2025 fiscal indicators paint a positive outcome for the period," he stated. "Although the revenue generated for 2025 thus far is still below budgeted targets, revenue is trending upwards and continues to outpace results for 2024."

Current revenue for the six-month period reached \$82.15 million, comprised of \$60.83 million in tax revenue and \$21.32 million in non-tax revenue. This represents a 12.53% increase, approximately \$9.15 million, compared to the same period in 2024.

Premier Brantley highlighted the robust performance of the Value Added Tax (VAT), particularly at the Inland Revenue Department, noting that collections rose by 56.15% despite the federal government's VAT Reduced Rate Programme, which ran from January through June. Although VAT collected at Customs decreased by 27.86%, total VAT receipts amounted to \$22.68 million – an overall increase of 17.77% compared to the previous year.

He explained, "The indication then of an increase in tax revenue receipts in Nevis is really a good indication

of how our local economy is performing ... VAT, the Tourism Development Levy – there's more activity. Those are taxes that apply in the context of the local economy. So to me, that's a great indicator."

Growth in tax revenue was also supported by strong performances from the Social Services Levy and Property Tax. Social Services Levy collections exceeded both the budgeted forecast and the 2024 figures, up by 4.5% and a substantial 76.18% respectively.

"Why is Social Services Levy important? As we all know, it's a levy on wages, so it's a good indicator of how the job sector is doing ... not just the number of jobs, but the value of those jobs," Premier Brantley said.

Property Tax receipts, while still below budgeted targets, have shown remarkable improvement – up 144.01% over the same period last year. Offshore Financial Services revenue also performed well, increasing by 11.68% compared to 2024, though it narrowly missed the budget target by 0.06%.

Premier Brantley underscored the significance of Nevis' tax-based revenue model, especially in contrast

to the larger inflows of Citizenship by Investment (CBI) funds available to the federal government.

"I think the people of Nevis would understand that we do not have the same comfort our brothers and sisters in St. Kitts do of having a torrent of CBI money flowing into the economy. We get a fixed amount monthly and that is all that we get. St. Kitts, if that amount in terms of overall income is extremely high, then they have these buffers that non-tax revenue provides.

"Put differently, this is not being diluted by any flows of revenue that are coming from other sources. So when we say that tax revenues are up in Nevis, it really means that there's more activity in the local economy."

Meanwhile, the NIA has also managed to rein in spending. Total expenditure for the first half of 2025 fell by 12.53% or \$13.76 million compared to the same period in 2024 and is down 15.45% or \$17.56 million compared to budgeted projections.

"I just wanted to say that fiscally the island seems to be on the right path," Premier Brantley concluded.

CSS deepens community engagement amid 76% drop in homicides

ST. KITTS--The Citizen Security Secretariat (CSS) continued its dynamic engagement strategy throughout July 2025, reinforcing the government of St. Kitts and Nevis' data-driven, public health-centred approach to crime prevention. These efforts form part of a wider national strategy that has supported a remarkable 76% reduction in homicides over the past year.

On July 28, CSS Coordinator Eartha Carey and Research Analyst and Public Health Consultant Hance Richards served as guest speakers at the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force's (RSCNPF) third Annual Crime Intervention Summer Soccer Camp, held at the NCI Grounds. Speaking to dozens of youth and volunteers, Carey and Richards led interactive sessions on citizen security, youth responsibility, and the im-

portance of community unity in reducing violence. The camp, which began on July 21, is one of several national interventions designed to guide at-risk youth towards positive pathways.

"Our mission is not just to respond to crime, but to transform the environment that allows it to take root," said Carey. "By working directly with our youth and engaging families, churches, and communities, we are building a safer Federation from the inside out."

Earlier in July, Carey and Richards also made tailored presentations to the Antioch Baptist Church Prayer Group, as well as to the Pastors' Conference on Nevis and members of the RSCNPF High Command. These forums provided meaningful faith-based platforms to raise awareness on citizen security, and to equip clergy and national security

leaders – who serve as key community anchors – with evidence-based strategies for promoting safety and social resilience.

Minister of National Security, Prime Minister (PM) Dr. Terrance Drew, publicly commended the CSS during a recent Cabinet press conference, praising the secretariat's dedication and the measurable success it continues to deliver. He reaffirmed that the CSS's work is essential to government's broader violence prevention framework, which treats crime as a symptom of deeper social imbalances rather than relying solely on punitive measures.

"The secretariat's outreach is not only transforming our communities but gaining regional recognition," PM Drew stated. He further noted that neighbouring Anguilla recently held high-level talks with the Drew administration to better understand how St. Kitts and Nevis has achieved such significant reductions in crime since the Citizen Security Task Force was launched in August 2024.

By proactively engaging with vulnerable groups and addressing the socioeconomic drivers of antisocial behaviour, the CSS is living up to its mandate to foster lasting change. Its July engagements exemplify the Federation's leadership in modern citizen security reform and offer a compelling model for other nations seeking sustainable approaches to crime and violence. ~ SKNIS ~

National Assembly meets on Thursday

ST. KITTS--Notice has been given for a sitting of the National Assembly to be held at the Na-tional Assembly Chambers, Government Headquarters, Basseterre, on Thursday, July 31, 2025, at 10:00am. The Order Paper and other Papers will be issued at a later date.

The National Assembly will be broadcast live on ZIZ Radio (96 FM) and participating radio stations. It can also be viewed live on TV Channel 5 in St. Kitts and Channel 98 in Nevis. It will also be streamed live at www.zizonline.com.

Copies of Bills are posted when they become available on the website (sknis.gov.kn) of the St. Kitts and Nevis Information Service under the section: bills.

Travellers' organisation critical of A'dam public transport plans

AMSTERDAM--Passenger advocacy group Rover is sounding the alarm over proposed changes to the Amsterdam metro system, warning that the new plans will result in poorer service, longer travel times and overcrowded trains, particularly on busy routes like Gein and Sloterdijk.

According to Rover, the problems will be especially noticeable outside peak hours. Travellers will be forced to make more transfers, spend more time in transit and deal with increasingly crowded metro cars.

"If a metro runs more often, but passengers are on the road longer, have to transfer more, and are packed into crowded trains, you simply lose those travellers," said Rover chairman Marinus de Jong. "Then the plan backfires."

The restructured metro lines are scheduled to launch in 2027. In recent months, commuters, residents and organisations have been invited to share their views on the proposed network redesign.

Rover is calling on authorities to reconsider the plans before a final decision is made.

"Higher frequency isn't a magic solution," De Jong said.

AGENDA

ST. EUSTATIUS

Police Station 182333
Emergency 111
Hot Line 108
Fire Department 120
Hospital 182211/182371
Landsradio 182210
Post Office 182207
St. Eustatius Historical Foundation Museum 182288
Winair Office 182362
Lions Club meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday at the "Den" next to the Airport
Drug Prevention Foundation meets every Tuesday 5:30pm at the Golden Era Hotel.
Coastguard NA&A 113
St. Eustatius National parks: Gallows Bay: 318 2884

SABA

Police Station
The Bottom, tel. 4163237
Emergency 111/112
Hospital
The Bottom, tel. 4163288/4163289
Fire Department Airport
Flat Point, tel. 4162210
SATEL
The Bottom, tel. 4163211
WINAIR, Airport
Flat Point, tel. 4162255/2713
Taxi Service Airport
Flat Point, tel. 160
Administration Building
The Bottom, tel. 4163311/4163312/4163313
Tourist Office
Windwardside, tel. 4162231
Harbour Office
Fort Bay, tel. 4163294
Saba Marine Park
Fort Bay, tel. 4163295
Nature & Hike Guide
James Johnson
The Bottom, tel. 4163307
Service Club
Saba Lions Club general meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday 8:00 p.m. at Eugenius A. Johnson Center.
Coastguard NA&A 113
Red Cross
General meeting every last Monday, 6 p.m., Eugenius A. Johnson Center.

ANGUILLA

EMERGENCY
Police 911
Fire 911
Ambulance 911
Police Station 497 2333
Hospital 497 2551
Disaster Department 497 2926
Radio Anguilla 497 2218
Tourism 497 2759

AIRLINES
Anguilla Air Services 498 5922
Trans Anguilla 497 8690

COURIER SERVICE
DHL 497 3400
Fedex 497 2719
UPS 497 2239

SERVICE CLUBS
Rotary
Meets at Roy's Restaurant
Every Thursday 6 pm
Soroptimist International
Meets at Day Care Centre
2nd Tuesday in month 4.30 pm
Lions Club
1st and 3rd Tuesday
Arts and Craft Centre 5.30 pm
Toastmasters Club
Every 2nd and 4th Saturday
Anguilla Community College
6.45pm

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United States President Donald Trump shaking hands with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Photo by Brendan Smialowski via DutchNews.nl.

US, EU trade deal results are 'not ideal,' say Dutch

BRUSSELS--The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) have struck a last-minute trade agreement that averts an escalation in tariffs, but key Dutch sectors still face significant hurdles.

US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen shook hands on the agreement in Scotland on Sunday evening, in which the US will impose a 15% import tariff on goods from the EU, although some products are exempt.

Caretaker Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said on social media that while "no tariffs would have been better," the deal provides greater clarity for Dutch companies and more stability in the markets.

"The next step is to implement the agreement

as quickly as possible," he said.

Caretaker Dutch State Secretary of Foreign Trade Hanneke Boerma said the agreement is "not ideal" and "could still have a big impact on many Dutch and European businesses."

She said the Dutch government is urging the European Commission to continue negotiating with the US on lowering tariffs and improving economic cooperation.

The deal leaves in place a 50% tariff on European steel and aluminium, which Trump said would not be reduced and is likely to have a significant impact on Tata Steel in IJmuiden.

However, Von der Leyen told reporters there would be a quota system in place.

Employers' federation VNO-NCW described the

deal as a temporary reprieve.

"It ends the uncertainty for now, but a general 15% tariff on all European products remains a painful measure for entrepreneurs," the lobby group said.

ING economist Bert Colijn told public broadcaster NOS that the deal brings welcome certainty after weeks of volatility, but warned that the outcome was still a step back compared to the situation before April.

"For companies, the agreement offers more predictability," he said. "We saw trade data fluctuate wildly due to the uncertainty. Deals were cancelled and projects postponed."

Products exempt from the 15% tariff include aircraft and aircraft parts, chip-making equipment, certain types of agricultural machinery, and selected chemicals.

Von der Leyen said after the talks that she would work to expand the list of exemptions.

The Netherlands has had a structural trade deficit with the US for years, according to figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Meanwhile, oil and gas imports have become more important since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

US crude oil imports now account for 23% of the Dutch total, making the US the most important supplier.

The US is also the biggest supplier of medical instruments and pharmaceutical products to the Netherlands.

Germany, France, Ireland, and Italy all have significant trade surpluses with the US, while Belgium, like the Netherlands, has a deficit.

Experts urge review of burn-out diagnoses in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM--Psychiatrists and occupational health experts are calling for a review of how the Netherlands diagnoses and treats burn-out, after Sweden announced it would drop the term following updated guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO), newspaper "De Volkskrant" reported on Monday.

The Netherlands and Sweden were the only two countries that still recognise burn-out as a formal diagnosis.

While symptoms such as exhaustion, concentration problems and sleep issues are real, critics argue the label lacks scientific precision and may delay access to more targeted treatment.

Psychiatrist Christiaan Vinkers, professor of stress and resilience at Amsterdam UMC teaching hospital, told the paper that many patients now diagnosed with burn-out could be more effectively helped if diagnosed with conditions such as depression or anxiety.

"Burn-out is poorly defined and creates a separate treatment market outside psychiatry," he said.

The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) dropped the term in 2023, and WHO's guidelines now define burn-out as an "occupational phenomenon rather than a medical condition."

However, occupational health and family doctors say the current approach works well. They use structured criteria to assess symptoms and suggest tailored interventions such as sleep routines, exercise or therapy.

The Hague family doctor Richard Starmans told the paper the diagnosis is meaningful to patients and gives direction to care.

Although he agrees that treatments are often based on experience rather than hard evidence, he stressed that most patients recover within six months.

Meanwhile, Vinkers is now leading a new study on early detection of stress symptoms, aiming to bring together general practitioners, psychiatrists, occupational doctors and psychologists to design better coordinated care.

"We need to break down silos and understand what this kind of stress really involves," he said.

Dutch research institute TNO said in 2023 that one in four employees between 18 and 34 years old reported burn-out symptoms.

That report, commissioned by the Dutch ministry of social affairs and employment, found burn-out cases were becoming more common and more severe, with the biggest increase among young women.

Dutch tourists spark search after jumping in Italian lake

TREMEZZINI, Italy--Two Dutch tourists are facing legal action after sparking an unnecessary search by Italian emergency services when they jumped off a ferry on Lake Como last Friday, local media reported.

The pair -- 23 and 26 years old -- jumped off the ferry and swam to the 18th-century village of Laglio.

Once out of sight, it was unclear whether they had reached the shore and emergency services were called.

The two were later sighted at Laglio and received a visit from local police at the campsite where they were staying in Tremezzini, some 30 minutes from Laglio.

They have been charged with causing a search and rescue operation without reason.

Scooter rider hurt in crash

ST. EUSTATIUS--A scooter rider was injured and had to be taken to hospital after colliding with a car on Dr. H.A. Korthalsweg in St. Eustatius last Saturday afternoon.

According to the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force KPCN, its central control room received a report about a crash at 2:40pm.

An ambulance took the rider to hospital, but KPCN did not disclose the extent of their injuries.

KPCN also did not mention anything about the cause of the collision or details about the car and its occupants.

New director of immigration named



Stephen LaRoda (right).

NASSAU, The Bahamas—Amid growing concerns over reports of an immigration crisis and questions about the operations of the Department of Immigration, Stephen LaRoda was appointed as the new director of immigration last week.

LaRoda, a 38-year veteran who previously served as assistant director, replaces William Pratt who was reappointed in 2023 and whose contract was due to expire later this year.

Speaking at a ceremony at the British Colonial Hilton, during which a total of 21 officers were honoured and Perry Davis and Andrea Moxey were also appointed as the newest deputy directors of immigration, LaRoda pledged to “uphold the highest standards of the Department of Immigration”.

“Immigration officers are public servants; we must therefore be mindful of the service

that we provide to the public,” LaRoda said as he addressed his colleagues during the ceremony.

“We must be honest in our dealings with the public. As law enforcement officers, we are called to a higher standard. We must uphold the law. We must also be fair in our dealings with the members of the public.”

When asked about how he plans to improve the perception of the Department of Immigration as it relates to transparency, accountability and fairness, LaRoda said that is his mandate.

“That is definitely my mandate. Maybe we need to have more public awareness programmes so that they can understand what it is that we do, but I talked about being servants of the public, and I believe that, and I’m going to ensure that the team provides the best service that we can.

There’s always room for improvement, and I believe that we’re ready to do that, too.”

Asked specifically about recent concerns raised by Free National Movement (FNM) Leader Michael Pintard, who claimed that there’s an immigration crisis, that there has been a rise in immigration-related irregularities and that the system is mismanaged and “wide open to abuse”, LaRoda said it follows global trends with respect to the perception of immigration.

“Immigration is a hotbed item globally, not just in The Bahamas, and so it’s not surprising,” he said.

“However, I see some things that we could do with respect to enforcement. We’re doing very well with revenue collection. We’re doing very well with, as former director Pratt said, with our computerisation and updates and upgrades, we’re going to look at what we can do on the enforcement side, being firm but being fair.”

As he congratulated LaRoda and the other promoted officers, Prime Minister (PM) Philip Davis said the Bahamian people are expecting results.

The PM assured that the government is not anti-immigrant, but said it will not stand for “systems that disadvantage Bahamians in their own country”.

“We must continue to build an immigration department that works,” PM Davis said.

“One that is prepared, disciplined, and aligned with the needs of a modern nation. That’s why these promotions matter. Mr. LaRoda, Mr. Davis, Ms. Moxey – the weight of the country’s expectations is now squarely on your shoulders.

“This is a time for serious leadership. You must rebuild morale. You must cut through inefficiency. You must lead a department that Bahamians trust – not fear, not question, but trust. This country wants results. And let’s be honest: immigration is a sensitive topic.

“Bahamians want to know that their communities are safe, that their jobs are secure, and that the rules apply to everyone – no matter their background, nationality, or connections. We are not anti-immigrant. We are anti-lawlessness. We are not against workers who follow the law, but we will not tolerate systems that disadvantage Bahamians in their own country.

“That’s why our policy is simple: Where Bahamians are available and qualified, they must come first. Where foreign labour is necessary, it must be legal, it must be regulated, and it must respect the rules.” ~ *The Nassau Guardian* ~



Skyport has launched legal action against BermudaAir alleging unpaid airport charges.

Skyport sues BermudaAir over unpaid airport charges

HAMILTON--Bermuda’s main airport operator, Bermuda Skyport Corporation Ltd., has launched legal proceedings against BermudaAir Ltd., alleging that the island-based airline owes millions in unpaid airport fees.

Skyport, a private company responsible for managing LF Wade International Airport under a long-term public-private partnership with the government of Bermuda, filed the writ on July 11 through local law firm Wakefield Quin. The action claims that BermudaAir has repeatedly failed to hand over mandatory airport charges it collected from passengers.

In a public statement, a Skyport spokesperson said: “After unsuccessfully attempting to work with BermudaAir for over a year, Skyport has been forced to initiate a legal process to recover the significant owing balance and ensure payment going forward.”

The charges in question are airport usage fees, which under the Bermuda Airport

Authority Act 2017, are to be collected by airlines on behalf of Skyport and remitted to the operator. These fees are levied on both passengers and carriers to support airport maintenance and operations.

“BermudaAir has been collecting these charges for an extended period of time and not paying them to Skyport,” the statement alleged. It also noted that Skyport had supported the airline’s launch with approximately US \$700,000 in fee concessions to help develop new services.

BermudaAir, which launched in September 2023 as Bermuda’s first locally registered commercial airline, acknowledged in a statement that it is working through “a number of commercial issues” with Skyport and is aiming to resolve them in the near future.

Though relatively new, BermudaAir has grown quickly since its debut. The airline began with two Embraer E175 jets and initially operated short-haul flights from

Bermuda to Boston and Westchester, New York. It has since expanded its fleet and introduced routes to Toronto, Halifax, Charleston, Orlando, Richmond, Baltimore, and Montreal.

In 2025, BermudaAir also announced the launch of a new brand, AnguillaAir, which will begin offering direct flights from Boston and Baltimore to Anguilla starting in December.

The legal dispute with Skyport arises during Bermuda’s peak travel season, which could mean the amount owed by BermudaAir has grown significantly since the writ was filed earlier this month.

LF Wade International Airport, located in St. George’s Parish, is Bermuda’s only airport and a critical hub for both tourism and business travel to the island. Skyport has operated the airport since 2017 under a 30-year concession agreement as part of a public-private partnership with the government of Bermuda. ~ *The Royal Gazette* ~

Teens embark on ocean innovation programme

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados—Sixty students from nineteen secondary schools across Barbados have embarked on a first-of-its-kind, four-week programme aimed at shaping the island’s next generation of ocean advocates and innovators.

The new pilot, which was launched on Monday at the Oceana Innovation Hub headquarters in Bay Street, brings together young minds from across the country for an immersive experience in marine science, conservation, and advocacy under the banner of the Oceana Innovation Hub Summer Programme.

Che Greenidge, Head of the Oceana Innovation Hub, expressed her enthusiasm during the opening ceremony, describing the initiative as both timely and transformative.

“I feel like we’re shaping the next generation of ocean stewards, and I’m so excited to see all of the students here today [Monday, July 28, 2025 – Ed.]. This pilot is very special, not only because of its innovative approach but because of the diversity that it represents,” she said.

Greenidge added, “We’re proud to have 19 different secondary schools from across Barbados participating in our summer pilot programme. Each of the 60 students registered, from both the senior and junior cohorts, will bring a unique voice and perspective. This is to ensure that the ideas, the creativity, and the energy that we cultivate over the next four weeks reflect the perspectives of our island’s future leaders – our young people.”

The curriculum will expose students to marine conservation, marine pollution, disaster management, the law of the sea, advocacy, and water safety. The programme includes a “learn to swim” component and a water safety certification aimed at building both confidence and respect for the marine environment.

“No one can fully appreciate the ocean without first feeling safe in it,” Greenidge explained. “Our learn-to-swim programme, and water safety certification – which will be for the stronger swimmers – will empower students with the confidence they need in open water, while also teaching respect for marine environments, the dangers of unsafe swimming conditions, and how they can navigate our seas and feel safe.” ~ *Barbados Today* ~

Caribbean seeks stronger Africa trade as traditional routes waver

ST. GEORGE’S, Grenada—Caribbean nations are looking to “decisively” broaden opportunities for trade with Africa, the secretary-general of its regional bloc said on Monday, in view of looming uncertainty with its more traditional trade partners.

Stronger trade ties with Africa would signal a key economic shift in a region that relies heavily on trade with the United States (US), Canada and Europe, in a period of growing protectionism.

In April, Washington imposed a baseline 10% tariff on nearly all its trade partners. It has been levying its power to influence domestic Caribbean policies on issues such as Cuban medical services and citizen-by-investment (CBI) programmes.

“We must decisively open the door to greater trade between our regions,” Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretary-General Carla Barnett said at the opening of the fourth Annual AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum (ACTIF 2025) in Grenada.

“CARICOM trade with the continent must grow beyond the current levels of less than 3% of our overall trade, particularly with the uncertainty that currently looms over trade with traditional partners.”

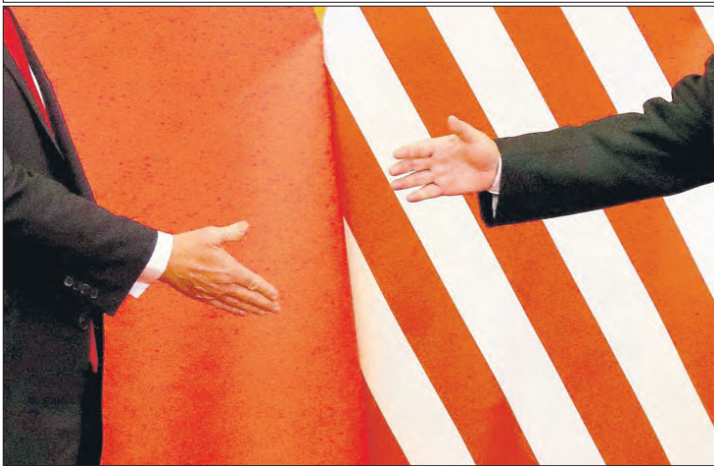
The US is CARICOM’s largest trading partner, according to latest data from the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC).

The US bought a quarter of the bloc’s \$38.8 billion

in exports shipped throughout 2023, according to OEC data, and sold 39% of the \$43.4 billion worth of goods imported into the region.

Caribbean nations remain particularly vulnerable to global economic shocks such as inflation and pandemics, due to their reliance on tourism, imported food and fuel, and their exposure to climate-related disasters.

Barnett said the region has already collaborated with Africa on so far unsuccessful campaigns for slavery reparations from former colonisers and for compensation from rich nations for climate change, which disproportionately affects small island states. ~ *Reuters* ~



U.S. President Donald Trump and China's President Xi Jinping shake hands after making joint statements at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, November 9, 2017.

Trump sets new deadline of 10 or 12 days for Russia to act on Ukraine

TURNBERRY, Scotland--U.S. President Donald Trump set a new deadline on Monday of 10 or 12 days for Russia to make progress toward ending the war in Ukraine or face consequences, underscoring frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin over the 3-1/2-year-old conflict.

Trump has threatened sanctions on both Russia and buyers of its exports unless progress is made. The fresh deadline suggests the U.S. president is prepared to move forward on those threats after previous hesitation to do so.

Speaking in Scotland, where he was holding meetings with European leaders and playing golf, Trump said he was disappointed in Putin and shortening a 50-day deadline he had set on the issue earlier this month.

"I'm going to make a new deadline of about ... 10 or 12 days from today," Trump told reporters during a meeting with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. "There's no reason in waiting... We just don't see any progress being made."

There was no immediate comment from the Kremlin. In a post on X, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, a close ally of Putin, said Trump was playing "a game of ultimatums" that could lead to a war involving the U.S. Medvedev wrote: "Each new ultimatum is a threat and a step towards war. Not between Russia and Ukraine, but with (Trump's) own country."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised Trump's "particularly significant" statement as timely in

trying to move forward to a peace settlement. "Clear stance and expressed determination by @POTUS – right on time, when a lot can change through strength for real peace," Zelenskyy wrote on X.

"I thank President Trump for his focus on saving lives and stopping this horrible war," Zelenskyy said.

Ukraine, he said later in his nightly video address, favoured tougher sanctions as a "key element" in ending the war. "Russia pays atten-

tion to sanctions, pays attention to such losses," he said.

Trump, who has expressed annoyance also with Zelenskyy, has not always followed tough talk about Putin with action, citing what he deems a good relationship that the two men have had previously. On Monday, Trump indicated he was not interested in more talks with Putin. He said sanctions and tariffs would be used as penalties for Moscow if it did not meet Trump's demands.

US Democrats, Republicans plan bills to pressure China

WASHINGTON--U.S. senators from both major parties plan to introduce bills this week targeting China over its treatment of minority groups, dissidents and Taiwan, emphasizing security and human rights as President Donald Trump focuses on trade with Beijing. The three bills, seen by Reuters ahead of their introduction, have Democratic and Republican sponsors, a departure from the fierce partisanship dividing Washington.

Trump's push to reach economic agreements between the world's two biggest economies has strong support in the U.S. Congress, especially from his fellow Republicans, but has prompted some China hawks to worry that the U.S. government is de-emphasizing security issues.

"It does appear that President Trump is keen to negotiate some kind of deal with China, and gaps are opening between his approach to China and the approaches of some members of his team, as well as with Congress, which overall has been quite hawkish on China," said Bonnie Glaser, an Asia expert at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

The desire for a hard line on China is one of the few truly bipartisan sentiments in the perennially divided Congress, even as many lawmakers support Trump's efforts to rebalance the bilateral trade relationship. "The United States cannot afford to be weak in the face of the People's Republic of China and its aggression around the world,"

said Democrat Jeff Merkley of Oregon, a lead sponsor of all three bills.

"No matter who is in the White House, America's values of freedom and human rights must remain at the heart of a clear and principled vision that guides our leadership on the global stage," Merkley said in a statement.

Trump administration officials have said that Trump remains fully committed to Asia-Pacific security issues as he pursues his trade agenda and a good personal relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Asked for comment on Monday, White House Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly said administration officials do not get ahead of the president on pending legislation.

"President Trump has pub-

licly discussed his desire for a constructive relationship with China. He is focused on advancing American interests, such as leveling the playing field for American industries and getting China to stop the flow of fentanyl into our country," she said via email.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters query about the bills.

One bill, co-sponsored by Republican John Cornyn of Texas, would deny entry into the United States of current or former Chinese government officials who were deemed to have engaged in the forced repatriation of members of China's Uyghur minority. Human rights groups accuse China of widespread abuses of Uyghurs, a main-

Continued on page 20

Trump asks for swift deposition of Murdoch in Epstein defamation case

NEW YORK--Donald Trump on Monday asked a U.S. court to order a swift deposition for billionaire Rupert Murdoch in the U.S. president's defamation lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal over its July 17 article asserting Trump's name was on a 2003 birthday greeting for the late financier and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The Republican president on July 18 sued the Journal, its owners, including Murdoch, and the reporters who wrote the story, which said Trump's letter included a

sexually suggestive drawing and a reference to secrets they shared.

Trump's lawsuit called the alleged birthday greeting "fake" and said the Journal published its article to harm the president's reputation. In a court filing on Monday, Trump's lawyers said Trump told Murdoch before the article was published that the letter referenced in the story was fake, and Murdoch told Trump he would "take care of it."

"Murdoch's direct involvement further underscores

Defendants' actual malice," Trump's lawyers wrote, referring to the legal standard Trump must clear to prevail in his lawsuit.

His lawyers asked U.S. District Judge Darrin Gayles in Miami to compel Murdoch, 94, to testify within 15 days. Gayles ordered Murdoch to respond by August 4.

Dow Jones, the Journal's publisher, declined to comment. Dow Jones has said the Journal stood by its reporting and would vigorously defend against the lawsuit.

WASHINGTON--Federal employees may discuss and promote their religious beliefs in the workplace, the Trump administration said on Monday, citing religious freedoms protected by the U.S. Constitution.

Agency employees may seek to "persuade others of the correctness of their own religious views" in the office, wrote Scott Kupor, director of the Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. government's human resources agency.

Supervisors can attempt to recruit their employees to their religion, so long as the efforts aren't "harassing in nature," according to Kupor's statement. Agencies can't discipline their employees for declining to talk to their coworkers about their religious views.

The statement represents the latest effort of the six-month-old Republican Trump administration to expand the role of religion in the federal workplace. Courts have long held that employers cannot suppress all religious expression in the workplace, but can lawfully curb conduct that is disruptive or imposes an undue hardship as long as it applies equally to members of any religion.

The U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protects individuals' rights to practice their religion while preventing the government from favoring one religion or another or religion in general. OPM in mid-July said agency workers can get permission to work from home or adjust their hours to accommodate religious prayers, after previously

demanding that workers report to offices fulltime.

The new statement cites President Donald Trump's February executive order calling on agencies to eliminate the "anti-Christian weaponization of government." That order directs cabinet secretaries to identify federal actions hostile to Christians. Trump has embraced the conservative Christian world view and promoted policies that speak to concerns that their religious liberty is under attack.

Federal employees can also set up prayer groups in the workplace, so long as they don't meet during work hours, Kupor's statement said. The memo references Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a law that prohibits workplace discrimination based on a person's religion or religious practices. Kupor in the memo said that means the law requires employers to allow workers to proselytize, organize prayer groups on non-working time, and display religious icons.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces Title VII, has said that proselytizing in the workplace can amount to unlawful religious harassment if it is unwelcome and is so severe or pervasive that it creates a hostile or abusive work environment. "A consensual conversation about religious views, even if quite spirited, does not constitute harassment if it is not unwelcome," the agency said in a 2008 guidance document.

Pro-Ukrainian hackers claim massive cyberattack on Russia's Aeroflot

MOSCOW--Russian airline Aeroflot was forced to cancel more than 50 round-trip flights on Monday, disrupting travel across the world's biggest country, as two pro-Ukraine hacking groups claimed to have inflicted a crippling cyberattack.

The Kremlin said the situation was worrying, and lawmakers described it as a wake-up call for Russia. Prosecutors confirmed the disruption at the national flag carrier was caused by a hack and opened a criminal investigation.

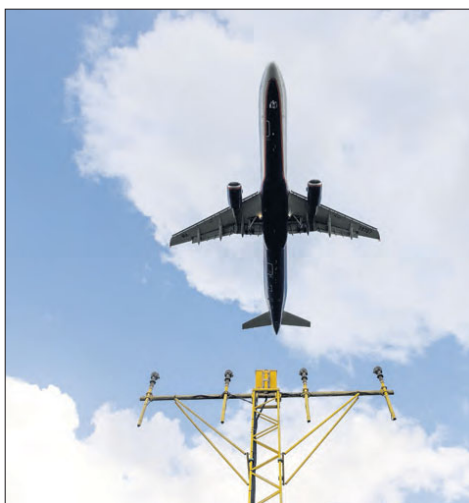
Senior lawmaker Anton Gorenkin said Russia was under digital attack. "We must not forget that the war against our country is being waged on all fronts, including the digital one. And I do

not rule out that the 'hacktivists' who claimed responsibility for the incident are in the service of unfriendly states," Gorenkin said in a statement.

Another member of parliament, Anton Nemkin, said investigators must identify not only the attackers but "those who allowed systemic failures in protection."

Aeroflot did not say how long the problems would take to resolve, but departure boards at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport turned red as flights were cancelled at a time when many Russians take their holidays. The company's shares were down by 3.9% by 1533 GMT, underperforming the wider market, which was 1.3% lower.

A statement purporting to be from a hacking group



An Aeroflot passenger plane descends before landing at the Sheremetyevo international airport outside Moscow, Russia, in this file photo.

called Silent Crow said it had carried out the operation together with Belarusian Cyberpartisans, a self-styled hacktivist group that opposes president Alexander Lukashenko and says it wants to liberate Belarus from dictatorship. "Glory to Ukraine! Long live Belarus!" said the statement in the name of Silent Crow.

Belarusian Cyberpartisans said on its website: "We are helping Ukrainians in their fight with the occupier, carrying out a cyber strike on Aeroflot and paralysing the largest airline in Russia."

There was no immediate comment from Ukraine. Silent Crow has previously claimed responsibility for attacks this year on a Russian real estate database, a state

telecoms company, a large insurance firm, the Moscow government's IT department and the Russian office of South Korean carmaker KIA. Some of those resulted in big data leaks.

"The information that we are reading in the public domain is quite alarming. The hacker threat is a threat that remains for all large companies providing services to the population," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Aeroflot said it had cancelled 54 round-trip flights but planned to operate the remaining 206 out of a total of 260 scheduled for Monday. An online departure board for Sheremetyevo airport showed dozens of flights were delayed by hours.

Firefighters battle blazes in Turkey, Greece and Albania

ATHENS--Firefighters battled on Monday to put out wildfires in three separate provinces of Turkey, in Greece and near a tourist resort in Albania, stoked by strong winds after days of searing heat across the Mediterranean region.

Smoke billowed over the mountainous Black Sea province of Karabuk, 200 kilometres (125 miles) north of the capital Ankara, as a wildfire which raged for a sixth day forced the evacuation of more than a dozen villages and burnt swathes of forests.

In the northwestern province of Bursa, three firefighters were killed on

Sunday when their vehicle crashed, Turkey's Forestry Ministry said on Monday. Crews fought two separate blazes there on Monday, following the evacuation of more than 3,600 people from settlements in the southern provinces of Mersin and Antalya.

Turkey has suffered dozens of wildfires in recent weeks as temperatures have soared, and 10 firefighters were killed last week battling a blaze in the central Eskisehir province.

Hot and dry summers are common in the Mediterranean region, but more intense heatwaves have

contributed to destructive wildfires in recent years amid fast-rising temperatures across the globe. At least 44 wildfires broke out in Greece in the past 24 hours, the fire brigade said on Monday afternoon.

On the southern Greek island of Kythera, strong winds rekindled a blaze burning since Saturday. In Athens, firefighters quickly contained a fire that broke out at the foot of Mount Hymettus, near a university campus and densely populated suburbs.

In Albania, over 900 firefighters assisted by the army battled to control a wildfire before it reached



A drone view shows damaged cars near a burned workshop following wildfires in the village of Buchinci, near Skopje, North Macedonia on Monday.

the seaside city of Saranda and other tourist resorts in the south of the country on the Ionian coast. Some 13 people have been arrested for arson-related offences in the past three days, po-

lice said.

Bulgaria, assisted by several European countries, deployed firefighting planes to help tame a large wildfire near the Bulgarian-Turkish border. So far,

the flames have scorched about 16,000 acres in total. Two people have been detained by authorities investigating the cause of the fires, according to local media.



Emergency personnel work in a flooded area of the town of Brosteni in Suceava county, Romania, in this handout image released on Monday.

Floods in Romania kill 3, hundreds evacuated

BUCHAREST--Severe overnight floods in eastern Romania killed three elderly people and damaged thousands of homes, with hundreds of people evacuated and four helicopters searching for stranded villagers, officials said on Monday.

Some 25 villages across nine counties were affected by heavy rain and high winds, which tore off roofs and uprooted trees, blocking traffic on some national roads, ac-

cording to the emergency response agency. It released footage showing wooden houses and cars swept away by the floodwaters, with rescue workers checking vehicles for potential victims.

The worst hit were Neamt and Suceava counties in eastern Romania, where two rivers burst their banks, killing a 66-year-old man and forcing hundreds of people to evacuate. All access roads to the village of Brosteni

in Suceava county were blocked.

The emergency response agency later said that two women, an 85- and an 83-year-old, were also victims of the flood. Firefighters had to use an excavator to retrieve one of the bodies from a riverbed. The Environment Ministry's water management agency said some rivers rose to record high water levels. Repair works on collapsed bridges were underway, it said.

Trump says many are starving in Gaza, vows to set up food centres

CAIRO/GENEVA--U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday many people were starving in Gaza and suggested Israel could do more on humanitarian access, as Palestinians struggled to feed their children a day after Israel declared steps to improve supplies.

As the death toll from two years of war in Gaza nears 60,000, a growing number of people are dying from starvation and malnutrition, Gaza health authorities say, with images of starving children shocking the world and fueling international criticism of Israel over sharply worsening conditions.

Describing starvation in Gaza as real, Trump's assessment put him at odds with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said on Sunday "there is no starvation in Gaza" and vowed to fight on against the Palestinian militant group Hamas - a statement he reposted on X on Monday. However, Netanyahu later on Monday described the situation in Gaza as "difficult", saying

his country was working to ensure aid delivery to the besieged strip.

"Israel will continue to work with international agencies as well as the U.S. and European nations to ensure that large amounts of humanitarian aid flows into the Gaza Strip," Netanyahu said, according to a statement from his office.

Trump, speaking during a visit to Scotland, said Israel has a lot of responsibility for aid flows, and that a lot of people could be saved. "You have a lot of starving people," he said.

"We're going to set up food centres," with no fences or boundaries to ease access, Trump said. The U.S. would work with other countries to provide more humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza, including food and sanitation, he said. A White House spokesperson said additional details on the food centres would be "forthcoming."

On Monday, the Gaza health ministry said at least 14 people had died in the

past 24 hours of starvation and malnutrition, bringing the war's death toll from hunger to 147, including 88 children, most in just the last few weeks.

Israel announced several measures over the weekend, including daily humanitarian pauses to fighting in three areas of Gaza, new safe corridors for aid convoys, and air-drops. The decision followed the collapse of ceasefire talks on Friday.

Wessal Nabil from Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza described the struggle of trying to feed her three children. "When you go to bed hungry, you wake up hungry. We distract them with anything ... to make them calm down," she told Reuters. "I call on the world, on those with merciful hearts, the compassionate, to look at us with compassion, to be kind to us, to stand with us until aid comes in and ensure it reaches us."

Two Israeli defence officials said the international pressure prompted the new Israeli measures, as did the worsening conditions on the



A Palestinian youth holds a can of chickpeas from an aid package dropped from an airplane, amid a hunger crisis, in Zawayda, in the central Gaza Strip, on Monday.

ground.

U.N. agencies said a long-term and steady supply of aid was needed. The World Food Programme said 60 trucks of aid had been dispatched - short of target. Almost 470,000 people in Gaza are enduring famine-like conditions, with 90,000 women and children in need of specialist nutrition treatments, it said.

"Our target at the moment, every day is to get 100 trucks into Gaza," WFP Regional Director for the Middle East,

North Africa and Eastern Europe, Samer AbdelJaber, told Reuters.

Jan Egeland, head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, told Reuters the situation is catastrophic. "At this time, children are dying every single day from starvation, from preventable disease. So time has run out."

Netanyahu has denied any policy of starvation towards Gaza, saying aid supplies would be kept up whether Israel was negotiating a ceasefire or fighting. A spokesper-

son for COGAT, the Israeli military aid coordination agency, said Israel had not placed a time limit on the humanitarian pauses in its military operation, a day after U.N. aid chief Tom Fletcher said Israel had decided "to support a one-week scale-up of aid".

"We hope this pause will last much longer than a week, ultimately turning into a permanent ceasefire," Fletcher's spokesperson, Eri Kaneko, said on Monday.

Viral 'honour' killing in southwest Pakistan triggers national outrage

KARACHI--A viral video of the "honour killing" of a woman and her lover in a remote part of Pakistan has ignited national outrage, prompting scrutiny of long-standing tribal codes and calls for justice in a country where such killings often pass in silence.

While hundreds of so-called honour killings are reported in Pakistan each year, often with little public or legal response, the video of a woman and man accused of adultery being taken to the desert by a group of men to be killed has struck a nerve.

The video shows the woman, Bano Bibi, being handed a Koran by a man identified by police as her brother. "Come walk seven steps with me, after that you can shoot me," she says, and she walks forward a few feet and stops with her back to the men.

The brother, Jalal Satakzai, then shoots her three times and she collapses. Seconds later he shoots and kills the man, Ehsan Ullah Samalani, whom Bano was accused of having an affair with.

Once the video of the killings in Pakistan's Balochistan province went viral, it brought swift government action and condemnation from politicians, rights groups and



Policewomen escort Gul Jan Bibi (C), mother of Bano Bibi, who along with a man was killed after being accused of having an affair, in a so-called honour killing after a video showing the couple being shot went viral on social media, at a local court in Quetta, Pakistan July 26, 2025.

clerics. Civil rights lawyer Jibril Nasir said, though, the government's response was more about performance than justice.

"The crime occurred months ago, not in secrecy but near a provincial capital, yet no one acted until 240 million witnessed the killing on camera," he said. "This isn't a response to a crime. It's a response to a viral moment."

Police have arrested 16 people in Balochistan's Nasirabad district, including a tribal chief and the woman's mother. The mother, Gul Jan Bibi, said the killings were carried out by family and local elders based on "centuries-old Baloch traditions", and not on the orders of the tribal chief.

"We did not commit any sin," she said in a video statement that also went viral.

"Bano and Ehsan were killed according to our customs."

She said her daughter, who had three sons and two daughters, had run away with Ehsan and returned after 25 days. Police said Bano's younger brother, who shot the couple, remains at large.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said it was a "test" case and vowed to dismantle the illegal tribal courts operating outside the

law. Police had earlier said a jirga, an informal tribal council that issues extrajudicial rulings, had ordered the killings.

The video sparked online condemnation, with hashtags like #JusticeForCouple and #HonourKilling trending. The Pakistan Ulama Council, a body of religious scholars, called the killings "un-Islamic" and urged terrorism charges against those involved.

Dozens of civil society members and rights activists staged a protest on Saturday in the provincial capital Quetta, demanding justice and an end to parallel justice systems. "Virality is a double-edged sword," said Arsalan Khan, a cultural anthropologist and professor who studies gender and masculinity. "It can pressure the state into action, but public spectacle can also serve as a strategy to restore ghairat, or perceived family honour, in the eyes of the community."

Pakistan outlawed honour killings in 2016 after the murder of social media star Qandeel Baloch, closing a loophole that allowed perpetrators to go free if they were pardoned by family members. Rights groups say enforcement remains weak, es-

pecially in rural areas where tribal councils still hold sway.

"In a country where conviction rates often fall to single digits, visibility - and the uproar it brings - has its advantages," said constitutional lawyer Asad Rahim Khan. "It jolts a complacent state that continues to tolerate jirgas in areas beyond its writ."

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported at least 405 honour killings in 2024. Most victims are women, often killed by relatives claiming to defend family honour.

Khan said rather than enforcing the law, the government has spent the past year weakening the judiciary and even considering reviving jirgas in former tribal areas. "It's executive inaction, most shamefully toward women in Balochistan," Khan said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in recent months has asked senior ministers to evaluate proposals to revive jirgas in Pakistan's former tribal districts, including potential engagement with tribal elders and Afghan authorities. The Prime Minister's Office and Pakistan's information minister did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Ceasefire takes effect between Thailand and Cambodia after five-day border battle

BANGKOK/PHNOM PENH--A ceasefire between Cambodia and Thailand came into effect at midnight on Monday, hours after they agreed to halt their deadliest conflict in more than a decade following five days of intense fighting that displaced over 300,000 people.

After efforts by Malaysia, chair of the ASEAN regional bloc, the United States and China to bring both sides to the table, the two countries' leaders agreed during talks in Putrajaya to end hostilities, resume direct communications and create a mechanism to implement the ceasefire.

"This is a vital first step towards de-escalation and the restoration of peace and security," Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim earlier told a press conference, flanked by the Thai and Cambodian leaders, following more than two hours of talks at his residence in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

At least 38 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in clashes in multiple locations along their 800 km (500 miles) border since fighting between the two Southeast Asian neighbours erupted on July 24. There were no official reports of unrest from either side in the hours leading up to the ceasefire taking effect.



Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim looks on as Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thailand's acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai take part in mediation talks on the Thailand-Cambodia border conflict, in Putrajaya, Malaysia on Monday.

The truce talks followed a sustained peace push by Anwar and U.S. President Donald Trump's phone calls to both leaders at the weekend, where he said he would not conclude trade deals with them if fighting continued. Both sides face a tariff of 36% on their goods in the U.S., their biggest export market.

Trump in a post on Truth Social on Monday congratulated all parties and said he had spoken to the leaders of Thailand and Cambodia and instructed his trade team to restart negotiations. "By ending this

War, we have saved thousands of lives ... I have now ended many Wars in just six months — I am proud to be the President of PEACE!" Trump said.

The two countries have wrangled for decades over border territory and have been on a conflict footing since the killing of a Cambodian soldier in a skirmish late in May, which led to a troop buildup on both sides and a full-blown diplomatic crisis that brought Thailand's fragile coalition government to the brink of collapse. They accuse each other of starting the fighting

last week that within hours escalated from small arms fire to heavy artillery and rockets and Thailand's unexpected scrambling of an F-16 fighter jet to carry out airstrikes.

Thai acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayacha praised Trump for pushing the peace effort and said trade negotiations would start from a good place. "I thanked him from my heart for what we received from him and helped our country move beyond this crisis," he told reporters on his return from Malaysia after speaking to Trump. "After today

the situation should de-escalate."

Simmering tensions boiled over last week after Thailand recalled its ambassador to Phnom Penh and expelled Cambodia's envoy, in response to a second Thai soldier losing a limb to a landmine that Bangkok alleged Cambodian troops had laid. Cambodia has strongly denied the charge, as well as Thai accusations that it has fired at civilian targets including schools and hospitals. It had accused Thailand of "unprovoked and premeditated military aggression."

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in a statement said he and Trump expected all sides to "fully honour their commitments to end this conflict."

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said his Thai counterpart had played a positive role and he deeply appreciated Trump's "decisive mediation" and China's constructive participation. In social media posts, Hun Manet said he had returned to Cambodia "with brilliant results" and had spoken with Trump, who expressed a desire for lasting peace.

The fighting has scarred border communities on both sides. In Thailand's Sisaket province, a house was reduced to splintered wood and twisted beams after it was struck by artillery

fire from Cambodia. The roof had caved in, windows hung by the frame and power lines drooped over the structure.

Amid the din of occasional artillery fire, homes and shops remained shut and a four-lane road was deserted except for a few cars and military vehicles. Dozens of displaced residents lined up quietly for their evening meal at an evacuation centre about 40 km away from the frontlines. A few children played with dogs, others swept the dusty floor.

Fifty-four-year-old Nong Ngarmrsi just wanted to go back to her village. "I want to go to my children who stayed back," she said. "I want them to cease firing so that I can go home."

North Korea says Trump must accept new nuclear reality

SEOUL--North Korea said on Tuesday the United States must accept that reality has changed since the countries' summit meetings in the past, and no future dialogue would end its nuclear programme, state media KCNA reported.

Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un who is believed to speak for her brother, said she conceded that the personal relationship between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump "is not bad."

But if Washington intended to use a personal relationship as a way to end the North's nuclear weapons programme, the effort would only be the subject of "mockery," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by KCNA.

"If the U.S. fails to accept the changed reality and persists in the failed past, the DPRK-U.S. meeting will remain as a 'hope' of the U.S. side," she said. DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea's capabilities as a nuclear weapons state and the geopolitical environment have radically changed since Kim and Trump held talks three times during the U.S. president's first term, she said. "Any attempt to deny the position of the DPRK as a nuclear weapons state ... will be thoroughly rejected," she said.

North Korea calls South's peace overtures 'great miscalculation'

SEOUL--North Korea has no interest in any policy or proposals for reconciliation from South Korea, the powerful sister of its leader Kim Jong Un said on Monday, in the first response to peace overtures by the South's liberal President Lee Jae Myung.

There had been cautious optimism in the South that the North might respond positively and even show willingness to return to dialogue after Pyongyang also shut off its propaganda loudspeakers, a move that Lee said came sooner than expected.

Kim Yo Jong, a senior official of North Korea's ruling party who is believed to speak for its leader, said Lee's pledge of commitment to the South Korea-U.S. security alliance showed he was no different from his hostile pre-

decessor. "If South Korea expects to reverse all the consequences of (its actions) with a few sentimental words, there could be no greater miscalculation than that," Kim said in comments carried by the official KCNA news agency.

Lee, who took office on June 4 after winning a snap election following the removal of hardline conservative Yoon Suk Yeol over a failed attempt at martial law, has vowed to improve ties with Pyongyang that had reached their worst level in years. Among gestures to ease tension, Lee suspended loudspeaker broadcasts blasting anti-North propaganda across the border and banned the balloon drops of leaflets by activists that had angered Pyongyang.

Kim, the North Korean official, called those moves



Troops march during a parade commemorating the anniversary of the Korean War armistice in Pyongyang, North Korea, July 27, 2025 in this picture released by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency.

merely a reversal of ill-intentioned activities South Korea should never have initiated. "In other words, it's not even something worth our assessment," she said. "We again make clear the official position that whatever policy is established in Seoul or proposal is made, we are not interested, and we will not

be sitting down with South Korea and there is nothing to discuss."

Following the KCNA comments on Monday, Lee said it was important to restore trust between the neighbours. South Korea's Unification Ministry, charged with handling ties between the two countries, said Kim Yo Jong's comments "show

the wall of distrust between the South and the North is very high as a result of hostile and confrontational policy over the past few years."

South Korea will keep up efforts for reconciliation and cooperation with the North, ministry spokesperson Koo Byoung-sam told a briefing.



Prada accessories are displayed at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City, U.S., July 24, 2025.

Trump's tariffs will be test of luxury brands' pricing power

PARIS/NEW YORK—Luxury goods companies were spared their worst case scenario in Sunday's EU-U.S. trade deal but they face a delicate balancing act as already weak consumer demand tests their ability to raise prices further. Big labels like Chanel and LVMH's Louis Vuitton and Dior have relied on dramatic price increases in recent years to drive a chunk of their profit growth.

Jacques Roizen, managing director, China, at Digital Luxury Group, said the deal struck by U.S. President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Sunday, imposing a 15% tariff on EU goods, brings much needed certainty to luxury's key U.S. market. Yet, "brands are treading carefully with further price hikes to avoid alienating younger and occasional shoppers," he said.

Although baseline duties are below a hefty 30% levy that Trump had threatened just a couple of weeks ago, they are a far cry from the zero-for-zero tariff deal Brussels was hoping to clinch. Fresh tariffs also come as the luxury goods industry is counting on the U.S. as former growth engine China sputters and sales globally are in decline.

"Tariffs are definitely going to affect my buying behaviour, depending on the rate of the tariff. I would think twice before I just pick things up," said Abida Taher, a 53-year-old physician who was out shopping at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City last week and likes Valentino among other Italian and French brands.

Bernard Arnault, chairman and CEO of French luxury giant LVMH, embarked on an

intense lobbying campaign with EU leaders to ease tensions with the Trump administration and last week announced plans for a new Louis Vuitton factory in Texas. Such a move, however, would be too complicated and costly for most European brands - involving the transfer of local skills that take years to build up, industry experts caution.

Some high end labels say they will be able to draw on pricing power to offset the cost of tariffs, but analysts and industry practitioners warn some players have limited wiggle room after a series of outsized price tag hikes. Big luxury companies profited from a rebound of consumer demand after the pandemic, hiking prices by 33% on average between 2019 and 2023, according to RBC estimates. The price tag of Chanel's classic quilted flap bag more than tripled between 2015 and 2024, while the Lady Dior bag and Louis Vuitton Keepall travel bag more than doubled, according to UBS analysts.

Half of the luxury industry's sales growth came from price hikes in the four years from 2019, compared to a third between 2016 and 2023, UBS analysts said. Yet the sector lost 50 million customers last year, according to consultancy Bain, as economic pressures and price fatigue dampened appetite for designer clothing and handbags.

Brands that got the pricing balance wrong are the ones struggling more today, said Flavio Cereda, who manages GAM's Luxury Brands investment strategy. "The significant deceleration in momentum, uneven as it was, is a natural consequence of a period of excess," said Cereda.

Visa, Mastercard set for higher profits

NEW YORK—Visa and Mastercard are expected to report higher quarterly profits this week on steady consumer spending, and analysts will scrutinize how demand for travel and discretionary purchases is shaping up in the face of tariff uncertainty.

The results from the world's biggest payment processors will help flesh out the broader financial outlook that major banks such as JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo presented earlier this month, signaling a resilient consumer.

"Visa and Mastercard remain top ideas, particularly in an uncertain macro environment, given their broad-based exposure to discretionary and non-discretionary spend, geographic reach, and proven ability to stabilize their expense increase in downturns," Oppenheimer analysts said in a note.

Billions of people worldwide use Visa and Mastercard for their everyday

spending and other purchases, making the card networks better equipped to weather downturns. They also have more expense flexibility to support profit growth.

In recent years, the companies have diversified their business model by building out value-added services such as threat intelligence and fraud reduction. Still, some analysts expect a potential spending slowdown in the back half of 2025. Cross-border travel, a high-margin business for payments companies, has come under some pressure due to trade tensions and geopolitical risks.

Slower travel from Canada to the U.S. and fresh tensions in the Middle East in June have raised concerns over a potential drag on growth. Analysts will also examine whether elevated volumes are being driven by a pull-forward in spending, as consumers pre-purchase goods they expect to get costlier after tariffs are

imposed.

In the second quarter, total card spending volumes modestly increased across bank issuers. Across credit and debit cards, Bank of America showed an increase of 110 basis points, while JPMorgan Chase showed a 40 bps rise, according to data compiled by RBC Capital Markets.

"On balance and relative to expectations, data seems neutral for the networks and acquirers, considering overall spending trends appear at least stable compared to last quarter's growth, which we think should be good enough considering the macroeconomic volatility since last quarter's earnings," J.P. Morgan analysts said in a note.

Investors will also zero in on the forecast around stablecoins. While both the card giants plan to launch products linked to the cryptocurrency, the recent passing of the Genius Act has raised some concern that

stablecoins could eliminate the need for payment intermediaries in the long term.

Visa, the larger of the two by market value, will announce quarterly results after markets close on Tuesday, while Mastercard will report on Thursday.

Trump eyes 'world tariff' of 15-20% for most countries

TURNBERRY, Scotland—President Donald Trump said on Monday most trading partners that do not negotiate separate trade deals would soon face tariffs of 15% to 20% on their exports to the United States, well above the broad 10% tariff he imposed in April.

Trump told reporters his administration will notify some 200 countries soon of their new "world tariff" rate. "I would say it'll be somewhere in the 15 to 20% range," Trump told reporters, sitting alongside British Prime Minister Keir Starmer at his luxury golf resort in Turnberry, Scotland. "Probably one of those two numbers."

Trump, who has vowed to end decades of U.S. trade deficits by imposing tariffs on nearly all trading partners, has already announced higher rates of up to 50% on some countries, including Brazil, starting on Friday. The announcements have spurred feverish negotiations by a host of countries seeking lower tariff rates, including India, Pakistan, Canada, and Thailand, among others.

The U.S. president on Sunday clinched a huge trade deal with the European Union that includes a 15% tariff on most EU goods, \$600 billion of investments in the U.S. by European firms, and \$750 billion in energy purchases over the next three years. That followed a \$550-billion deal with Japan last week and smaller agreements with Britain, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Other talks are ongoing, including with India, but prospects have dimmed for many more agreements before Friday, Trump's deadline for deals before higher rates take effect.



Aluminum cans are shown during a production run before being filled with craft beer at Black Plague Brewery in Oceanside, California, U.S., March 14, 2025.

Canada-US trade talks are at an intense phase, some tariffs likely, says Carney

OTTAWA—Talks between Canada and the United States on a trade deal are at an intense phase, Prime Minister Mark Carney told reporters on Monday, reiterating that an agreement without any tariffs at all was unlikely.

The two sides are working towards an agreement by August 1, the date U.S. President Donald Trump is threatening to impose a 35% tariff on some Canadian imports. "The nego-

tiations are at an intense phase. It's a complex negotiation ... we will only sign a deal that's the right deal," Carney said.

"There is a landing zone that's possible, but we have to get there, and we'll see what happens," he told a televised press conference in the Atlantic province of Prince Edward Island.

The United States struck a framework trade agreement with the European Union on Sunday, impos-

ing a 15% import tariff on most EU goods.

Carney said earlier this month that Canada - which sends 75% of its exports to the United States - would most likely have to accept some tariffs. "It's improbable that there will be deals without any tariffs at all," he said when asked whether Canada would escape being hit. "But there is a question about the level, there are questions about the size of tariffs."

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WHY DO DOGS

GET
CAPITAL
MINIMISE
FOR THE
STUPIDITY
OF
HUMANS?

How US-EU aerospace rivals united to preserve tariff-free aircraft trade

PARIS--A provisional deal between the United States and European Union to exempt aircraft from tariffs avoids a potential threat to jet production and deliveries in both regions and caps months of uncharacteristic unity among plane-making rivals.

The framework deal, announced on Sunday, will see the U.S. impose a 15% import tariff on most EU goods but offer protection for industries including aerospace, with zero-for-zero tariffs on aircraft and parts, European officials said.

Following intense lobbying, it spares an industry that is often a lightning rod for trade tensions, with the World Trade Organization tested to its limits by a 17-year dispute over Airbus and Boeing subsidies before a truce in 2021. Aircraft, engines, spare parts, and components from landing gear to seats had faced potentially higher costs and some jet deliveries looked set to be disrupted by the threatened U.S. tariffs that would have compounded supply chain problems.

Still, questions remain over detailed implementation of the deal and whether it will extend to other components like space. "We are just waiting until we see these things written down," one European industry official told Reuters.

Airbus said it had taken note of the deal. "A stable and predictable trade environment is essential for our highly integrated global aerospace industry," it said.

Boeing had no immediate comment.

United Campaign

Sunday's agreement follows a discreet and unusually united campaign to revert to a landmark 1979 agreement



A Ryanair Boeing 737 and an EasyJet Airbus A320 are seen at Luton Airport, in Britain, in this file photo.

between over 30 nations that mandated duty-free trading in civil aircraft. An industry that only a few years earlier had torn itself apart over trade disputes on subsidies involving Airbus and Boeing found itself in lockstep on both sides of the Atlantic.

But two terms from the industry's previous trade handbook were quietly dropped, sources said: multilateral and WTO. The 1979 Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft that

eliminated tariffs on aircraft and parts is one of a handful of industry-specific deals that survived from an earlier round of trade talks when the World Trade Organization opened in 1995. U.S. President Donald Trump, who once called the WTO "the single worst trade deal ever made," appears to prefer bilateral deals over broad alliances from trade to security, and "multilateralism" is one of the biggest bugbears of his America First philosophy.

USA CHINA

Continued from page 15.

ly Muslim ethnic minority numbering about 10 million in its northwestern region of Xinjiang. Beijing denies any abuses.

Another bill, co-sponsored by Republican John Curtis of Utah, aims to help Taiwan as the island faces increasing pressure from China. It would support countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that maintain official diplomatic relations with Taiwan and would take other steps to deepen coordination with Taipei.

China claims the democratically governed island as its own and has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. Beijing has stepped up military and political pressure against the island in recent years.

A third bill, co-sponsored by Republican Dan Sullivan of Alaska, seeks to combat "transnational repression" - efforts by any foreign government to reach beyond its own borders to intimidate, harass or harm dissidents, journalists or activists.

Lobbying was intense from all quarters but industry sources highlighted a discreet but influential role played by GE Aerospace CEO Larry Culp. Culp told Reuters in April he had advocated re-establishing the tariff-free regime for the aerospace industry during a meeting with Trump at the White House. He said the position was "understood" by the administration, stressing that the zero-duty regime had helped the U.S. aerospace industry reach a \$75 billion annual trade surplus.

Industry officials also argued aerospace was interconnected and that U.S. tariffs would not favour Boeing at the expense of its European rival Airbus, but merely hurt everyone. GE did not have any immediate comment on the new deal.

In May, Trump reached a trade accord with Britain that tested the ground by restoring duty-free trading in jet engines.

Template For Talks

After the US-UK trade deal, aerospace industry officials urged the White House to use it as a template for future

trade negotiations. GE's Culp and Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian mentioned the deal as a template to follow.

The agreement stops short of restoring the whole 1979 agreement and focuses on the single largest aerospace markets. Boeing typically delivers 17% of its jets to Europe while Airbus delivers some 12% to the United States, some of which are assembled locally, according to Boeing and Cirium data.

But Europe and the U.S. are each other's largest market for aircraft components, according to French industry lobby Gifas. Although the agreement relieves one significant source of pressure, there are concerns that Boeing, Airbus and their suppliers could still be caught up indirectly in trade tensions between Washington and China, as they seek to do business there.

Aerospace companies are also awaiting findings from an ongoing U.S. trade investigation into aerospace. In May, the U.S. Commerce Department launched a "Section 232" national security investigation into imports of commercial aircraft, jet engines and parts that could form the basis for tariffs or quotas.

U.S. airlines who met the department say much of the focus has been on China and concerns over potential further disruption to key supplies, on top of rare earths and magnets. It could also be used to impose new tariffs on Brazil, home to Embraer, for whose regional jets there are few alternatives.

U.S. carriers currently face 50% tariffs on imports of the jets, which Embraer says could add \$9 million per plane. Alaska Air said last week it could defer some deliveries.

Brazil coffee growers wary of incoming Trump tariffs

VASSOURAS, Brazil--Coffee growers in Vassouras, in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro state, are hoping for an eleventh-hour reprieve before the country is subject to tariffs of 50% on its exports to the United States.

Earlier this month, U.S. President Donald Trump announced new tariffs, which included raising duties on Brazilian imports to 50% from 10%, effective August 1. Producers of coffee and other goods hope a solution can be found before then.

"Brazil is the largest producer and exporter (of coffee)

fee) in the world," coffee farmer Thiago Garcia told Reuters at his farm in Vassouras.

Around a third of the coffee consumed in the U.S., the world's largest drinker of the beverage, comes from Brazil, which has in recent years been shipping about 8 million 60-kilogram bags (132 pounds) a year there, according to industry groups. "There will be a surplus of coffee here in Brazil and the tendency is for (the price) to decrease, until they find another way to export to other countries," Garcia said.



A worker checks roasted coffee beans at a farm near Brasilia, Brazil July 15, 2025.

EU's pledge of \$250 billion-per-year spending on US energy is unrealistic

BRUSSELS/HOUSTON-

The European Union's pledge to buy \$250 billion of U.S. energy supplies per year is unrealistic because it would require the redirection of most U.S. energy exports towards Europe and the EU has little control over the energy its companies import.

The U.S. and EU struck a framework trade deal on Sunday, which will impose 15% U.S. tariffs on most EU goods. The deal included a pledge for the EU to spend \$250 billion annually on U.S. energy - imports of oil, liquefied natural gas and nuclear technology - for the next three years.

Total U.S. energy exports to all buyers worldwide in 2024 amounted to \$318 billion, U.S. Energy Information Administration data showed. Of that, the EU imported a combined \$76 billion of U.S. petroleum, LNG and solid fuels such as coal in 2024, according to Reuters' calculations based on Eurostat data.

More than tripling those imports was unrealistic, analysts said. Arturo Regalado, senior LNG analyst at Kpler, said the scope of the energy trade envisioned in the deal "exceeds market realities."

"U.S. oil flows would need to fully redirect towards the EU to reach the target, or the val-

ue of LNG imports from the US would need to increase sixfold," Regalado said.

There is strong competition for U.S. energy exports as other countries need the supplies - and have themselves pledged to buy more in trade deals. Japan agreed to a "major expansion of U.S. energy exports" in its U.S. trade deal last week, the White House said in a statement. South Korea has also indicated interest in investing and purchasing fuel from an Alaskan LNG project as it seeks a trade deal.

Competition for U.S. energy could drive up benchmark U.S. oil and gas prices and encourage U.S. producers to favour exports over domestic supply. That could make fuel and power costs more expensive, which would be a political and economic headache for U.S. and EU leaders.

Neither side has detailed what was included in the energy deal - or whether it covered items such as energy services or parts for power grids and plants. The EU estimates its member countries' plans to expand nuclear energy would require hundreds of billions of euros in investments by 2050. Its nuclear reactor-related imports, however, totalled just 53.3 billion euros in 2024, trade data shows.

The energy pledge reflected the EU's analysis of how much U.S. energy supply it could accommodate, a senior EU official said, but that would depend on investments in U.S. oil and LNG infrastructure, European import infrastructure, and shipping capacity. "These figures, again, are not taken out of thin air. So yes, they require investments," said the senior official, who declined to be named. "Yes, it will vary according to the energy sources. But these are figures which are reachable."

There was no public commitment to the delivery, the official added, because the EU would not buy the energy - its companies would.

Private companies import most of Europe's oil, while a mix of private and state-run companies import gas. The European Commission can aggregate demand for LNG to negotiate better terms, but cannot force companies to buy fuel. That is a commercial decision.

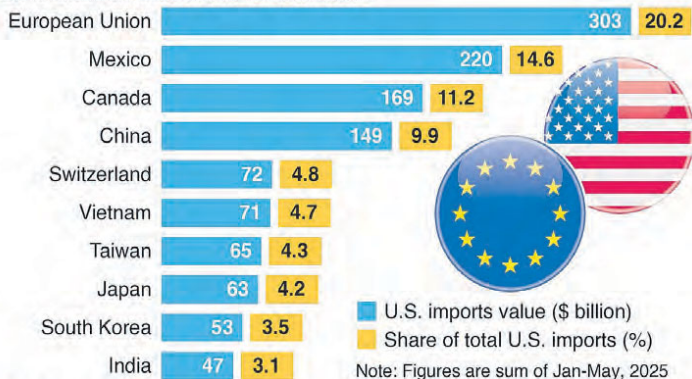
"It's just unrealistic," ICIS analysts Andreas Schröder and Ajay Parmar said in written comments to Reuters. "Either Europe pays a super high non-market reflective price for U.S. LNG or it takes way too much LNG volumes, more than it can cope with."

EU and U.S. agree broad tariff deal

The trade deal ends a months-long standoff between two of the world's biggest economic partners



EU IS BIGGEST SOURCE OF U.S. IMPORTS



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM EU-U.S. TRADE DEAL

- 15% tariffs on most EU goods entering U.S., instead of 30% that had been threatened
- Zero tariffs on certain goods, including aircraft and plane parts, some chemicals and some agricultural products
- EU to boost its investment in U.S. by \$600bn, including purchase of military equipment, and spend \$750bn on U.S. energy
- EU steel and aluminium will continue to face 50% tariff when sold into U.S.

Sources: BBC, Bloomberg

Picture: Getty Images

© GRAPHIC NEWS

Heineken shares slide 8% over tariff uncertainties

LONDON--Dutch brewer Heineken's shares slid over 8% on Monday as a forecast-beating profit rise was eclipsed by investor worries over second-half profits and volumes, which Heineken warned may be softer as tariffs weigh on confidence.

The world's No.2 brewer welcomed a trade deal struck between the European Union and the United States and said on Monday that it was weighing all options to deal with growing tariff challenges in the long term, including shifting manufacturing.

Its shares closed down 8.45% despite a 7.4% rise in first-half profit, above analyst estimates, for which it credited growth in once-difficult regions like Africa and Asia as well as cost savings. Beer sales volumes, however, dipped 1.2%.

Analysts and investors pointed to Heineken's warning that volumes would be softer than ex-

pected for the remainder of the year as U.S. President Donald Trump's trade salvoes disrupt markets in the Americas. A price dispute with retailers meanwhile dented sales in Europe.

The company exports beer, especially its namesake lager, to the U.S. from Europe and Mexico, and has also suffered from the indirect impact on consumer confidence in key markets like Brazil. CEO Dolf van den Brink welcomed the certainty brought by the trade deal clinched on Sunday, which reduced a threatened 30% U.S. tariff on EU goods to 15% - a rate that would still hit Heineken's U.S. profits.

While some in the industry, such as spirits makers, are hopeful for an exemption, this does not appear to be a prospect for beer. All options are being considered to mitigate tariffs long-term, including shifting manufacturing, he said, but added that such moves



Bottles of Heineken beer are displayed in a cooler at a bar in Gurugram, India, November 26, 2024.

were capital intensive and would first need more consistency in policy.

"We look at all options from ... continuing with our current setup, a more hybrid version, or otherwise," he told journalists on a call. "If and when we deem them financially to be

more attractive in the mid-to-long-term, we would for sure explore them."

Heineken still faces U.S. tariffs of up to 30% on products it produces in Mexico unless the Mexican government can reach an agreement with Washington ahead of an August 1

deadline. Executives told journalists that since the first quarter, Heineken has also seen economic uncertainty hit spending and confidence in the U.S., Brazil and Mexico.

In Mexico, remittances from the U.S. have fallen significantly, impacting

beer industry sales. And U.S. Hispanic consumers were also spending less, van den Brink said.

Heineken continues to expect annual profit growth of between 4% and 8%. The company also beat forecasts for second quarter revenue and volume, with growth in markets like Vietnam and India, and increased an annual cost-saving goal by a quarter to 500 million euros (\$586 million).

"They have slightly downgraded their volume guidance," said Ryann Dean, global analyst at Heineken investor Aylett Fund Managers. "Given everything going on in the world... that to me doesn't feel like a terrible outcome."

Heineken's strong growth in markets like India and China, and consistent profitability, more than offset this, he continued, adding that emerging markets would drive Heineken's long-term volume growth.

Donald Trump's yellow brick road doesn't lead to Oz

Kathleen Parker

We owe author L. Frank Baum eternal gratitude for writing "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz". In addition to entertaining generations of children, the story has proved endlessly useful to columnists in search of metaphors.

Let me put it this way: I think Donald Trump is beginning to melt.

It was bound to happen. His near-constant barrage of dubious policies, power grabs and assaults on freedom and liberty have led to his own unraveling. With each new action and reac-

tion, he seems to be pouring buckets of water over his own head.

I know. He's not a witch in the usual sense. Trump has an airplane, not a broom. He has a Secret Service attachment rather than high-stepping Winkies chanting "Oh-Ee-Yah" outside Mar-a-Lago. But he does command an army of flying monkeys, a.k.a. MAGA minions, ICE agents and his inner circle.

In psychology circles, "flying monkeys" is a term often used to describe people who carry out the work of a narcissist/abuser. The narcissist/abuser controls the monkeys by providing something they need emotionally or physically – love-bombing them to secure their fealty. The monkeys aren't inherently evil, just under the Wicked Witch's control.

Clinical psychologist Lauren Kerwin has written that

it can be difficult to recognize a flying monkey, "as they may seem like normal people who are simply taking sides in a disagreement or conflict."

See what I mean about Baum? He foreshadowed everything.

Trump's self-soaking manifested recently in turning against his own, saying that Republicans who demand release of the Jeffrey Epstein files are "stupid."

Then things got worse. Late Wednesday, three House Republicans – Nancy Mace (South Carolina), Scott Perry (Pennsylvania) and Brian Jack (Georgia) – voted with Democrats to subpoena the Justice Department's files on Epstein.

Trump ought to know that when you're the conspirator-in-chief and promise to release the Epstein files upon becoming president but fink out, your co-conspirators are going to conspire right back at you. What's he hiding? How many times does his name appear? What gives?

In fact, Attorney General Pam Bondi reportedly told Trump in May that his name appeared multiple times in the case documents. She said she wouldn't release them because they contain child pornography and personal information about the victims.

Trump attempted to appease his base by saying he'd get the grand jury records released in the case. But a Florida federal judge nixed that, saying that the public's need to know was inadequate to the greater need to observe rules protecting the records. Nice try.

Then the dam broke. The Justice Department is meeting with Epstein's imprisoned partner-in-crime, Ghislaine Maxwell. And Senator Adam Schiff (Democrat-California) has called on Bondi and FBI Director Kash Patel to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Trump says the Epstein controversy is a "witch hunt." His words.

However the White House may spin these cascading events, we seem to be poised for a Trump meltdown. When narcissists lose control, they often react with rage. Trump is flailing at his perceived enemies, including late-night comedians, who routinely skewer the president for laughs.

"I absolutely love that Colbert got fired," he posted

on Truth Social. "His talent was even less than his ratings." He wrote that next to go would be Jimmy Kimmel and Jimmy Fallon – giving all three men more material than they could ever hope for.

CBS and its parent company, Paramount Global, are ending not just Colbert but also "The Late Show," effective next year. Strictly for financial reasons, they say. This could well be true because nothing is more financial than an \$8.4 billion merger, which Paramount was trying to finalize with Skydance Media, pending regulatory approval from the federal government, which the FCC provided Thursday night.

The timing of Colbert's firing came just three days after the comedian called CBS's \$16 million settlement with Trump in his election interference lawsuit against "60 Minutes" "a big fat bribe" to secure approval of its merger. But, sure, there probably was no connection.

"I hope I played a major part in it!" Trump crowed on Truth Social.

Into this noisy fray stepped Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard on Wednesday with a barely-noticed news conference announcing that a GOP report had found that former president Barack Obama had led a "years-long coup and treasonous conspiracy against the American people." Wow. The Justice Department has formed a task force to examine Trump's claims that Obama and his aides ordered an investigation into the 2016 Trump campaign's connections to Russia to try to derail the soon-to-be president.

The thing about Trump's transparently retributive investigations and lawfare is – no damages. He wins lawsuits through intimidation and bullying rather than legal merits. What Obama really did to Trump surpasses the question of Russian interference in the 2016 election, which did happen through hacking and other dastardly deeds, but without effect, according to several other previous reports. As Obama pointed out in a rare response to the Trump allegations, Russian chatbots and other efforts produced no quantifiable effect on votes. But this new attack on Obama most likely goes back to April 2011, when Obama roasted

Trump at the White House correspondents' dinner. I think it's fair to say that Trump hates comedy.

For months leading to Obama's 2008 election to the presidency, Trump had been haranguing Obama about his alleged birth in Kenya, demanding his birth certificate, and Obama decided to return the fun. His monologue was hilarious to everyone except Trump, who, according to his adviser Roger Stone, likely decided in that moment to run for president. I happened to be seated within arm's length of Trump at the table behind him and you could feel the fury building as Obama proceeded to humiliate his future successor. I can't be sure, but I think I saw steam coming from Trump's ears.

In a "Frontline" documentary about then-presidential opponents Obama and Hillary Clinton, "The Choice 2016," which premiered the night after the first presidential debate, Omarosa Manigault, a former contestant on "The Apprentice" and eventually Trump's director of African American outreach, said about the WHCD: "I thought, 'Oh, Barack Obama is starting something that I don't know if he'll be able to finish.'" "Every critic, every detractor, will have to bow down to President Trump," she added. "It's everyone who's ever doubted Donald, whoever disagreed, whoever challenged him – it is the ultimate revenge to become the most powerful man in the universe."

Which is to say, anyone who has trespassed on Trump's fragile ego is forewarned. But surely – surely! – the most powerful man in the universe has more important things to do than punish past transgressors. Trump holds the future in the palm of his hand and has the opportunity to do great things befitting his office and, one hopes, his noblest aspirations. If only he could shed this monkey business and recognize his power to do good. But current events and his history of revenge bode otherwise.

Things didn't end well for the Wicked Witch of the West. As Trump feels threatened by exposure and, possibly, shame, we can expect him to become more frantic, erratic, vengeful and combustible. Tread lightly, my friends – and keep your hoses primed.

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

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

Complete the grid so every row, column and 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

Previous puzzle solution

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

7/29 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

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ACROSS

- 1 Film award
- 6 Defeat in sports
- 10 President Gerald
- 14 Opposite of tight
- 15 Card game payment
- 16 Not at home
- 17 Down in the
- 18 Apple desktop
- 19 Take a taxi
- 20 Photo holder: 2 wds.
- 23 French port city
- 24 Took a spill
- 25 "Butter" band
- 27 Hockey puck shape
- 30 Small jeweled crowns
- 34 Painting or sculpture
- 35 " does it!"
- 37 Got ready to pray
- 38 Farm buildings
- 41 Colorful card game
- 42 Lawn-trimming tool
- 43 French "goodbye"
- 44 Clothing labels
- 46 Nest egg option: Abbr.
- 47 Feast
- 49 Ear-splitting
- 51 Pig enclosure
- 52 "Now hear ___!"
- 54 Home made of twigs
- 56 Athlete who cleans and snatches
- 60 "So be it"
- 62 In this place
- 63 Dog-___ page
- 65 Shoe bottom
- 66 College freshman, often
- 67 Cloudless
- 68 Hang onto
- 69 Raced
- 70 Cuddly bear

DOWN

- 1 Ancient
- 2 Minestrone or borscht

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17					18				19			
20					21				22			
23					24							
25	26			27		28	29		30		31	32
33					34				35		36	37
38			39	40		41			42			
43					44			45			46	
47					48		49		50		51	
52					53			54		55		
56					57	58					59	
60	61				62				63			64
65					66				67			
68					69				70			

Created by Stella Zawistowski

7/29/25

Monday's Puzzle Solved

W	R	A	T	H	T	U	T	U	A	D	D	S
A	I	M	E	E	A	T	I	T	C	R	E	W
S	T	E	M	S	L	A	T	E	T	A	M	E
H	A	R	P	S	I	C	H	O	R	D	P	O
I	T	E	M						U	R	G	E
A	R	C	S	A	E	R	O	S	O	L		
P	E	A		G	R	A	D		P	O	R	T
P	A	N	T		E	A	T		B	O	R	E
S	P	O	O	L	S	O	S	A		L	I	N
				R	E	P	E	N	T	S	T	E
C	E	R	E	A	L				T	E	A	M
A	X	E		F	U	R	T	H	E	R	M	O
R	I	N	G		R	A	R	E		R	A	D
A	L	T	O		A	M	E	N		E	L	E
T	E	S	T		L	I	E	S		D	E	L

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7/29/25

- 3 "Garfield" or "Peanuts": 2 wds.
- 4 Group for pet lovers: Abbr.
- 5 Took a time-out
- 6 Animal's den
- 7 "My treat!": 2 wds.
- 8 Employees
- 9 Top-___ information
- 10 Acreage for growing crops
- 11 Boo-boo
- 12 "Awesome!"
- 13 Easter egg coloring
- 21 Pound, yard, or hour
- 22 Identically
- 25 Kiddie-lit elephant
- 26 Swap
- 28 Close up
- 29 Ear passage
- 31 Formally enrolled
- 32 Phone notification
- 33 Get sidetracked
- 36 Neighbor of Ghana
- 39 Tidied up
- 40 Raw fish dish
- 45 Gymnast Lee
- 48 Ballerina's stockings
- 50 Flaw
- 53 Rams and ewes
- 55 Opposite of fresh
- 56 "___, I'll be!"
- 57 Maple or magnolia
- 58 Loan
- 59 Enjoy a magazine
- 60 Cigar residue
- 61 Cow's sound
- 64 Moisture-free

Trump refuses to be restrained by isolationists

By Marc A. Thiessen

The neo-isolationist right does not like being called isolationist, a term they know is sullied in the American psyche by its association with the 1940s isolationists who fought to keep the United States out of World War II. So, they are coming up with new euphemisms to describe their noninterventionist approach to the world.

They now want to be called “restrainers.” The restrainers don’t want to retreat from the world, they claim; they simply want to restrain the use of force, the growth of U.S. military spending and U.S. security commitments abroad.

But their moniker begs a question: Who, exactly, are the restrainers seeking to restrain?

Answer: Donald Trump. Unfortunately for them, six months into his second presidency, Trump is proving to be quite unrestrainable.

The restrainers did not want Trump to bomb the Houthis in Yemen, arguing the terrorist attacks on ships and tankers crossing the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden were primarily a European problem. They would have effectively continued the feckless policies of President Joe Biden, who allowed these terrorist proxies of Iran to fire with virtual impunity more than

140 times at merchant vessels and 174 times at U.S. warships.

Trump was having none of it. “The Houthi attack on American vessels will not be tolerated,” he declared on Truth Social. He warned the Houthis, “YOUR TIME IS UP, AND YOUR ATTACKS MUST STOP, STARTING TODAY. IF THEY DON’T, HELL WILL RAIN DOWN UPON YOU LIKE NOTHING YOU HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!” And he warned Iran that “Support for the Houthi terrorists must end IMMEDIATELY! Do NOT threaten the American People, their President, who has received one of the largest mandates in

Presidential History, or Worldwide shipping lanes. If you do, BEWARE, because America will hold you fully accountable and, we won’t be nice about it!”

When the Houthis failed to comply, Trump launched a 51-day military campaign, during which U.S. forces struck more than 1,000 Houthi targets, killed hundreds of Houthi fighters and leaders, and destroyed their headquarters, weapons depots and missiles poised to be launched – until the fighting ended with a ceasefire agreement brokered by Oman.

Not very restrained!

The restrainers also did not want Trump to bomb Iran’s nuclear program,

warning Trump not to listen to the “neocons” and “warmongers” (as Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard put it). Trump ignored their warnings and gave Iran a deadline to peacefully give up its nuclear weapons program.

When it failed to do so, he launched Operation Midnight Hammer, deploying a squadron of B-2 bombers that “obliterated” Iran’s nuclear sites. He warned Iran he would subject its Supreme Leader to “A VERY UGLY AND IGNOMINIOUS DEATH” if they killed a single American in retaliation. And, to the horror of the neo-isolationists, he declared on Truth Social soon after the attack: “It’s not politically correct to use the term, ‘Regime Change,’ but if the current Iranian Regime is unable to MAKE IRAN GREAT AGAIN, why wouldn’t there be a Regime change??? MIGA!!!” Iran backed down. With his decisive action, Trump delivered a devastating setback to Iran’s nuclear ambitions and brought an end to the Iran-Israel war after just 12 days of fighting.

The restrainers also did not want Trump to arm Ukraine. Indeed, restrainers inside the Pentagon suspended U.S. weapons shipments to Ukraine without Trump’s knowledge. They were not paying attention to Trump’s repeated warnings that if Russian leader Vladimir Putin did not agree to his efforts to broker peace, he would give Ukraine more weapons than it has ever received from the U.S. and impose crippling secondary tariffs on all oil coming out of Russia. Now that Putin has rejected Trump’s peace efforts, Trump is delivering on those promises – sending Ukraine advanced U.S.-made weaponry (purchased for Kyiv by European allies), including rockets, artillery and Patriot air defense systems, and giving Putin 50 days to come to the peace table or see his economy crushed.

None of this should come as a surprise. Trump’s second term actions are consistent with his first term record, when he drove the Islamic State from its caliphate, bombed Syria

(twice) for using chemical weapons on its people, gave the green light for the U.S. military to take out hundreds of Wagner Group mercenaries in eastern Syria, launched a cyberattack on Russia targeting St. Petersburg’s Internet Research Agency, armed Ukraine with Javelin anti-tank missiles and killed then-leader of Iran’s Quds Force Qasem Soleimani. Trump is not, and never was, an isolationist.

Neither are his supporters. A CBS News poll finds that 94 percent of self-identified MAGA Republicans support Trump’s strikes on Iran’s nuclear facilities. And 65 percent of Trump voters say they agree with his decision to increase the sale of weapons to Ukraine, while just 22 percent are opposed, according to a new Echelon Insights poll.

This should not be a surprise either. Polling by the Ronald Reagan Institute has consistently shown that MAGA Republicans are more hawkish and supportive of U.S. leadership on the world stage than establishment Republicans: 73 percent of MAGA Republicans want the U.S. to be “more engaged and take the lead” on foreign policy; 74 percent say that “U.S. involvement with international affairs is mostly beneficial for the U.S.”; 84 percent say “the U.S. has a moral obligation to stand up for human rights and democracy whenever possible in international affairs”; 71 percent support “the U.S. responding with military force if a NATO ally in Europe was attacked”; and 73 percent would support “taking military action to defend Taiwan” if China were to attack or blockade the island.

In other words, the “restrainers” are out of step with both Trump and his supporters. They are a tiny minority in the GOP, which has tried to hijack the MAGA movement to advance their neo-isolationist agenda – and are now finding just how isolated they really are. Indeed, the only thing as satisfying as watching Trump exercise bold American leadership on the world stage over the past six months has been watching the isolationists realize that Trump is not one of them.

Dictators win as Trump cuts aid to human rights groups in Cuba, Venezuela

By Andres Oppenheimer

The dictators of Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua are breathing more easily these days. Human rights groups and independent media in their countries are being decimated, courtesy of President Trump’s massive foreign aid cuts to pro-democracy groups abroad.

In the wake of Trump’s July 18 law slashing \$9 billion from foreign aid and public broadcasting, many pro-democracy groups in Latin America are drastically downsizing. Some are considering shutting down altogether, activists tell me.

Trump’s budget cuts stripped \$8 billion from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other organizations that provided foreign assistance. Nearly half of that – \$4 billion – had funded international organizations and pro-democracy groups, countering China and Russia’s outsized cultural and political propaganda programs in developing countries.

If you think that America is spending too much on foreign aid to promote democracy, think again. Trump’s recently passed ‘Big Beautiful’ law injects \$170 billion in new funds – over 4,000% more – to arrest and imprison undocumented immigrants. That includes \$45 billion earmarked for immigration detention centers – critics call them

concentration camps – to keep mostly hard-working undocumented people who have committed no serious crimes.

Many human rights groups in Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador and other countries are now facing “an existential threat” because of U.S. budget cuts, says Juan Pappier, Latin America director at the Human Rights Watch advocacy group. Much of this aid flowed through the International Republican Institute (IRI), a nonprofit group linked to the Republican Party.

But since the start of Trump’s second term, the IRI has had to suspend 92 of 95 programs to defend democracy in authoritarian countries, the Miami Herald reported in March. About 85% of the IRI’s staff have been laid off, and all of its 64 overseas offices have been closed, according to TheHill.com. On Wednesday, the Republican-led House Appropriations Committee approved legislation that could restore some of the foreign aid programs that Trump wants to defund, but the scope and fate of that congressional effort is still unclear.

Laritz Diversent, the U.S.-based executive director of CubaLex, one of Cuba’s best-known human rights groups, told me that “there will be a major weakening of human rights

organizations that are operating in Cuba” as U.S. foreign aid dwindles. Her own group, which gathers data on political prisoners and provides them with legal help, has had to layoff some employees and cut 50% of its contract workers, Diversent told me.

Justicia 11J, another Cuban human rights group, has had to cancel presentations before the United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to denounce the plight of Cuban prisoners. The group helps hundreds of political prisoners arrested during the massive demonstrations of June 11, 2021.

Camila Rodriguez, head of Justicia 11J, told me the group was informed earlier this year it would lose 90% of its U.S. funding for a key project. Later, they were told some aid would be restored, but it’s not clear how much, or when.

Right now, Justicia 11J is operating with a skeleton crew that is doing all of its work on a voluntary basis, Rodriguez said. This has caused “a significant decrease in the production and dissemination of content aimed at documenting and denouncing systematic violations of the right to peaceful protest in Cuba,” she added.

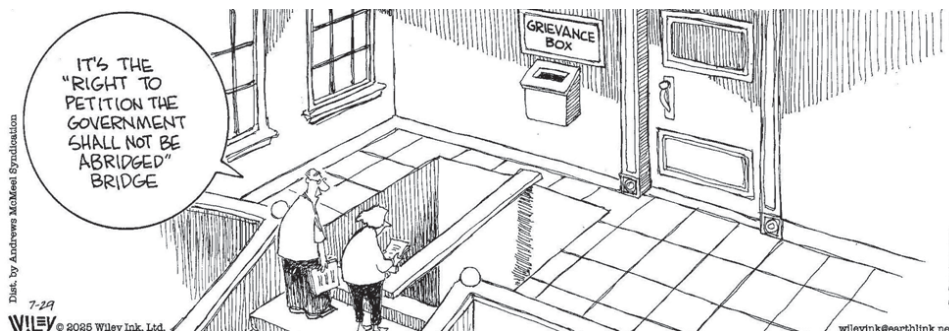
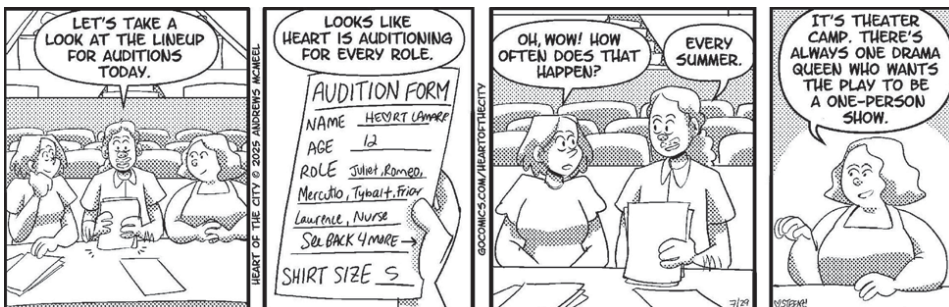
A similar crisis is hitting the Voice of America and independent news websites in Cuba, Venezuela

and Nicaragua, El Salvador and other countries, as their U.S. funds are being cut. In many countries, these websites are the only sources of critical news, and are competing against Russia’s state-run Russia Today en Español and Telesur regional TV network, funded by the Venezuelan and Cuban regimes.

“Trump’s budget cuts to USAID and the Voice of America are manna from heaven for China and Russia,” Arturo Sarukhan, a former Mexican ambassador to the United States, told me. He added, “This withdrawal of U.S. soft power, the abandonment of public diplomacy, and the capacity to counter Russian propaganda in Latin America is an own goal for the United States.”

I agree. Worst of all, these cuts to support human rights groups and independent media in Latin America amount to peanuts compared to the astronomical sums the Trump administration plans to spend arresting mostly hard-working immigrants who are doing jobs that most Americans won’t do.

Indeed, the dictators of Russia and China, and their allies in Latin America, will have a field day, thanks to Trump’s abrupt end to the post-World War II bipartisan consensus that promoting democracy abroad is a moral duty, and a smart thing to do to keep the U.S. safe.



By Magi Helena

ARIES (March 21-April 19): People may not know how to respond today, or a partner could be more reactive than usual. Take time to deepen your understanding of money; small insights can lead to big shifts. A task may require extra effort.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Share your wisdom generously but be mindful: you might be misunderstood or come across more strongly than intended. A financial windfall could come your way – do the homework and trust your gut.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take time to understand yourself, uniqueness is a strength. Financial growth is possible now, so stay open to opportunity. Avoid digging too deep into old issues today, instead, offer your truth with kindness.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Money may be on your mind, focused research could bring. In your career, consistency is key; steady effort builds momentum. At home, try a fresh approach – small changes can shift the energy in meaningful ways.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Stay in your lane and resist the urge to push your opinions. A partner may offer surprisingly useful ideas. Creative inspiration could arrive unexpectedly, keep your mind open and ready to explore something new and refreshing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Use logic to ease financial discomfort, but back it up with solid research. Your career or sense of purpose can truly flourish now. If possible, carve out time to meditate – it may bring clarity and calm where it's most needed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Try to build some self-care into the day, your wellbeing matters. An old mystery may finally start to make sense, offering relief or insight. If you're single, dating might seem like a rollercoaster, don't settle for less that you deserve.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may come across as both charismatic and trustworthy today. Avoid getting pulled into tension between friends – it's not your battle. Sharpen your focus and stay mentally engaged; clarity and insight can make all the difference.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stay alert for subtle signs and unexpected blessings and let them guide you. Take thoughtful, practical steps in your external world. A partner might offer financial insight worth considering, so keep communication open.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Find calm within – inner peace is the best foundation. Seek out the knowledge that empowers you, don't wait for it to come to you. Show top-tier loyalty where it counts; your consistency will speak louder than words.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Believe in your abilities. Whether you're learning something new or sharing a breakthrough, let it inspire growth. Choose your words with care; thoughtful communication will strengthen your connections and keep your message clear.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Seek clarity on unsettling – don't let confusion linger. Step back from the details and look at the bigger picture. Someone may need your support today, and your presence could mean everything. Financial flow at home may soon ease.



Speak your mind
By Queenie

SEND LETTERS TO
P.O. BOX 828
FAX +721 542 5913
OR E-MAIL
queenie@thedailyherald.com

Dear Queenie,

I have been married for 10 years and all that time my husband has had other women too. If I complain, he says if I don't like it I can leave, but we have 4 children under 10 years old and I only have a part-time job and I don't have any family here to go to.

Now he brought home an STD from one of his outside women and he gave it to me and I can only guess when he'll bring home AIDS! I can't go to Safe Haven because he doesn't beat me up.

Queenie, I don't have any money to leave him. What can I do?—Desperate

Dear Desperate,

First, go to a doctor *at once* to be treated for the STD and tested for AIDS.

Next, make a list of all of his assets: house, car, furniture, bank accounts, *everything*. If (when) you leave him, he will still be responsible for supporting his children and your lawyer will need this information.

Then call the Women's Desk and/or Safe Haven's hotline. Even if Safe Haven won't take you in, they can help you make plans to get away from this abusive man.

There are other kinds of abuse besides physical (beating you). Making a woman live in constant fear of being infected with a fatal disease certainly should qualify as mental and emotional abuse.

Only notices and events of non-profit or educational organisations will be placed in the Events/Notices column. Notices/Events should be sent to notices@thedailyherald.com in the wording format used on this page. Do not send fliers, photos, locked files or press releases to this address.

NOTICES**Prosecutor's Opening Time**

Prosecutor's Office is now open in the morning and afternoon Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 12:30pm and 2:00pm to 4:00pm. During those hours, the public may visit the office to get information, pay fine (by debit/credit cards only), and access other services. The Prosecutor's Office is located on Emmaplein behind Orco Bank (formerly CIBC First Caribbean Bank) and is also reachable via telephone 542-2243 or email infosxm@OMCarib.org

Domain Affairs Walk-ins

The Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI Domain Affairs Department informs the public that walk-in hours for domain affairs services will be available every Thursday from 9:00am to 11:00am. No appointment is necessary. For more information, contact domainaffairs@sintmaartengov.org or call 542-4292 ext 2425.

Free Senior Yoga

Gentle stretch and breath Senior Yoga, in person, at the Lions Club Commu-

nity Center in Sucker Garden, Mondays and Fridays from 10:00-11:00am. Mats provided. Also, streamed live on Facebook at Yoga with Lisa SXM. For more info contact Lisa at 554-0115 or email davisburnettlisa@gmail.com.

Volunteers Needed

St. Maarten AIDS Foundation is looking for motivated women and men to become facilitators for Girl Power and Real talk workshops. For more information call 523-2626 or 553-2626 or email: coordinatorsxmaidsfoundation@gmail.com

Church Service

Island Church invites you to its Sunday Morning services from 10 to 11 o'clock in the Simpson Bay Resort Conference Center in Pelican Key. Follow us on Facebook at Island Church SXM for the live stream. Visit our website at islandchurchsxm.com. Email: info@islandchurchsxm.com for more information.

Club Meeting

Calling all book lovers, no matter your age or gender! Join The Happy Bookers for laughs, literary love affairs (on the page!), and occasional existential crises disguised as book discussions. They meet once a month to discuss a wide array of books. WhatsApp +590690663716 for more information.

Toastmasters Meets

Creative Intellect Toastmasters meets the first and third Sundays of each month 5:00pm at the John Larmonie Center, Longwall Road 20, Philipsburg, or online via Zoom. For more information about the club, visit Creative Intellect Toastmasters Club on Facebook, email creative.intellect.tmc@gmail.com or calling: 586-5172.

Youth Wing

Persons 13-20 years old are invited to join SAF Youth wing. We organize monthly meetings at the St. Maarten AIDS Foundation office, located in the Sun Building Cole Bay. For more information call 523-2626 or 553-2626 or email: coordinatorsxmaidsfoundation@gmail.com

Volunteers Needed

Animal Defenders SXM could use some volunteers to help feed cats and dogs at several different locations (own transportation is important). We are also looking for help with admin work and creative computer skills. Please call or contact ADS for more information at 553-3116.

Volunteer.sx Registration

St. Maarten Development Fund (SMDF) and Foresee Foundation invite persons and non-profit organisations to register on volunteer.sx to find volunteering opportunities and/or to post volunteer events. To register go to volunteer.sx, follow the sign up process.

Duplicate Bridge

The St. Maarten Duplicate Bridge Club is now meeting Wednesday nights at 7:15pm at La Vista Resort on Billy Folly Road in Pelican Key. Bring a partner for a fun night of bridge. US \$10 per person, coffee and water provided, cash bar. Proof of COVID vaccination is required, masks optional. For information call Jan Peter 520-0594.

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AA Meetings

Al-Anon is a non-profit 12-step programme of men and women who may have a common problem and solution to stop drinking. The support group meets at Red Cross on Airport Boulevard every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:00pm, and on Sundays at Guana Bay Beach (near old restaurant) at 8:30am.

Club Meeting

Elite Soualiga Toastmasters Club meets virtually on Zoom from 2:00 to 3:30pm on the first and fourth Sunday of every month. For more information, please email: elite.soualigatm@gmail.com

Consular Services

The Office of the Honorary Consul of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana operates on Wednesdays from 2:00 to 5:30pm and on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:30pm by appointment only. For more information call 527-3198, or 527-0704. email: guyanahonoraryconsulsm@gmail.com, guyanaconsulatesxm@gmail.com

Homework Guidance

Oranje Community School is looking for dynamic youth leaders and homework guidance persons. Pass by the Oranje Community School at 11:00am or call 580-2882.

Positive Thinking

Brahma Kumaris St. Maarten invites persons to its ongoing free meditation and Positive Thinking courses at Raj Yoga Centre, 16 Front Street. Call 524-2554 or 542-0541 for more information.

Club Meeting

Soualiga Corporate Toastmasters Club meets at the new Government Administration Building on the second and fourth Wednesday every month from 5:30 to 7:00pm.

Club Meeting

SXM Achievers Toastmasters Club meets on Zoom every second and fourth Thursday (except on holidays) of the month from 7:30 to 9:00pm. All are welcome to join. Please email sxmachieverspresident@gmail.com for the Zoom meeting details.

Community Service

Is your organization seeking assistance with various tasks such as cleaning, washing, gardening, moving, carpeting, painting, maintenance, and more? Contact the SJIS-Probation Department at 526-4322, 542-3449, or lloyd.beaton@sjis-sxm.org to explore how you can become a community service workplace. This opportunity is available for non-profit community or governmental organizations. Community Service assistance is provided free of charge!

Foster Parents Needed

Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands (FJIWI)/Stichting Justitieel Inrichtingen Bovenwinden (SJIB), is looking for foster parents: Interested persons ages 24-67 can apply. Contact 526-4310.

Volunteers Needed

St. Maarten Animal Welfare Foundation is seeking volunteers for special activities. For more information call 520-8887.

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Juan Fuentes, 90, and Zandra Pedraza, 77, co-founder of Club Tobias, dance during the weekly gathering of the club at a shopping mall, in Caracas, Venezuela July 17, 2025.

Venezuela's seniors find lifeline on the dance floor

CARACAS--In a bustling Caracas shopping mall, the sound of music and laughter signals another meeting of Club Tobias. This is no ordinary social club; it's a lifeline for Venezuelans aged over 60, many of whom live alone after their children and grandchildren emigrated.

Angela Graterol, 93, is a regular. Three of her six children live abroad, one of whom encouraged her to join. She says dancing every Thursday brought her "back to life."

"Music fills me up," she beams. "My feet just start moving on their own."

Graterol is often joined by Juan Fuentes, a 90-year-old retired soldier whose daughter lives in Europe. He walks from his house, where he practices his favourite songs, writing down the lyrics he fears he might forget.

Venezuela is home to an estimated 3.5 million seniors. Nearly 8 million of the country's citizens have left in recent years, according to the UN. "With migration, many

of us seniors are left alone," says Zandra Pedraza, 77, who co-founded the club three years ago to combat loneliness among seniors.

Club Tobias now has 15 locations. Co-founder Jose Rafael Quintana motivates everyone with a simple motto: "If you don't move, you seize up." For Graterol, Fuentes, and hundreds of others, the club is more than just a place to dance; it's a vibrant community that proves a good time has no age limit.

Shaolin Temple's 'CEO monk' probed for embezzlement and relations with women

BEIJING--The abbot of China's famed 1,500-year-old Shaolin Temple is under criminal investigation for alleged embezzlement, "improper relationships" with women and fathering illegitimate children, religious authorities said.

Shi Yongxin, 59, previously a member of China's parliament, is "suspected of criminal offences, misappropriating and embezzling project funds and the temple's assets," the temple said in a statement, adding Shi is under joint investigation by multiple agencies.

Shi could not immediately be reached for comment. The temple did not answer a call from Reuters.

Nicknamed the "CEO monk" and known for his commercial ambitions, Shi

sought to capitalise on the monastery's fame during his decades-long tenure at Shaolin Temple, the fabled birthplace of kung fu and the setting for many martial arts films in the central Chinese province of Henan. Shi has "seriously violated Buddhist precepts, maintained improper relationships with multiple women over a long period of time" and fathered at least one "illegitimate" child, the temple said in its statement released on its social media account on Sunday.

In a statement issued on Monday, the state-supervised Buddhist Association of China said it approved the revoking of Shi's ordination certificate, adding that his "behaviours are extremely deplorable in nature, have seriously damaged the reputation of the Buddhist community and tarnished the image of monks."

In 2015, a letter circulated online accusing Shi of mis-



Buddhist abbot Shi Yongxin, a delegate of the National People's Congress (NPC), walks towards the Great Hall of the People for a plenary meeting of the NPC, China's parliament, in Beijing, China, March 4, 2016.

conduct and improper sexual relations. The temple denied the allegations at the time.

Shi, known as Liu Yingcheng before he became a monk in 1981, has overseen the temple since 1987 and became its abbot in 1999, the temple's website showed. In 2008, the temple opened an online store, offering a range of goods including shoes, tea, T-shirts, and a kung fu instruction manual for 9,999 yuan (\$1,395).

Its business ventures over the years also included book publishing, medicine, kung

fu performances, film production, asset management and real estate.

Shi posted daily on his social media account on Weibo with more than 882,000 followers. Shi was a delegate of

China's rubber-stamp parliament, the National People's Congress, for around two decades until 2018. He has also been deputy head of China's Buddhist association.



TV-CARIB (local)
WTN Channel 010

Tuesday, July 29

8:00am Good Morning Beautiful
9:00am Morning Show (Pearl FM)
12:05pm Viewpoint (PJD2)
5:00pm Animated Kids Program
6:30pm Voice of Our Kids News
7:00pm Special
7:30pm TV-Carib Informer
8:00pm Special
10:00pm Noticias en Español
10:20pm Late Night

Program Rotation



TeleCuraçao
TelTV Channel 035
WTN Channel 202

Tuesday, July 29

6:30am Mòru Bon Dia
9:30am Programa Santísima Trinidad
10:00am Gostoso ku Ulrich
12:00pm Resumen Informativo AIL
12:30pm Extra Journaal
1:00pm Tra'i Mèrdia 3.0
3:30pm Punto Final (r)
5:00pm TCFM Live
6:00pm Bonochi Kòrsou
7:00pm VVRP ta Informa
7:30pm Home Team (r)
8:00pm TeleNotisia
9:00pm Wega di Number Kòrsou
9:10pm Partisipashon di Morto
9:15pm Pagina Sosial
9:30pm Punto Final
10:30pm Music Videos
11:00pm TeleNotisia (r)



TV15 (local)
TelTV Channel 001

Tuesday, July 29

6:30am TV15 News
7:00am Fashion News
8:00am News and Sports
9:00am Documentary
10:00am DComm Special Program
10:30am SXM Sports
11:00am Late Night
12:00pm Local Entertainment
1:00pm Romance Movies
3:00pm International Entertainment
4:30pm Special Events
6:30pm TV15 News
7:00pm DComm Special Program
7:30pm Sports Report
8:30pm Special Reports
9:00pm Late Night
10:00pm PBS Special/Caribbean Lottery
11:00pm TV15 News
11:30pm Theatre Movies



BVN (Dutch/Flemish) TV
Channel 122 SXM Cable
Channel 204 WTN

Tuesday, July 29

12:00pm NOS Journaal
12:15pm Nederland in Beweging
12:30pm MAX Geheugentrainer
NOS Journaal
1:05pm BinnensteBuiten
1:15pm Tussen Kunst en Kitsch Extra
Hollandse Meesters in de 21e Eeuw
2:00pm NOS Journaal
2:15pm De Geknipte Gast
2:30pm Sesamstraat
2:50pm Sesamstraat 10 voor...
3:05pm Klaas kan alles kort
3:15pm Het Klokhuis
3:30pm NOS Jeugdjournaal
3:50pm NOS Journaal in Makkelijke Taal
4:10pm Gort over de Grens
4:20pm NOS Journaal
5:00pm MAX Skutje Journaal
5:15pm Expeditie Nederland
5:45pm EenVandaag
6:15pm De Bauers - 20 jaar later
6:40pm NOS Journaal
7:15pm Weerbericht Europa/Afrika
7:40pm Geheimen van het museum
7:45pm Holland drugsland
8:30pm Nieuwsuur
9:10pm Weerbericht Amerika/Caribiën
9:40pm Goedenavond Nederland
9:45pm Avondetappe: Tour de France Femmes
10:35pm NOS Journaal
11:20pm Adieu God?

Edinburgh university confronts slavery links

LONDON--The University of Edinburgh benefited financially from transatlantic slavery and served as a haven for scholars developing racist theories in the 18th and 19th centuries, a review has found.

The review, commissioned in 2021 and published on Sunday, found the university profited from slavery through individual donations to endowments that have funded bursaries, scholarships, chairs and fellowships. Donations were traced to profits made by individuals and industries involved in enslavement through the cultivation, production and sale of colonial commodities, such as tobacco, sugar and cotton.

Edinburgh follows in the footsteps of other UK universities that have acknowledged historical ties to slavery in recent years, including the University of Glasgow, University of Bristol and University

of Cambridge.

Founded in 1583, Edinburgh holds 15 historic endowments linked to African enslavement and 12 tied to British colonialism in India, Singapore, and South Africa. Some remain active, the review said.

"We cannot have a selective memory about our past, focusing only on the historical achievements which make us feel proud," the university's principal Peter Mathieson said. "We are right to address its complexities too."

The report said that between 1750 and 1850 the university served as a "haven" for professors and alumni who promoted ideas of African inferiority and played an "outsized role" in developing racial pseudo-sciences that justified slavery and colonial expansion.

Among the review's recommendations were the creation of a research and community

centre focused on racism, colonialism, and anti-Black violence, and action to address under-representation of Black staff and students, degree awarding disparities and support barriers for those facing racism.

As well as universities, other major UK institutions, such as the Church of England and the Bank of England, have also started to recognise how they benefited from slavery's injustices. Some activists and scholars have criticised such efforts as largely symbolic, arguing that true commitment to addressing historical injustices requires meaningful reparations, not just acknowledgements and reports.

Calls for reparations have been gaining momentum but the backlash against it has also been growing, with critics saying modern institutions should not be held responsible for historical wrongs.



Director Tim Story (Far right) and cast members Pete Davidson, Keke Palmer and Eddie Murphy attend the world premiere for the film "The Pickup" in Los Angeles, California, U.S., July 27, 2025.

Eddie Murphy and Pete Davidson flex comedy muscles in The Pickup

LONDON--Actor-comedians Eddie Murphy and Pete Davidson team up for "The Pickup", a heist movie that sees them sparring as a pair of incompatible armoured truck drivers.

Starring opposite Murphy, 64, was "a bucket list thing" for Davidson, 31, who had admired Murphy's work since he was seven. Unlike their characters, the two had much in common.

"Pete comes from SNL. He's a standup comic. We're both from the East Coast," said Murphy. "I love to get into a scene with somebody else that's funny, improvise with them and start playing, I love it."

On a routine round of cash pickups, Murphy's Russell and Davidson's Travis get targeted by criminals. Things get personal when Travis discovers that the thieves are led by his one-night-stand from the night before, played by Keke Palmer, and the life of Russell's hot-headed wife, played by Eva Longoria, comes under threat. The duo must pull together to save the day.

The script, by Kevin Burrows and Matt Mider, served as their blueprint and director Tim Story encouraged them to go off it, the two said.

"We would do one as written and then Tim and everyone was like, 'Just go

nuts' and we would end up just trying to one-up each other, we were just trying to make each other laugh," said Davidson.

"They were improvising constantly and it was really sweet to see. It's so cool because you see two different generations," added Palmer.

The generational differences also seeped into the scenes, with the fighting taking its toll on Russell's body. "Usually in these types of movies or my early movies like the 'Beverly Hills Cop' and '48 Hrs.', I was the young maverick and now I'm the older guy," said Murphy.

Murphy has been making movies for 43 years and said new challenges were few and far between. "I've played different ethnicities and different genders. I've been inanimate, I've played spaceships. I've played every type of role you could possibly imagine," he said, but added he was working on "something fresh and new". "We're doing George Clinton, Parliament Funkadelic, we're doing his life. And there's no one like George. So I'll be in uncharted waters."

"The Pickup" starts streaming on Prime Video on August 6.



Numbered dog-related figures are seen while Gabarro's relatives and friends count them for the Guinness World Record in Terrassa, north of Barcelona, Spain, March 15, 2025.

Collector sets world record with over 5,000 dog figurines

TERRASSA, Spain--Spanish collector Marià Gabarro did not care for real dogs but won a posthumous place in the Guinness World Records this year for the largest collection of canine-related items - 5,025 figurines, soft toys or dog-head walking sticks.

Gabarro, a sales manager from Terrassa, a town about 30 km (19 miles) from Barcelona, started his mammoth collection of figurines in his 60s. When he died last year, aged 94, his children decided to see if the haul could claim a record as a tribute to their parents.

Gabarro acquired the figurines at markets and stored them in two houses. Teresa Gabarro, 54, one of four siblings who now lets her West Highland White Terrier play with the soft toys, said: "(My parents) really liked the non-real dogs, but not the live ones."

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Lady Grace & the Breakfast Lounge
7 am - 10 am

Joanne Lewis - The Mid-Morning Show
10 am - 2 pm

Wendell Moore - View Point
12 pm - 1 pm

Deelo's House
2 pm - 5 pm



Henderik Ekema representing The Friendly Island participates in the parade of athletes at the World Championships in Scotland.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Continued from page 32.



Henderik Ekema on his way to winning two bronze medals at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.

marking the close of a distinguished and passionate journey in the sport. He extended sincere thanks to Mr. David Oliver for his leadership in organizing the championships and praised Scotland for hosting such a well-executed, spirited event in Glasgow. Ekema also expressed deep gratitude to those who stood behind him: "I would especially like to thank my sister, Anna Ekema, and my Taekwon-do Academie Jan Ekema for coaching, guiding, and believing in me and of course, all of my sponsors who made this journey possible." As he looks toward the final chapters of his competitive career, Henderik Ekema continues to embody the values of perseverance, humility, and excellence a true martial artist in every sense.

Liberty, without Stewart, stumble against Wings

TEXAS--Arike Ogunbowale compiled 20 points and 14 assists, Paige Bueckers scored 20 points and the Dallas Wings held off the Breanna Stewart-less New York Liberty 92-82 on Monday in Arlington, Texas.

The Wings led by 30 points early in the third quarter and were up 85-62 at the end of the period. However, the Liberty pulled within six with 1:44 left in the game as Dallas went scoreless for more than six minutes before Bueckers and Dijonai Carington each made two late free throws.

Luisa Geiselsoder added 14 points for the Wings (8-19), who entered the game with the second-worst record in the league. They won for just the second time in eight games.

The defending WNBA champion Liberty (17-8), who have the second-best record in the league, were playing their first full game without Stewart this season. The All-Star forward hurt her lower right leg three minutes into a 101-99 home loss to the Los Angeles Sparks on Saturday. Jonquel Jones scored 18 points, Sabrina Ionescu had 17 and Stephanie Talbot and Isabelle Harrison added 10 each to lead the Liberty, who were beginning a four-game road trip that they hope will feature Stewart's return at some point.

Ogunbowale scored seven points and Bueckers added five as the Wings raced to a 16-2 lead in less than four minutes. Leonie Fiebich made a layup for the Liberty to stop the surge, but Dallas took its biggest lead of the first quarter at 23-6.

Marine Johannes made a

3-pointer and another jumper to start a New York push that concluded with Talbot and Jones each making a 3-pointer to pull the Liberty within 31-19 at the end of the period.

The second quarter started much like the first. Grace Berger and Bueckers each made two field goals during

a 10-1 run that expanded the Wings' lead to 41-19. Dallas led by as many as 25 points before Natasha Cloud made New York's first field goal of the quarter with 4:37 remaining.

The Liberty stretched the gap to 63-36 going into halftime.

Andre Pallante fires 7 scoreless innings as Cards rout Marlins

ST. LOUIS --Andre Pallante allowed one hit in seven scoreless innings as the St. Louis Cardinals defeated the visiting Miami Marlins 7-1 Monday night.

Pallante (6-7) struck out four batters and walked one while enjoying quite a turnaround from his previous three starts, when he allowed 18 runs, 17 earned, on 25 hits in 15 2/3 innings.

Masyn Winn went 3-for-4 with two doubles, a run and three RBIs for the Cardinals, who won for just the fourth time in 11 games since the All-Star break. Alec Burleson had a homer, two runs and two RBIs.

Marlins starter Edward Cabrera (4-5) allowed two runs, one earned, on four hits and three walks in six innings. He fanned four.

Burleson's homer put the Cardinals up 1-0 in the third inning. The 411-foot shot to center was his 14th long ball of the year.

The Marlins threatened in the fourth inning when Jesus Sanchez walked with one out and advanced to second on a groundout. However, Pallante struck out Heriberto Hernandez to strand the runner. The Cardinals increased their lead to 2-0 in the bottom of the inning. Yohel Pozo hit a double, then took third on a wild pitch and scored on catcher Agustin Ramirez's wild throw.

Pallante held the Marlins without a hit until the sixth inning, when Graham Pauley led off with a single to right. Pauley advanced to third on two groundouts before Sanchez hit an inning-ending grounder back to Pallante.

St. Louis' Victor Scott II hit a one-out double in the seventh inning. After Scott stole third base, Brendan Donovan and Ivan Herrera walked to load the bases.

A catcher's interference call with Burleson batting forced in a run. Lake Bachar relieved Josh Simpson on the mound and fanned Willson Contreras before allowing

Winn's double that cleared the bases thanks in part to an error by left fielder Hernandez. Jordan Walker's RBI double then increased the Cardinals' lead to 7-0.

The Marlins finally got on the board in the ninth inning when Hernandez hit an RBI single against Matt Svanson.

Orioles tag Blue Jays for 16 hits in series-opening win

BALTIMORE --Cedric Mullins and Coby Mayo belted back-to-back home runs and Adley Rutschman had a big game at the plate in his first game off the injured list as the Baltimore Orioles rapped the visiting Toronto Blue Jays 11-4 on Monday night.

Ramon Laureano and Colton Cowser also homered and Jordan Westburg joined Rutschman and Mayo with three hits. Baltimore had 16 hits in the first of four meetings between the teams across three days.

Corbin Martin (1-0) was the winning pitcher with 1 2/3 innings of shutout relief. It marked his second victory in the major leagues, and his first since 2019.

Bo Bichette had four hits, and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Nathan Lukes each hit home runs for the Blue Jays, who've lost two games in a row for the first time since the All-Star break.

The Orioles, who've won four of their last five games, tagged Toronto starter Chris Bassitt (11-5) for six runs in 2 1/3 innings. He had gone 4-0 in his first four starts in July.

Baltimore starter Zach Eflin lasted 4 1/3 innings, surrendering four runs on eight hits with one walk and three strikeouts.

Lukes and Guerrero Jr. both hit their home runs in the third inning.

Colson Montgomery, Luis Robert Jr. homer as White Sox top Phillies

CHICAGO --Colson Montgomery and Luis Robert Jr. homered and Davis Martin pitched 5 2/3 sharp innings to help the host Chicago White Sox to a 6-2 victory against the Philadelphia Phillies on Monday.

Lenyn Sosa went 3-for-3 for the White Sox, including an RBI single in the eighth. Chicago has won the first game in each of its four series since the All-Star break and is 7-3 out of the break overall.

Philadelphia fell two games behind the New York Mets for first place in the National League East. The Mets were

set to play later Monday. Montgomery, a rookie, delivered his fourth home run in the past six games with a game-tying, two-run blast against Phillies left-hander Cristopher Sanchez in the third inning. Montgomery added a run-scoring single to finish 2-for-4 with three RBIs.

Robert connected for a go-ahead, two-run blast to the opposite field in the fourth as Chicago struck against Sanchez, a National League Cy Young award contender, in key spots. Sanchez (9-3) had allowed four earned runs in 30 1/3 innings over his past

four starts entering Monday. The White Sox reached him for four runs and seven hits in 6 2/3 innings. Sanchez walked one and struck out five.

Philadelphia took an early lead when Bryce Harper grounded a two-run double with two outs in the third. Martin retired the first seven Phillies before surrendering consecutive singles to the bottom two hitters in the lineup and walking Kyle Schwarber to load the bases ahead of Harper.

Harper and Brandon Marsh collected two hits apiece for Philadelphia. Miguel Vargas

had two hits for Chicago.

Martin (3-8) limited the Phillies to two runs and six hits with three walks and seven strikeouts. He also helped his effort defensively. With two on and two out in the fifth, Martin dove to scoop Nick Castellanos' soft grounder to the left side, then rose to his feet to throw Castellanos out at first base.

Chicago relievers Jordan Leasure, Steven Wilson and Grant Taylor combined to retire 10 of the 11 batters they faced.

Philadelphia stranded seven runners and struck out 11 times.

Sky's Angel Reese, Ariel Atkins could sit out again vs. Mystics

WASHINGTON --After a blockbuster matchup on Sunday that did not feature either team's headliner, the Chicago Sky hit the road to face the Washington Mystics Tuesday night in a game where both sides might need to rely on rookies to help stop their slides.

When the Sky suffered a 93-78 loss to the Indiana Fever in a matchup moved to the United Center, neither Indiana's Caitlin Clark nor Chicago's Angel Reese suited up. Reese, who leads the WNBA with 12.5 rebounds per game, missed her second game in a row with a back injury.

Moreover, the Sky (7-18) played without leading scorer Ariel Atkins (13.9 ppg) for the fourth straight game due to a leg injury. There is no official word whether Reese or Atkins will be able to face the Mystics. If not, a rookie will continue to help fill their minutes.

Former Notre Dame

forward Maddy Westbeld has averaged 4.5 points, 2.8 rebounds and 21.4 minutes over the last four games -- all dramatic increases over her previous contributions. While Westbeld is not replacing Reese and Atkins' production, the forward is giving Chicago important minutes.

"She works so hard," said Sky veteran guard Rachel Banham, who paced Chicago with a season-high 26 points on Sunday. "She's so coachable. We love playing with her. You can talk to her the entire game, get on her. She's just really great about it."

Chicago faces a Washington Mystics (12-13) squad that has been relying on All-Star rookies Sonia Citron and Kiki Iriafen to stay in the WNBA playoff hunt. However, the Mystics are on a skid of late. They have lost three of their last four, including Sunday's home game against the Phoenix Mercury.

Washington had a four-point lead heading into halftime, but struggled on both sides of the court in the second half as the Mercury outscored the Mystics 46-26 in the final 20 minutes of an 88-72 defeat.

All-Star Brittney Sykes struggled in the defeat with no points on 0-for-6 shooting from the floor. The guard also left the bench for a short period of time, leading to questions about her health.

"Slim (Sykes) could have something that I don't know about right now," said head coach Sydney Johnson. "But no, the medical didn't tell me anything in terms of her getting injured during the game."

The Mystics have two wins over the Sky this season, both in close matchups. When the two sides met on July 8, Washington defeated Chicago 81-79 on Shakira Austin's game-winning free throws with 2.8 seconds left.



Skylar Diggins (4) reacts in the fourth quarter. (Trevor Ruszkowski-Imagn Images/File Photo.)

Skylar Diggins' triple-double leads Storm past Sun 101-85

UNCASVILLE--Skylar Diggins tallied her first WNBA regular-season triple-double while leading the hot-shooting Seattle Storm to a 101-85 win over the Connecticut Sun on Monday in Uncasville, Conn.

Diggins, playing in her 318th WNBA game, had never logged a regular-season triple-double, although she posted the first triple-double in the history of the WNBA All-Star Game nine days earlier.

In just 23 minutes, Diggins logged 11 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists. She led the Seattle offense in a red-hot performance, as the Storm pulled away with a 28-5 run in the third quarter that turned a 57-48 edge to an 85-53 advantage with 2:02 left in the quarter.

Diggins drained a pair of free throws late in the quarter to complete her triple-double, and then watched the final period from the bench.

A game after scoring just 58 points, the Storm nearly matched that total by halftime, establishing a 57-46 lead. The Storm fell a point short of their season scoring high, set in a 102-82 win over the Las Vegas Aces on May 25.

Seattle shot a season-best 60.9 percent (42-for-69) from the field, including 9-for-20 (45 percent) from 3-point range.

Aside from Diggins, Seattle (16-11) was led by Nneka Ogwumike and Gabby Williams. Ogwumike scored 26 points on 11-for-13 shooting in 19 minutes of playing time,

while Williams notched 16 points on 7-for-11 shooting. Rookie Dominique Malonga added 12 points and six boards, and Ezi Magbegor tallied 10 points in the easy win.

Connecticut (4-21) was coming off a season-high 95-point output against the Golden State Valkyries on Sunday but couldn't keep up that pace. Bria Hartley paced the Sun with 17 points, though she shot just 4-for-12 from the field. Tina Charles added 11 points, and reserves Jacy Sheldon and Olivia Nelson-Ododa chipped in 11 and 10 points, respectively.

The Sun took their fifth loss in six games, while the Storm continued a nine-game stretch of alternating wins and losses.

Dream riding high off big wins as they return home to meet Valkyries

ATLANTA --Fresh off two of the season's most impressive wins, the Atlanta Dream return home for the first time in more than three weeks to face the slumping Golden State Valkyries on Tuesday in College Park, Ga.

Atlanta (15-10) went 3-3 during its recent six-game road trip, which was cut in half by the All-Star break. After dropping three of four to begin the stretch, the Dream topped the Phoenix Mercury 90-79 before picking up a 90-86 victory over the league-leading Minnesota Lynx on Sunday.

As the team returns home for the first time since beating Golden State on July 7, the Dream hope the extended time on the road will serve them well going forward.

"I do think it's important as you get into a playoff situation that you already have some experience winning big games on the road against the best teams," Atlanta head coach Karl Smesko said. "There hasn't been a better team than Minnesota this year, so to be in this environment

and play as well as we did, I think it's something that we'll remember."

Allisha Gray's 18.7 points per game lead Atlanta, while Rhyné Howard -- the team's No. 2 scorer (16.5 ppg) -- remains out with a left knee injury suffered on July 11. Howard is expected to miss at least Atlanta's next two games.

Golden State (11-13) will look to rebound from its worst loss in the franchise's young history. As the league's lone expansion team, the Valkyries are still a work in progress, as their 31-point loss at Connecticut on Sunday proved.

Golden State has dropped six of eight in July, including its 95-64 defeat against the Sun, in which the Valkyries turned the ball over 24 times.

"(Connecticut) just played harder than us," Golden State head coach Natalie Nakase said. "Things were just not clicking. We weren't connected because our energy level, our organization, our minds, just weren't connected with our body."

A bad stretch was made worse this week, as leading

scorer and rebounder Kayla Thornton (14.0 points, 7.0 rebounds per game) underwent season-ending knee surgery after injuring herself in practice.

Tiffany Hayes, who adds 12.5 points per contest, will try to shoulder the load and bounce back from an 0-for-8 shooting output on Sunday.

Brewers overcame a shaky first inning from All-Star rookie Jacob Misorowski to rally for an 8-4 victory over the visiting Chicago Cubs on Monday in the opener of the three-game series between NL Central leaders.

The Brewers, who moved into first place one game ahead of the Cubs, erased a 3-0 first-inning deficit with four runs in the third off Matthew Boyd (11-4).

Andrew Vaughn had a

solo homer, his ninth, in the fifth and Sal Frelick had a solo shot, his eighth, an inning later to make it 6-3.

The Cubs pulled within 6-4 in the seventh on Kyle Tucker's RBI single. Yelich followed a leadoff single by William Contreras in the bottom half with his 20th homer to put the Brewers up 8-4.

Misorowski finished his 80-pitch outing with three scoreless innings, allowing three runs, two earned, on three hits, striking out seven and walking two. Nick Mears (2-3), one of seven relievers used by the Brew-

ers, got the win with one scoreless inning. Trevor Megill came on with two aboard in the ninth and struck out Seiya Suzuki for his 24th save in 27 chances.

In the third, Frelick singled to open and took second on Contreras' one-out single. Yelich followed with an RBI double to right and Vaughn walked to load the bases. Isaac Collins tied it with a two-run single to right and Brice Turang followed with a go-ahead sacrifice fly.

The Cubs took a 3-0 lead in the first with the aid of a wild pitch and throw-

ing error in a 40-pitch inning against Misorowski, named to the All-Star team after just five big league starts.

Chicago loaded the bases with none out when Michael Busch singled, Kyle Tucker walked and Suzuki lined an infield single that caromed off Misorowski.

Busch scored when Pete Crow-Armstrong struck out on a wild pitch. Carson Kelly struck out and Ian Happ dribbled a single in front of the mound, but Misorowski threw wildly past first, allowing Suzuki to score.

Brewers overcome rough first inning to take down rival Cubs



Japan's Naomi Osaka in action.

Osaka parts company with coach Mouratoglou after Washington exit

WASHINGTON-- Naomi Osaka has parted company with coach Patrick Mouratoglou less than a year after the pair began working together, the four-times Grand Slam champion said days after her defeat to Emma Raducanu at the Washington Open.

The 27-year-old began working with Mouratoglou ahead of the China Open in September last year, as she sought to reignite her career following a patchy run of form after returning to the tour from a long maternity break.

"Merci Patrick. It was such a great experience learning from you. Wishing

you nothing but the best. You are one of the coolest people I've ever met and I'm sure I'll see you around," Osaka wrote in a post on Instagram on Sunday.

Under Frenchman Mouratoglou, who previously guided Serena Williams to 10 of her 23 major titles, Osaka won her first WTA title since 2021 at the L'Open 35 de Saint-Malo in May - a WTA 125 tournament.

She also reached the final of the Auckland Classic in January, where she was forced to retire with an injury, and suffered a frustrating first-round exit from

this year's French Open at the hands of Paula Badosa.

"Nothing lasts forever. What counts is what a collaboration has brought to each other and what lasts after," Mouratoglou wrote on social media.

"After 10 months of collaboration, we have decided to part ways professionally. I am grateful for the trust, the journey and what we have built together. I will always root for you and wish you nothing but the best."

Osaka is next in action at the Canadian Open in Toronto, where she takes on Ariana Arseneault later on Monday.

Wiebes wins chaotic sprint in Tour de France Femmes stage three as Vos reclaims yellow

FRANCE-- Lorena Wiebes prevailed in a chaotic sprint to claim victory in the third stage of the Tour de France Femmes on Monday, edging fellow Dutch rider Marianne Vos who took the overall lead after a 163.5km ride from La Gacilly to Angers.

Sprint specialist Wiebes (SD Worx-Protime), who narrowly lost stage two to Mavi Garcia, made an explosive push for the finish as a crash in the final four kilometres temporarily took out several riders including 2023 champion Demi Volterling (FDJ-Suez).

Opening stage winner Vos (Visma-Lease a Bike) lost a photo-finish to Wiebes but reclaimed the yellow jersey from Kim Le Court Pienaar (AG Insurance-Soudal), who led the general classification after Sunday's second stage but dropped to second with a six-second deficit.

"It was very hectic... I think when we went right on to the river there was a big crash behind me. I hope everyone is well," Vos said.

The stage, mostly on a flat terrain, began without Giro d'Italia winner Elisa Longo Borghini, who withdrew from the race due to a stomach infection.

Four riders made an early attack to form the leading pack, with Alison

Jackson (EF Education-Easy) winning a mountain sprint to the top of Cote de La Richardiere.

But others slowly caught up, with Lotte Kopecky expertly leading her teammate Wiebes to the front, setting up the final sprint just before the crash derailed a number of riders behind them.

New Zealand's Ally Wol-

laston (FDJ-Suez) finished third as her teammate Volterling, who recovered from the crash, remained in contention in the general classification, sitting 19 seconds behind Vos.

The Tour continues on Tuesday with stage four, a 130.7km ride from Saumur to Poitiers through another mostly-flat terrain.

Junior Caminero's homer sparks Rays' win over Yankees

NEW YORK--Junior Caminero hit a two-run homer and the Tampa Bay Rays pulled back above .500 with a 4-2 victory over the host New York Yankees on Monday night.

Rays starter Drew Rasmussen allowed a pair of run-scoring walks in the first inning before pitching five innings holding the Yankees scoreless the rest of the way.

Rasmussen (8-5) gave up four hits and two walks while striking out five.

Caminero gave the Rays a 2-0 lead four batters into the contest when he blasted a 2-1 slider into the left field seats off New York rookie Cam Schlittler (1-1). It was Caminero's 27th

homer and fourth since the All-Star break.

In the bottom of the inning, Rasmussen allowed consecutive one-out singles to rookie Jasson Dominguez, Cody Bellinger and Giancarlo Stanton. He walked Jazz Chisholm Jr. on a full count, struck out Paul Goldschmidt, then issued a full-count free pass to Ryan McMahon.

Rasmussen recovered from the walks and retired 12 straight before Dominguez singled with two outs in the fifth. The right-hander ended his outing by getting Bellinger on a fly ball.

The Rays went back ahead when Josh Lowe hit an RBI single in the fifth off Schlittler, who walked Yandy Diaz and allowed a single to Jonathan Aranda ahead of the clutch hit.

Three Tampa Bay relievers followed Rasmussen and threw a combined four scoreless innings. Edwin Uceta fanned four in two innings, Garrett Cleavinger got two outs, and Pete Fairbanks notched the final four outs for his 18th save. With a runner on second, Rays center fielder Jonny DeLuca made a running catch on a fly ball by Austin Wells to end the game.

Diaz added a bases-loaded sacrifice fly in the eighth off Tim Hill after the Rays got a three singles, two of them in the infield.

Schlittler allowed three runs on seven hits in 4 1/3 innings during his third career start. The hard-throwing right-hander struck out five and walked four.

The Yankees fell to 4-8 in their past 12 games and mustered only three baserunners after the opening inning.

Paraguay's Arrieta nets dramatic late winner to secure 2027 Pan Am Games spot

QUITO--- A stunning stoppage-time strike from Camila Arrieta handed Paraguay a dramatic 1-0 victory over Chile in Monday's Women's Copa America fifth-place playoff in Quito, securing the final berth for the 2027 Pan American Games in Lima.

The victory sends Paraguay to their fourth Pan Am Games, where they will aim to surpass their best-ever fourth-place finish from Lima 2019.

"It was a difficult match," the 23-year-old Arrieta said after the game. "We know what Chile are capable of, but we managed to get through the game and we deserved this victory."

Chile dominated possession but failed to create clear-cut chances, while Paraguay stayed compact and looked threatening on the counter-

attack through tournament leading scorer Claudia Martinez.

Just as the match appeared destined for penalties, Arrieta broke the deadlock two minutes into stoppage

time, her precise low drive deflecting off the post before nestling into the net to seal a hard-fought triumph.

"I had chances to shoot at goal earlier in the game, but I couldn't convert them. I kept

trying," Arrieta said.

"After all the hard work we've put in, this means a lot to us. We'll prepare as best we can for the World Cup qualifiers."

Later on Monday, Argen-

tina will face Colombia in the first semi-final of the tournament, with an Olympic spot at stake.

Defending champions Brazil take on Uruguay in Tuesday's second semi-final.

Yoshinobu Yamamoto strikes out 9, leads Dodgers over Reds

CINCINNATI --Yoshinobu Yamamoto allowed just one run with nine strikeouts over seven innings, and Shohei Ohtani hit a two-run double to send the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers to a 5-2 win over the Cincinnati Reds Monday night.

Yamamoto (9-7) matched a season-high seven innings, allowing just four hits and one

run with two walks. The right-hander improved his road record to 6-3 in 11 starts. The only blemish on his slate was an RBI groundout by former Dodger Gavin Lux in the first inning.

Ohtani walked twice and cashed in a pair of runners to break a 1-1 tie with a double to center field off Cincinnati starter Chase Burns (0-3).

Teoscar Hernandez had two hits and drove in two runs while Mookie Betts also had a pair of hits and three runs for the Dodgers, who bounced back after losing two of three in Boston to open their three-city, nine-game road trip.

Burns failed again in his bid for his first Major League win in his sixth career start. The righty was charged with three

runs on six hits over 5 2/3 innings while walking one.

But the highly-touted rookie did achieve another historic milestone, striking out 10 for a third straight start to become just the second Cincinnati pitcher with 10+ strikeouts in three straight starts, joining Raisel Iglesias in 2015.



Seattle Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh (29) hits a home run. (Kiyoshi Mio-Imagn Images.)

Cal Raleigh passes Aaron Judge as AL MVP favorite

SEATTLE --Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh has taken over as the American League MVP favorite with his closest rival, Aaron Judge, heading to the injured list.

Raleigh hit home runs in consecutive games over the weekend to extend his major league lead to 41. It is already seven more than his career high, and Raleigh has tied Todd Hundley (1996) for the most home runs in a season by a switch-hitting catcher.

Judge has led the MVP race most of the season, but the New York Yankees slugger will miss an undetermined amount of time due to a flexor strain. The two-time AL MVP currently paces the majors in batting average (.342), on-base percentage (.449) and slugging percentage (.711).

However, Raleigh has now passed Judge for the AL RBI lead, 86 to 85, and is only one behind Arizona's Eugenio Suarez for the major league lead.

Raleigh is now the -130 AL MVP favorite at DraftKings and is -135 at BetMGM. Judge has the second shortest odds at +100 of +105, respectively. It's still a two-player race, with the third-shortest odds belonging to Detroit Tigers ace Tarik Skubal at +4000 at both books.

Currently a +8000 longshot.

The gap between Raleigh and Judge could continue to widen depending on how long the Yankees star is sidelined.

Judge experienced discomfort, wincing on a throw during New York's three-game series in Toronto last week. He was in more discomfort Friday and the Yankees sent him

for tests that revealed only the strain and no damage to the ulnar collateral ligament.

"All in all, we got good news," manager Aaron Boone said. "I think all of us feared the worst."

Los Angeles Dodgers superstar Shohei Ohtani remains the prohibitive NL favorite at -2000 at both books.

Tigers' Troy Melton dominates Diamondbacks, earns first win

DETROIT --Troy Melton tossed seven shutout innings to collect his first career victory as the host Detroit Tigers downed the slumping Arizona Diamondbacks, 5-1, on Monday night.

Melton (1-1) scattered five singles and didn't issue a walk while striking out five in his second career start after being promoted from Triple-A Toledo.

Dillon Dingler led the offense for the Tigers with three hits, including a solo homer, and two runs scored. Andy Ibanez, recalled from Toledo earlier in the day, supplied a double and a solo homer and also scored twice. Matt Vierling added an RBI double as the Tigers won their second straight following a six-game losing streak.

Diamondbacks starter Eduardo Rodriguez (3-7) gave up five runs and eight hits while striking out five in six innings. Alek Thomas hit a solo homer for Arizona, which has lost six of its last seven contests.

Arizona third baseman Eugenio Suarez, one of the prominent names on the trade market, was removed after being hit in the hand by a Will Vest pitch in the ninth. Suarez

is among the top five in the league in homers with 36.

The Tigers scored a gift run in the first. Gleyber Torres drew a one-out walk and Jahmai Jones hit into a fielder's choice. Spencer Torkelson then hit a short fly ball. A trio of Diamondbacks converged but left fielder Lourdes Gurriel Jr. couldn't hang onto it. Jones came around to score on the play.

Ibanez led off the second inning with a double and moved to third on a Dillon single. One out later, Javier Baez had a bloop single to center as Ibanez scored.

Detroit extended its lead to 4-0 in the fourth. Ibanez led off and ambushed a Rodriguez fastball over the left field wall. Dingler followed with a single and moved up on a grounder. With two out, Vierling doubled to center to bring home Dingler.

Rodriguez recorded four straight strikeouts before Dingler pulled a hanging Rodriguez slider to make it 5-0.

The Diamondbacks got on the board when Thomas blasted a Tommy Kahnle changeup over the right-center field wall with one out in the eighth.

Bouchard extends career with first-round win at Canadian Open

MONTREAL - Hometown hero Eugenie Bouchard beat Emiliانا Arango 6-4 2-6 6-2 in the first round of the Canadian Open in Montreal on Monday, a win that delayed the former world number five's retirement.

Bouchard announced earlier this month she would walk away from the sport after the tournament but added a condition to that plan in the wake of her thrilling victory in front of a packed crowd.

"If I win this tournament, I will not retire," she said in an on-court interview.

Playing in only her second singles match of the year, Bouchard blasted a forehand winner to take the first set but Colombian Arango turned the tables in the second set amid a cascade of unforced errors from her opponent.

However, Bouchard broke for a 3-1 lead in the decider and hammered a swinging volley to extend the advantage to 4-1.

The 31-year-old wildcard put her hands on her head and then her heart after securing the victory to set up a second round meeting with 17th seed Belinda Bencic of Switzerland.

Briton Emma Raducanu beat her good friend Elena-Gabriela Ruse of Romania 6-2 6-4 and will next meet 32nd seed Peyton Stearns.

"It's very difficult to play someone who you are close to," Raducanu said. "I'm really glad about how I was able to put that to one side for the match and back up a good week in D.C."

Four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka of Japan beat Canadian qualifier Ari-

ana Arseneault 6-4 6-2 in breezy conditions to set up a second-round meeting with 13th seed Liudmila Samsonova of Russia.

In the men's tournament, which is being played in Toronto, Australian Adam Walton roared back from a set down to defeat Frenchman Benjamin Bonzi 4-6 6-0 6-3 and set up a second-round meeting with top seed Alexander Zverev of Germany.

Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta, the tournament's 2022 champion, came from behind to defeat Liam Draxl 2-6 6-4 6-4.

Several top players withdrew ahead of the Masters and WTA 1000 tournament including world number ones Aryna Sabalenka and Jannik Sinner, Carlos Alcaraz, Novak Djokovic and Jack Draper.

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SPORTS ARENA



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates winning.

Canadian teen, American Brianna Do among AIG Women's Open qualifiers

WALES--American Brianna Do and Canadian Anna Huang were among the 17 players to earn spots in this week's AIG Women's Open via Monday's 18-hole qualifier.

The AIG Women's Open begins Thursday at Wales' Royal Porthcawl.

Huang, the youngest player on the Ladies European Tour at 16, posted the low round Monday with her 4-under par 67 at Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club. She was followed by Ireland's Anna Foster and Thailand's Arpichaya Yubol at 3 under.

"I'm delighted with my score," said Huang, who is No. 521 in the Rolex Women's Rankings. "I don't play links golf, so it took a couple of practice rounds to get used to it, but I think I handled it pretty well. I played in the U.S. Open this year so this will be my second major championship. I learned a lot from that week and bringing more patience into this week will be really helpful."

Do, 35, tied for eighth at 1 under. The 2011 Women's Amateur Public Links champion will play in her first Women's Open since 2016. Ranked 351st, she is coming off a T23 in June at the KPMG Women's PGA

Championship and a T59 three weeks ago at the Evian Championship.

"A few years ago, I was first alternate for the Evian, and I didn't get in, so I came over to Scotland and played quite a bit of golf," Do said. "I played the Old Course, Prestwick, Elie, so I played quite a bit for fun, and it was amazing. I learned quite a bit there but not in a tournament sense."

Among the five Americans who fell short in qualifying was 2017 major champion and four-time United States Solheim Cup player Danielle Kang, who shot a

73. Despite failing to qualify for her 13th Women's Open, Kang said she is not disappointed.

"Not even a little bit," she said. "I met unbelievably great people here. I got to play with a bunch of members at Porthcawl, and I got to know everybody at Pyle and Kenfig. It's been great."

Australia's Hira Naveed (69) and New Zealand's Momoko Kobori (70), teammates at Pepperdine from 2017-19, both qualified. All 17 qualifiers for this week's 144-golfer field finished under par.

Red Bull adviser confirms Max Verstappen staying for 2026

BELGIUM --Red Bull Racing will have Formula 1 superstar Max Verstappen for at least another season.

Team adviser Helmut Marko said Monday that the four-time defending F1 champion would return to the team in 2026 despite reported interest from Mercedes.

A widely reported exit clause in Verstappen's Red Bull contract would have allowed him to leave the team at year's end if he were fourth or lower in the championship standings as of the Hungarian Grand

Prix, which takes place this Sunday.

Following the Belgian Grand Prix last Sunday, Verstappen sits in third place in the F1 standings and far enough ahead of fourth-place George Russell (28 points) that he cannot be caught in Hungary.

The understanding of Verstappen's situation was confirmed when Marko spoke to German outlet SportDe.

"Yes, I can confirm that Max Verstappen will drive for Red Bull in 2026," Marko said.

Mercedes' cars are currently occupied by Russell and potential rising star Kimi Antonelli, but Mercedes boss Toto Wolff has not denied looking into pursuing Verstappen, the winningest F1 driver since his first championship in 2011.

Earlier this month, Red Bull abruptly dismissed team principal Christian Horner and replaced him with Laurent Mekies. Verstappen's agent told a Dutch outlet at the time that Verstappen remained committed to the team despite the change.

Henderik Ekema shines at World Championships in Scotland

GLASGOW— Henderik Ekema, earned two bronze medals at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.

After seven years away from international competition, Australian martial artist Henderik Ekema marked a powerful return at the World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland. Following months of disciplined training, Ekema delivered an inspiring performance that earned him both individual and team bronze medals and

reignited a deep passion for the sport.

Returning to the ring after such a long hiatus, Ekema described the experience as transformational. "To feel the adrenaline, the spirit, the energy of the ring again it was like coming home," he said. Among his matches, one of the most intense was against a Scottish opponent. Though Ekema lost by just a few points in a tightly fought contest, his pride remained intact particularly as his opponent went on to win

the World Champion title. Ekema ultimately claimed third place individually, a remarkable achievement after such an extended absence. "This tournament was more than a competition it was a personal milestone," he shared. "Fighting again reignited the passion that had quietly burned all these years." With his eldest son present to witness the occasion, the moment held even deeper personal meaning.

Ekema was also honoured to compete for

Team Australia, invited by team coach Tony Curtis. The Australian squad finished with a strong third-place result in the team competition. "It was a true honour to stand with the team and contribute to such a meaningful result," Ekema said. Looking ahead, Henderik Ekema has confirmed he will continue competing. His next goal is the 2026 World Cup, with plans to end his competitive fighting career at the 2027 World Championships.

Continued on page 28

Dusty Baker to manage Nicaragua at 2026 World Baseball Classic

NICARAGUA --Former MLB manager Dusty Baker is reportedly set to manage Nicaragua during the 2026 World Baseball Classic.

Baker, 76, retired from the major leagues two years ago after winning a World Series with the Houston Astros in 2022 and being named National League Manager of the Year three times. Baker is the eighth-winningest manager in major league history.

Baker also played in the majors for 19 seasons.

"I'm excited," Baker told USA Today, "...I know baseball is trying to get going in Nicaragua, and I want to help."

Nicaragua finished 19th in the 2023 WBC but secured a 3-0 record in qualifying for the 2026 tournament and will play in Pool D against Venezuela, Israel, the Netherlands and the Dominican Republic.



Henderik Ekema, wearing red head gear competes at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.



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Ocan marks 40 years advocating for equal citizenship for Caribbean Dutch

THE HAGUE--“We are citizens of the Kingdom, but in practice, visible and tangible differences remain,” said Lionel Martijn, director of the Caribbean Dutch advocacy organisation Ocan. As the group marks its 40th anniversary, Martijn emphasised that the fight for equal rights and opportunities for Caribbean Dutch citizens is far from over.

Ocan was founded on July 25, 1985, as the National Advisory

Council for Antilleans, later becoming part of the National Minority Consultation (LOM). The Dutch government had hoped to engage more directly with migrant groups to ensure inclusive policy development. Over the years, organisations like Ocan raised critical issues affecting their communities.

“In the past four decades, we’ve tackled a range of challenges –
Continued on page 6

VVD party proposes easing path to independence for Caribbean islands

THE HAGUE--The Dutch liberal People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy VVD has proposed amending the Kingdom Charter to make it easier for Caribbean territories to pursue independence, should they choose to do so. The proposal is part of the party’s newly released election manifesto titled “Stronger After the Storm”.

The manifesto outlines VVD’s vision for governance and future relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Under the section “Good Governance in the Caribbean Parts of the Kingdom”, VVD suggests explicitly enshrining the right to self-determina-

tion in the Charter.

“A provision will be added stating that, in addition to Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten can also declare independence. Likewise, Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba can express their wish for independence,” the manifesto reads.

The proposal revives a 2019 initiative by former VVD Member of Parliament André Bosman, who sought to introduce legislation allowing the islands to exit the Kingdom unilaterally, without the need for a referendum. While the idea has garnered support among VVD members, it has not advanced in parliament.

For Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba – special municipalities of the Netherlands – VVD is calling for stricter anti-corruption measures and accelerated reforms to improve public governance. This would include a revision of the WolBES and FinBES legislation governing administrative and financial structures on the islands.

Continued on page 7



Sargassum weed in Oyster Pond.

French side anti-Sargassum collective launches petition

MARIGOT--French-side residents are urging the local authorities and the State to do more to find solutions to tackle the ongoing Sargassum weed invasion that is causing health concerns and impacting the local economy. To that end, a petition has been launched which reads as follows:

“We, the residents of Saint-Martin, particularly those living in Cul-de-Sac, Mont Vernon, Oyster Pond and Orient Bay, are facing a serious environmental and health problem due to the massive accumulation of Sargassum seaweed on our shores and near our homes.

“As these brown algae decompose, they release extremely harmful gases into the air, such as: hydrogen sulphide (H₂S), which has a very unpleasant, irritating odour and can be toxic in high concentrations, and ammonia (NH₃), a corrosive gas that attacks the respiratory tract.

“These fumes cause frequent headaches; nausea and a feeling of unease; irritation of the eyes, nose and throat; respiratory problems, particularly in children, the elderly and asthmatics; and extreme daily fatigue due to continuous exposure to these gases.

“The worst thing is that this pol-

lution is invisible, but very real. And it gets worse at night, when the air is heavier, forcing residents to live with their windows closed despite the heat. Despite repeated reports, local authorities remain either inactive or overwhelmed, leaving residents alone to face this danger.

“We demand:

“The rapid and systematic col-

lection of Sargassum from our beaches and inhabited areas.

*Installation of air quality sensors that are accessible to the public.

*An independent health impact study, with transparent information for residents.

*A coordinated emergency plan to prevent further accumulation

Continued on page 8

10.8 percent jump in passenger arrivals in first quarter of 2025

PHILIPSBURG--Passenger arrivals to St. Maarten rose by 10.8% in the first quarter of 2025. These new data were released by Princess Juliana International Airport’s operating company, PJIAE, on Monday.

The increase comes as the airport marks a major milestone in the automation of immigration data collection, following the November 2024 launch of its revamped Arrival Hall and digital border control systems.

Between January and March 2025, PJIAE recorded 256,923 arriving passengers – up from 231,900 in the same period last year. Total passenger movements, including both arrivals and depar-

tures, reached 533,990, compared to 518,658 in the first quarter of 2024.

Of the total arrivals recorded in the first quarter of 2025, a significant 67% originated from North America, with the majority – 54% – coming from the United States and 13% from Canada. European travellers accounted for 25% of arrivals, reflecting continued strong interest from traditional markets. These figures underscore the importance of maintaining and expanding airlift from key regions to support sustained tourism growth.

This growth is credited not only to increased visitor demand but

Continued on page 7

IN BRIEF

Philipsburg RETRIEVE SCOOTERS

St. Maarten Police Force urges scooter owners whose vehicles were confiscated earlier this year to retrieve them before the final deadline of Wednesday, July 30. Page 3.

Kralendijk PROPERTY VALUATIONS

The Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority has announced it will begin property valuations on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba in the coming months. Page 3.

St. Eustatius CARNIVAL COMPETITION

Golden Revellers Eux has won this year’s troupe competition for Statia’s carnival. Page 11.

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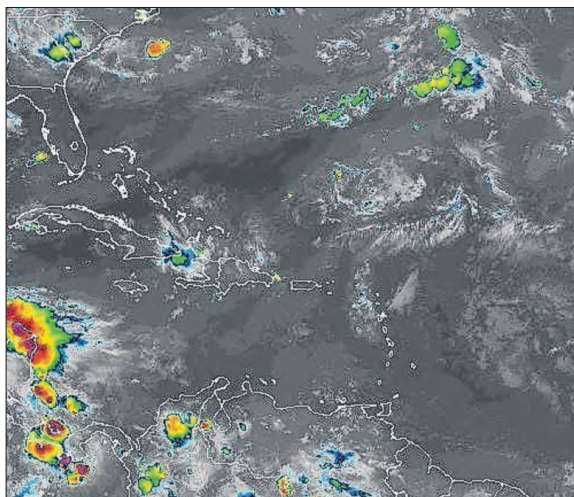
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Weather

Today: Fair to partly cloudy and slightly hazy, with a low chance of showers.

Winds: East to southeast, 4-15mph.

Sea conditions: Light.

Seas: 2-4 feet.

Forecast high: 32°C 90°F

Forecast low: 27°C 81°F

SYNOPSIS: An increase in both moisture and instability overnight supported showers overnight. A drier airmass will enter the area accompanied by a plume of Saharan dust. Expect stable weather and slightly hazy, daytime conditions. Those with allergies and/or respiratory issues should take necessary precautions. Light sea conditions will prevail over the upcoming days..

SPECIAL FEATURE: Remaining names for this year's hurricane season (now to November 30): Dexter, Erin, Fernand, Gabrielle, Humberto, Imelda, Jerry, Karen, Lorenzo, Melissa, Nestor, Olga, Pablo, Rebekah, Sebastien, Tanya, Van, Wendy.

The Meteorological Department St. Maarten (MDS) will monitor the development of all tropical systems closely and issue watches or warnings when it becomes necessary.

Outlook through Wednesday evening: Fair to partly cloudy, with brief showers.

Sunrise: 5:50am.

Sunset: 6:48pm.

CRUISE SHIPS IN PORT TODAY

Date	Vessel	Place Arrival	Departure
July 30:	No cruise ships in port.		

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COLE BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL:

meeting 1st. Thursday of month at Sun
Flower Kinder Garden School, Union Rd.
Cole Bay at 7:30pm

SERVICE CLUBS

THE ROTARY CLUB OF ST. MAARTEN

meets every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. at
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Complex). Rotary Mid Isle meets every
Tuesday 7 p.m. at Pineapple Pete's,
Simpson Bay. Rotary Sunrise meets every
Tuesday at 7am at Gingerbread Cafe
located in Belair Beach Hotel Terrace
Restaurant. Rotary Club St. Martin Nord
meet at the Grand Case Beach Club Sun-
day at 7:30 p.m.

THE ROTARACT CLUB OF ST.

MAARTEN SUNRISE meets every 2nd
and 4th Saturday of the month at 7pm at
The University of St. Martin.

LIONS meeting at the Upper Princess

Quarter Community Centre Lions Den
in Sucker Garden every 1st and 3rd Tuesday
of the month at 7 p.m.

ST. MAARTEN LEO CLUB

meeting at the Lions Den every 1st, 3rd Saturday every
month at 11:00 am.

JCI St. Maarten (JAYCEES)

meeting at the Philipsburg Jubilee Library every last
Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Busi-
ness attire required.

PHILIPSBURG TOASTMASTERS CLUB

bi-monthly sessions every first and third
Thursday of every month at the Library
conference room at 8:00 p.m.

ST. MARTIN MUSEUM

Frontstreet 7, Philipsburg, tel 542-4917
Opening hours from March 1st:

Informed decision-making

That first-quarter arrivals at Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) topped those of the same period in 2024 by 10.8% (see related story) obviously spells good news. It is welcome particularly due to concern that uncertainties during the first few months of US President Donald Trump's term in office would negatively impact travel from that dominant stay-over visitors market.

North America still provided the biggest share with 67%, of which the US 54% and Canada 13%, while another 25% came from Europe. The airport projects 1.8 million incoming passengers in total for the entire year.

Regular publication of these vital figures for the island's tourism economy had been sorely lacking, certainly when compared to similar destinations. Mention was made of "a new era in immigration monitoring and air traffic intelligence" indicating that this problem has now become a thing of the past.

However, it is already the end of July, the final month of the third quarter, and the question may rightfully be asked what took so long. After all, such statistics can be of even greater value when issued in a more timely manner.

If accurate passenger data are indeed instantly recorded with use of the e-Gates and automated passports kiosks, that should be possible. It translates to frequent, current updates and informed decision-making.

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Tel. 544-4267, Fax. 544-4268. Facebook:
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2. Cay Hill Satellite, Jackal Road #4, at the
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ST. MAARTEN CHAPTER OF BUSINESS

AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN holds
their general monthly meetings every third
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DIABETES FOUNDATION OF ST.

MAARTEN. Free blood-glucose testing ev-
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USO St. Maarten/St. Martin (USA mili-

tary), contact Janet Lambert 5577616 or
00590 590 294406.

SKALCLUB ST. MAARTEN/ST. MARTIN

meets 1st Tuesday of the month. For loca-

tion call: 5424432 (Jennifer).

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HOSPITAL tel. (00590) 590 52 25 25

DISPENSARE Marigot

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8 a.m. - 3 p.m. tel. (00590) 590 87.37.21

C.R.O.S.S. (Center, Research, Organiza-

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Case Beach Club every Thursday at
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56.78.92.



Police stress that the presence of abandoned scooters near the station could pose a public safety hazard.

Two days left to retrieve scooters held by police

PHILIPSBURG--St. Maarten Police Force KPSM is urging scooter owners whose vehicles were confiscated earlier this year to retrieve them before the final deadline of Wednesday, July 30, 2025.

The call comes as dozens of scooters remain unclaimed at the Philipsburg Police Station, many of which were impounded during traffic checks for lacking proper documentation or posing safety concerns.

Despite repeated public notices issued earlier this year, most of the impounded scooters have not been collected. Owners are now being warned that unclaimed scooters will be permanently disposed of after the deadline. KPSM intends to request that the remaining vehicles be removed and destroyed.

Police stress that the presence of abandoned scooters near the station could pose a public safety hazard, particularly during hurricane season.

Owners whose scooters

were seized between late January and June 2025 are asked to report to the Philipsburg Police Station during regular office hours and speak with Mr. J. Abreu.

To reclaim their vehicle, owners must present proof of ownership, valid insurance documents, a road tax receipt, an inspection card, and a valid driver's licence.

KPSM encourages anyone with questions to contact the station at +1 (721) 542-2222.

Tax authority launches 2026-2030 property valuations on BES islands

KRALENDIJK--The Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority (Belastingdienst Caribisch Nederland) has announced it will begin property valuations on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba (the BES islands) in the coming months.

The assessments are being carried out in preparation for the next five-year property tax period, which runs from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030.

Property values for tax purposes are reviewed every five years. For the upcoming tax period, valuations will be based on property values as of January 1, 2026.

The valuations will be conducted by independent, certified appraisers commissioned by the Tax Authority. The process will include assessments of various types of real estate, including commercial properties, hotels, educational and healthcare institutions, utility facilities, and similar buildings.

Valuations will be performed primarily through visual inspections from public roads, supported by data from the land registry (Kadaster), construction documentation, and other

public sources.

The Tax Authority underscored several important points regarding the valuation process. All information collected during the assessments will be treated with strict confidentiality. Appraisers conducting the valuations will carry valid identification and will not make prior contact with property owners or occupants. Additionally, the process does not involve entering homes, buildings, or private properties, as all inspections will be carried

out from public areas.

These activities are part of the Tax Authority's routine valuation process to ensure accurate and transparent tax assessments. The property values being determined are solely for taxation purposes and are not related to inspections or enforcement measures.

For more information, residents can contact the Caribbean Netherlands Tax Authority at +599-715-8585 or via email at balie@belastingdienst-cn.nl.

Hurricane Pass application process closed until 2026

PHILIPSBURG--The Office of Disaster Management (ODM) has announced that the application process for Hurricane Passes for the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season is now officially closed until 2026.

The application window, which opened in mid-April 2025, closed on May 30. The process included two types of passes: the Disaster Pass and the Hurricane Pass.

ODM, which operates under the Ministry of General Affairs, manages the issuance of these passes on behalf of the Prime Minister.

The Hurricane Passes is-

sued this year are valid for both the 2025 and 2026 hurricane seasons and remain the property of the Government of St. Maarten.

The pass system plays a vital role in ensuring public order and safety during emergency situations. After a disaster, the Prime Minister – working in coordination with emergency management entities – may assess the extent of damage and implement a curfew if necessary to protect the community.

For further updates, the public is advised to follow official government communication channels.

Tax Office back on track after ransomware attack

WILLEMSTAD--Following the ransomware attack on Curaçao's Tax and Customs Administration last Thursday, an extensive technical investigation is underway to determine the nature and impact of the attack, it was announced in a press release. They expected it would take at least several days before full operations are restored.

A limited number of services resumed as of Monday. This includes the Motor Vehicle Tax MRB department and transfer of license plates, existing agreements with tax collectors, and electronic payments at the cash registers. These can be made at the building on Regentesselaan in Em-

mastad.

The MRB department and cash registers are open from 8:00am to 12:00pm and from 2:00pm to 3:30pm.

Other departments like customer service and the call centre remained unavailable. Management is doing everything possible to safely and securely restart the affected systems.

The online portals for filing tax returns are still accessible and functional. Payment of taxes due can also be made as usual.

As soon as more clarity is available about the restart of other services, further communication will follow through the official channels of the Tax and Customs Ad-

ministration, according to the agency.

A ransomware attack is a cyberattack in which malicious software (ransomware) is used to block or encrypt access to a victim's files or systems, and demands a ransom in exchange for restoring access. The attackers often threaten to release stolen data if the ransom is not paid.

Whether payment was made in the case of the Tax and Customs Administration is unknown but seems unlikely. When the target has good backups, authorities also advise against paying the ransom, as there is no guarantee that the attackers will keep their promise.

Precautions include

implementing security measures, such as up-to-date software, strong passwords and backups.

The office was closed on Thursday and Friday. Finance Minister Javier Sylvania said earlier he had requested technical support from the Netherlands to investigate and restore the system.

The Joint Court of Justice also suffered a persistent computer outage last week, resulting in all its offices remaining closed on Thursday. The scheduled hearings for that day and Friday in principle went ahead, while judgements from that week were postponed to this week, according to the court.

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Experts urge review of burn-out diagnoses in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM--Psychiatrists and occupational health experts are calling for a review of how the Netherlands diagnoses and treats burn-out, after Sweden announced it would drop the term following updated guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO), newspaper "De Volkskrant" reported on Monday.

The Netherlands and Sweden were the only two countries that still recognise burn-out as a formal diagnosis.

While symptoms such as exhaustion, concentration problems and sleep issues are real, critics argue the label lacks scientific precision and may delay access to more targeted treatment.

Psychiatrist Christiaan Vinkers, professor of stress and resilience at Amsterdam UMC teaching hospital, told the paper that many patients now diagnosed with burn-out could be more effectively helped if diagnosed with conditions such as depression or anxiety.

"Burn-out is poorly defined and creates a separate treatment market outside psychiatry," he said.

The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) dropped the term in 2023, and WHO's guidelines now define burnout as an "occupational phenomenon rather than a medical

condition."

However, occupational health and family doctors say the current approach works well. They use structured criteria to assess symptoms and suggest tailored interventions such as sleep routines, exercise or therapy.

The Hague family doctor Richard Starman told the paper the diagnosis is meaningful to patients and gives direction to care.

Although he agrees that treatments are often based on experience rather than hard evidence, he stressed that most patients recover within six months.

Meanwhile, Vinkers is now leading a new study on early detection of stress symptoms, aiming to bring together general practitioners, psychiatrists, occupational doctors and psychologists to design better coordinated care.

"We need to break down silos and understand what this kind of stress really involves," he said.

Dutch research institute TNO said in 2023 that one in four employees between 18 and 34 years old reported burn-out symptoms.

That report, commissioned by the Dutch ministry of social affairs and employment, found burn-out cases were becoming more common and more severe, with the biggest increase among young women.



Cicilia and Den Heyer

Two commissioners resigned in Bonaire

KRALENDIJK--Commissioners Anjelica Cicilia and Nina den Heyer on Saturday, personally presented their resignation letters to acting Island Governor Ingrid Sealy in her capacity as chair of Bonaire's Island Council.

Both stepped down effective immediately. It is rare for two Executive Council members to do so simultaneously, especially while their term of office is far from over.

No official announcement had yet been made about the reason for their departure. According to insiders, it is due to the fact that the commissioners, who were appointed for their expertise and not based on political

affiliation, no longer felt supported by fellow commissioner Clark Abraham to counterbalance the political wishes of the parties they represent.

Abraham is also the leader of the largest coalition party "Partido Demokratiko Boneriano" (PDB). Collaboration has reportedly been difficult for some time.

The expectation is that successors, this time party-affiliated, will soon be named. Daisy Coffie of M21 has reportedly been pushing for a political member on the Executive Council for some time.

There has been some public disappointment over the departure of these two commissioners, who were

reportedly valued for their no-nonsense approach, social engagement and extensive professional expertise.

Cicilia (born 1977) managed the Spatial Planning & Development Department. In 2023, after working for over twenty years in the Dutch construction and real estate sector, she returned to her native island.

With a bachelor's degree in architecture and civil engineering and a master's degree in urban planning from Delft University of Technology, she brought a wealth of knowledge. Cicilia worked on topics including environmentally friendly housing, road safety and climate adaptation.

She also advocated for heritage preservation and greater transparency within the administration. Her departure means a loss of professional expertise within the Executive Council.

Den Heyer (born 1978) is an experienced administrator who served for many years in social and adminis-

trative roles within the Caribbean Netherlands. She was, among other things, deputy head of the RCN Social Affairs Unit and later worked for the RCN as well as the Tax and Customs Administration.

Since 2016, Den Heyer has served several terms as a member of the Executive Council, responsible for portfolios such as social affairs, youth, culture, education and healthcare. She was appreciated for her commitment to poverty reduction, youth care and equal educational opportunities.

In 2019, she was on the "Movimentu di Pueblo Boneriano" (MPB) list and became the first woman ever to receive the most votes on the island. In 2022, Den Heyer transferred to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science OCW Caribbean Netherlands as head of the department but returned at the end of 2023 as a non-political member of the Executive Council.

Dutch tourists spark search after jumping in Italian lake

TREMEZZINI, Italy--Two Dutch tourists are facing legal action after sparking an unnecessary search by Italian emergency services when they jumped off a ferry on Lake Como last Friday, local media reported.

The pair -- 23 and 26 years old -- jumped off the ferry and swam to the 18th-century village of Laglio.

Once out of sight, it was unclear whether they had

reached the shore and emergency services were called.

The two were later sighted at Laglio and received a visit from local police at the campsite where they were staying in Tremezzini, some 30 minutes from Laglio.

They have been charged with causing a search and rescue operation without reason.



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Silvania blasts Capriles Clinic

WILLEMSTAD--Curaçao Minister of Public Health Javier Silvania has strongly criticised the management of Capriles Clinic for unilaterally closing two key facilities without informing the Ministry or the Health Inspectorate in advance. According to him, this has serious consequences for public safety and the mental health care system on the island.

Silvania pointed out that in 2021, the clinic shut down the "Nachtopvang Dios Yudami" (night shelter for addicts) and most recently in July 2025, closed the "Un Miho Mañan" (rehabilitation facility), again without any prior notice to authorities.

The minister expressed concern about the visible increase in disturbances on the streets of Punda following these closures. According to him, groups of addicts and individuals with mental health issues now enter the area as early as 6am, harassing locals and tourists, and return between 5pm and 7:30pm, causing further public nuisance.

An abandoned building in the area has reportedly become a shelter for homeless addicts, and the minister fears the situation is spiralling out of control.

Silvania also took issue with the clinic's frequent use of the term "uitbehandeld" (treatment completed) for chronic addicts with psychiatric conditions.

He questioned how the mental hospital measures treatment effectiveness and asked for an explanation from the director about what "uitbehandeld" really means in the context of long-term psychiatric patients.

The minister said he has received calls from distressed families who claim that once their loved ones are labelled "uitbehandeld" and discharged, they quickly relapse due to lack of follow-up care and medication, leading to aggressive or unstable behaviour in public spaces.

Silvania noted with disappointment that Capriles Clinic received an extra 3.4 million guilders in 2023 to support its operations, yet still claims to lack sufficient space for patients. He also expressed regret that the clinic closed two essential care units without any consultation with the ministry.

"These unilateral decisions have created a ticking time bomb," he said. "When the situation explodes, the public, the media and Parliament all turn their attention to the ministry, even though we were left out of the decision-making process."

Silvania emphasised the need for transparency, accountability and coordination between mental health institutions and government to protect both vulnerable patients and the broader community.



The St. Maarten Library recognised and celebrated Daniel Helligar on his 15th work anniversary on July 12. The library's board, general manager and staff congratulated Helligar for his dedication, service and commitment to the institution. "His contributions have made a lasting impact on the library and the community it serves," the library said in a press release.

APS is moving!

Same Commitment
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Office Closure Notice

APS will be closed to the public from July 30 through August 1, 2025, as we relocate to our new location. During this period, we are reachable via email and social media and will respond as soon as we can, prioritizing based on urgency.

As of August 4, 2025, our phone lines will be back in service and we will accommodate scheduled appointments only.

Normal operations will resume on August 11, 2025.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition.

- 📍 New location, same commitment!
- 📞 All other contact details remain unchanged.

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Man confessed to beheading his own mother, court hears

DORDRECHT - A 31-year-old man has confessed to beheading his mother with an axe in Hellevoetsluis, prosecutors told a court in Dordrecht on Monday.

Jesse R. was arrested on April 16 after fleeing the crime scene in his mother's car.

Police found a bag in the vehicle containing both the axe and the woman's head. Her body was discovered in the home by a friend, who saw R. running away.

Prosecutors said R. was probably in a psychotic state at the time of the killing. He is due to undergo psychiatric examination at Pieter Baan Centre, but the assessment is unlikely to begin before November due to waiting lists.

R.'s lawyer Job Knoester told the court that his client had long been in contact with mental health services.

"It is slowly starting to sink in what he's done, and he finds it horrific," Knoester said.

The defence has requested that a mental health worker who spoke to R. shortly before the killing be called as a witness. Knoester said the testimony could shed light on his client's mental state at the time.

R. previously described himself on social media as manic depressive.

The next pro-forma hearing is scheduled for October 21.

R. will remain in custody while the investigation continues.



Lionel Martijn (second from left) and staff during a small celebration for the 40th anniversary of Ocan.

Ocan marks 40 years

Continued from page 1.

whether contesting offensive terminology, unfair use of statistical data, pension rights, or opposing mandatory integration requirements once proposed for Caribbean youth by former Minister Rita Verdonk," Martijn explains. He has led the organisation since 2022.

While many Caribbean Dutch citizens are thriving in Dutch society – pursuing higher education and building successful careers – Martijn points out that some struggle economically, socially, or emotionally. "We need to stand beside those who are more vulnerable. They must be treated fairly – not as second-class citizens," he says.

Ocan remains actively involved in shaping legislation and policy. Martijn describes their role as "a green checkmark" in the process. The group contributed to the national dialogue leading up to the Netherlands' apology for slavery and to decisions on the Slavery Memorial Fund. Yet, he says, policy development often lacks nuance when addressing Caribbean communities.

"Mainstream solutions aren't always effective," Martijn notes. "Take language courses, for instance. Caribbean Dutch citizens with limited Dutch

are placed alongside others who are illiterate or from vastly different backgrounds. This discourages participation."

Martijn stresses that true language fluency goes beyond vocabulary. "Understanding the tone and context in which something is said is just as important. Misinterpretation can lead to frustration or conflict – while the actual message might be harmless."

Language also presents challenges for older Caribbean migrants, particularly those who joined family members in the Netherlands in recent years. Many struggle with isolation and limited access to care.

"Imagine a grandmother describing her illness to a Dutch doctor by saying, 'My head is biting me.' How do you interpret that?" Martijn says, illustrating the cultural and linguistic gap.

Ocan works closely with both national and local governments to address policy blind spots, especially around youth and elderly care. Recent collaborations include HPV awareness campaigns for Caribbean teens and fall prevention programmes for older residents, in partnership with the Ministry of Health. International bodies such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in

Europe (OSCE), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union's (EU) anti-racism commission also seek Ocan's input.

Beyond advocacy, Ocan runs its own outreach programmes, often with help from volunteers. These include support with pension applications, debt relief, and benefits guidance. If Ocan cannot provide direct assistance, clients are referred to trusted experts. Projects like BelWel foster intergenerational connections between youth and seniors.

What's missing, Martijn says, is a unified national approach. "We run many small projects, but they end when the funding ends. What we need is a national programme with a long-term goal: improving the well-being of Caribbean Dutch citizens."

Looking ahead, Martijn hopes that in another 40 years, Caribbean and European Dutch citizens will enjoy equal opportunities across all sectors of society. If that happens, he says, Ocan could shift its focus toward preserving Caribbean heritage and culture. "But until that day comes, our work for equal citizenship must continue," Martijn stated.

Gendarmerie issues a missing teenager alert

MARIGOT--The Gendarmerie disclosed Monday that a minor was reported missing between the night and morning of July 17-18. The 14-year-old minor named Isaline Victor, born in St. Martin on October 7, 2010, ran away from her foster family living at 32 Yellow Tail Street (Sandy Ground) in Saint-Martin. The teenager does not have a mobile phone.

The public is asked to call the Gendarmerie emergency number 17 if they have any knowledge of the teenager's whereabouts, if she has been found, or to obtain more information.



Isaline Victor

THERE'S
NO EXCUSE
FOR
ANIMAL
ABUSE



The first chairman Anthony Begina (centre) and his successor Roy Pieters (left) at the founding of the National Consultative Body for Antilleans (Landelijk Inpraakorgaan Antillianen, LIA).



United States President Donald Trump shaking hands with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Photo by Brendan Smialowski via DutchNews.nl.

US, EU trade deal results are 'not ideal,' say Dutch

BRUSSELS--The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) have struck a last-minute trade agreement that averts an escalation in tariffs, but key Dutch sectors still face significant hurdles.

US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen shook hands on the agreement in Scotland on Sunday evening, in which the US will impose a 15% import tariff on goods from the EU, although some products are exempt.

Caretaker Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said on social media that while "no tariffs would have been better," the deal provides greater clarity for Dutch companies and more stability in the markets.

"The next step is to implement the agreement as quickly as possible," he said.

Caretaker Dutch State

Secretary of Foreign Trade Hanneke Boerma said the agreement is "not ideal" and "could still have a big impact on many Dutch and European businesses."

She said the Dutch government is urging the European Commission to continue negotiating with the US on lowering tariffs and improving economic cooperation.

The deal leaves in place a 50% tariff on European steel and aluminium, which Trump said would not be reduced and is likely to have a significant impact on Tata Steel in IJmuiden.

However, von der Leyen told reporters there would be a quota system in place.

Employers' federation VNO-NCW described the deal as a temporary reprieve.

"It ends the uncertainty for now, but a general 15% tariff on all European products remains a painful mea-

sure for entrepreneurs," the lobby group said.

ING economist Bert Colijn told public broadcaster NOS that the deal brings welcome certainty after weeks of volatility, but warned that the outcome was still a step back compared to the situation before April.

"For companies, the agreement offers more predictability," he said. "We saw trade data fluctuate wildly due to the uncertainty. Deals were cancelled and projects postponed."

Products exempt from the 15% tariff include aircraft and aircraft parts, chip-making equipment, certain types of agricultural machinery, and selected chemicals.

Von der Leyen said after the talks that she would work to expand the list of exemptions.

The Netherlands has had a structural trade deficit with the US for years, according to figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Meanwhile, oil and gas imports have become more important since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

US crude oil imports now account for 23% of the Dutch total, making the US the most important supplier.

The US is also the biggest supplier of medical instruments and pharmaceutical products to the Netherlands.

Germany, France, Ireland, and Italy all have significant trade surpluses with the US, while Belgium, like the Netherlands, has a deficit.

10.8 PERCENT JUMP IN PASSENGER ARRIVALS

Continued from page 1.

also to the full implementation of automated immigration systems, including electronic gates and self-service passport kiosks. The collaboration between PJIAE, the Ministry of Justice's Immigration and Border Protection Services (IBPS), and the Department of Statistics (STAT) now enables secure, GDPR-compliant data collection and real-time reporting.

"The automation of immigration data transforms how we assess, plan, and respond to travellers," said Erling Hoeve, policy advisor and programme manager for border security innovation at the Ministry of Justice. "St. Maarten is now at the forefront of border security innovation in the region, with tools that enhance both safety and efficiency."

Before automation, immigration statistics were compiled manually, relying on flight manifests and limited software solutions such as the now-defunct Tourism Statistical Information System (TSIS). The introduction of the Radex border control system, paired with ABC e-Gates, now allows for instantaneous and accurate registration of passenger data.

"This leap in automation is not just about technology – it's about capacity, transparency, and national security," said Damien Schmidt, Digitisation Project Coordinator at PJIAE. "We're building a future-ready airport in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of TEATT."

The automation aligns with PJIAE's broader modernisation efforts, including the final stages of its terminal reconstruction project. The new Arrival Hall was designed to improve passenger flows and better accommodate the airport's

regional hub function for neighbouring islands like Saba, St. Eustatius, Anguilla, St. Barthélemy, and Tortola.

Earlier this year, PJIAE also participated in the Routes Americas 2025 conference to expand airline partnerships and support future growth. The airport is projecting 1.8 million to-

tal passengers for the year, aided by its investment in digital infrastructure and data-driven policy.

The first-quarter figures not only reflect renewed traveller confidence but also highlight St. Maarten's strategic progress in airport-border collaboration and regional leadership in aviation innovation.

Seven arrests for domestic abuse so far in this month

WILLEMSTAD--At least seven individuals have been detained in Curaçao for domestic abuse up to now during July. In addition, there have been multiple other incidents where no arrests were made, raising serious concerns about the prevalence of relational violence on the island.

One of the most recent cases occurred overnight from Friday to Saturday, when a 31-year-old man was held after entering his ex-partner's home at night and striking her on the head with a mobile phone. Just a day later, on Saturday around 11:00pm, a 39-year-old man was taken into custody for assaulting his ex-partner in her home.

A subsequent search of the latter's residence un-

covered a firearm, which was seized by police. Both suspects remain in custody as the investigation continues.

The Bar Association of Curaçao earlier this year called on political leaders to make domestic violence a policy priority, citing the widespread nature of the issue. In nearly all reported cases, the perpetrators are men targeting their current or former partners.

Authorities and advocacy groups warn that the situation is growing increasingly urgent and emphasise the need for stricter enforcement, better protection for victims, and more public awareness to combat domestic violence in all its forms.

Scooter rider hurt in crash

ST. EUSTATIUS--A scooter rider was injured and had to be taken to hospital after colliding with a car on Dr. H.A. Korthalsweg in St. Eustatius last Saturday afternoon.

According to the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force KPCN, its central control room received a

report about a crash at 2:40pm.

An ambulance took the rider to hospital, but KPCN did not disclose the extent of their injuries.

KPCN also did not mention anything about the cause of the collision or details about the car and its occupants.

EASING PATH TO INDEPENDENCE

Continued from page 1.

Regarding Aruba, Curaçao, and St. Maarten, the autonomous countries in the Kingdom, the party stresses the importance of cooperation in promoting good governance, sound fiscal policy, anti-corruption initiatives, and long-term economic and educational development. VVD calls for concrete agreements with the countries to improve financial oversight and accountability.

The manifesto also underscores the strategic importance of the Caribbean territories from a defence standpoint. "The islands

are strategically located and align with our ambition to maintain a global presence. We therefore maintain a credible military presence to protect our interests and to monitor migration and drug trafficking from the South American continent," it states.

Despite advocating for new pathways to independence, VVD maintains that the relationship with the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom remains "valuable," mirroring the position of the outgoing Dutch cabinet.





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Positive CFT advice for investment loan

WILLEMSTAD--The government of Curaçao received a positive recommendation from the Committee for Financial Supervision CFT on a loan of over 115 million Caribbean guilders, intended for strategic investments in infrastructure, public safety, education and digitalisation. The approved amount is part of the Dutch Caribbean

country's 2025 draft budget.

The total loan request was 159 million guilders, but the remaining 33 million will only become available pending formal approval of a budget amendment by Parliament.

The largest portion – 50 million guilders – is earmarked for road maintenance and management. Another 25

million will be used to connect Curaçao to the CELIA Subsea Cable System, enhancing the island's digital resilience and connectivity.

Additional funds are allocated for:

- * Renovation of government buildings

- * Educational materials such as textbooks

- * Equipment for the Coast Guard and Fire Department, including new emergency vehicles

- * Construction of a crisis management centre

According to CFT, the proposed investments meet the criteria of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and do not breach debt service limits. The Ministry of Finance has confirmed that all interest and repayment obligations have been fully incorporated into the national budget.

The ministry also emphasised its ongoing oversight of project implementation, ensuring that funds are effectively and responsibly used. The loan is expected to play a crucial role in modernising Curaçao's infrastructure and public services while also boosting long-term economic resilience.



Middelhof (centre) with Gastra and Keijzer-Balde

142 Curaçao students left for the Netherlands

WILLEMSTAD--A group of 142 students from Curaçao departed for the Netherlands on Sunday evening to begin their studies there with the support of study financing from "Stichting Studiefinanciering Curaçao" (SSC).

This year, a total of 160 received a loan. Some had already travelled earlier, while others are scheduled to leave at a later date.

In addition, 25 students have been granted loans to pursue studies within the region.

According to SSC director

Sidney "Bicho" Justiana, housing arrangements have been secured for all first-year students. However, the shortage of student housing for second-year students remains a significant concern.

SSC has already held discussions on the issue with the Permanent Committee for Kingdom Relations in Dutch Parliament and plans to address the matter during the upcoming Inter-Parliamentary Kingdom Consultation IPKO scheduled for September.

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The applications should include an application letter, copy of identification, copy of diplomas and or certificates, where required. All suitable applicants will be contacted for an interview to be held with a representative of the business and a Business Service Officer representing NESC.

Minister talks sustainable energy in the Netherlands

THE HAGUE--During his recent visit to the Netherlands, Curaçao's Minister of Economic Development MEO Roderick Middelhof held his first official meeting with Secretary-General at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs EZ Sandor Gastra and newly appointed Secretary-General at the Dutch Ministry of Climate and Green Growth KGG Gerdyne Keijzer-Balde.

Discussions focused on a range of critical economic topics and future development plans for Curaçao, with a particular emphasis on sustainable energy and the Netherlands' support for a transition to greener, more resilient energy infrastructure. A key topic was the Dutch Caribbean country's hydrogen chain programme, which is seen as a central pillar of its energy transformation.

According to a government release, the encounter provided Middelhof with an opportunity to formally introduce himself and engage in dialogue on areas of mutual interest. With the energy transition programme having recently shifted from EZ to KGG, Middelhof expressed his gratitude to Gastra for his continued support of the hydrogen project.

At the start of the current Dutch government's term

(now in a caretaker phase), the Energy Fund, initially set at 200 million euros, was significantly reduced, and Curaçao was excluded from the remaining allocations. However, last year, EZ made 1 million euros available, and following discussions with Middelhof, the Netherlands has now allocated an additional 4 million euros for necessary feasibility studies related to the development of the "Maritime Wind Park" – a project vital to Curaçao's sustainable future.

The minister described his talks as open and constructive, exploring how both EZ and KGG can assist

Curaçao in developing and implementing solutions in areas such as renewable energy, transition management, and industry development. These goals align with Middelhof's broader vision of diversifying Curaçao's economic structure while protecting the island's vulnerable environment in the face of climate change.

"Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to ongoing cooperation on these vital issues, recognising their shared objectives in promoting economic stability and environmental stewardship," added the statement.

ANTI-SARGASSUM COLLECTIVE

Continued from page 1.

and protect our health.

"We cannot continue to live with this toxic odour, under an invisible but constant threat," the petition concludes.

The petition can be signed at <https://www.onparticipe.fr/p/jFJuO7ga>

However, one Facebook reader disagreed that few resources are being deployed locally. Contractors working for the Collectivité are removing Sargassum from the beaches on a daily basis, specifically at Cul-de-Sac Bay and Orient Beach

North and other areas, representing a significant effort in terms of finance, human resources, equipment and organisation.

"These resources put in place are unfortunately very insufficient compared to the intensity of the Sargassum observed during periods of massive arrivals," the reader said. "It is also legitimate to push decision-makers to study, test and implement more effective measures, and to define and present long-term solutions."



The panel with Bertrand in centre

Curaçao lawyer at seminar on piracy

WILLEMSTAD--Attorney Karyl Bertrand represented Curaçao on July 16th and 17th at the Vision and Innovation in Intellectual Property seminar held in Anguilla. Bertrand was the only speaker from the Dutch Caribbean region and part of a panel that included the vice-chair of the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC), representatives from Ralph Lauren USA, and officials of the Antigua & Barbuda Customs Service.

The gathering was held by the Latin American organisation "Cámara de Lucha contra la Piratería y el Con-

trabando" CALPYC, and the Cervieri Monsuárez law firm, which specialises in intellectual property law. The event is part of an international training programme held in more than 27 countries in Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean.

In her presentation, Bertrand discussed strategies that can be applied within Curaçao's local legislation to combat brand piracy and also made recommendations for measures that can be implemented in the Caribbean. Furthermore, she emphasised the importance of cooperation between au-

thorities and sectors at the local, regional and international levels.

At Bertrand's initiative, the organisation extended an invitation to the Curaçao Intellectual Property Crimes Task Force. The latter was represented by Marlon Wernet (Interpol Curaçao), Serving Keli (Ministry of Health, Environment and Nature GMN), Wilbert Geertuida (Curaçao Police Force KPC) and Ronny Cornelis (Ministry of Economic Development MEO).

This made Curaçao the largest delegation at the seminar. Bertrand also coordinated the participation of the St. Maarten Customs Department.

The seminar was attended by brand owners, representatives of intellectual property agencies, academics, enforcement authorities and representatives of public sectors such as health and economics from various Caribbean countries. According to organisers, Bertrand's contribution was considered one of the highlights.

Curaçao honours first inhabitants

WILLEMSTAD--More than 70 people gathered last Saturday at "Parke Lucha pa Libertat" in Curaçao to commemorate the Caquetío, the island's first inhabitants. They did so in a ceremony that combined ancestral tribute with a call for recognition, protection and education. The gathering served as a counter-narrative to the commonly taught history that begins with the arrival of the Spanish in 1499.

Accompanied by ancestral drums, cultural advocates Marlon Regales, Richenel Anzano, Amy Victorina and Tico Vos addressed the legacy of the Caquetío during the seaside ceremony, which took place near a vibrant totem pole that symbolises their enduring presence. "We still carry their spirit. They have not disappeared; they live within us," one person declared, setting the tone for a day of collective reflection.

The speakers emphasised that there is extensive – and in some cases still unexamined – evidence pointing to the continued presence of the Caquetío on the island. The ceremony featured talks on culture, agriculture, spirituality and the pre-colonial sovereignty that existed long before European contact.

Public engagement was high during the interactive segment, where several attendees questioned why Caquetío heritage has no formal place in the island's education system and why construction projects are not required to conduct heritage impact assessments. There was also a plea to protect archaeological sites that remain unexplored.

Communication specialist Vos issued a warning about the direction of development on the island: "Educated travellers come here seeking cul-

tural depth – not cement. If we destroy our roots in the rush to modernise, we lose the very story that makes this island unique."

Victorina highlighted the valuable role that institutions like the National Archaeological Anthropological Museum (NAAM) can play. "NAAM has a treasure trove of knowledge, much of it accessible through its website. We have top professionals who can help developers create a real win-win: advancing their projects while protecting our cultural and historical legacy."

She urged policymakers to view NAAM as a strategic partner in shaping the island's

future while preserving what is yet to be discovered.

Closing the ceremony, Regales delivered a striking re-definition of colonial history: "The Spaniards could not 'discover' or claim what was already inhabited, cherished and named by the Caquetío. Today, we reclaim that truth – for ourselves and for future generations."

The July 26 commemoration, traditionally associated with the 1499 arrival of Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda, thus became a moment of re-framing history – asserting that the island was not discovered but already known and beloved as "Kurassau."

Government called on to pay teachers better

WILLEMSTAD--In light of ongoing teacher shortages in Curaçao, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport OWCS should take urgent steps to make the profession more financially attractive. That is the view of Roylea Pierre, Director of the Roman Catholic Central School Board RKCS.

Pierre emphasised that many qualified professionals are opting to work in the private sector, where salaries are significantly higher. By increasing teachers' pay, more individuals may be encouraged to choose a career in education, she argued, expressing hope that this proposal will be seriously considered by the Council of Ministers.

Currently, many young professionals are leaving the island to work in the Netherlands or Bonaire, where working conditions and compensation are more favourable. According to Pierre, Curaçao is not able to compete with those salaries at this time, making it difficult to retain and attract qualified educators.

The call comes amid growing concern about the long-term impact of teacher shortages on the island's education system.

Search for missing fishermen is ended

ORANJESTAD--Authorities in Aruba, Venezuela and Colombia have officially ended the search for four missing fishermen and their vessel "Energy," fifteen days after they disappeared.

On Saturday, July 12, Marcelo Heyden, Jarred Croes, Davey Croes and Aischell Tromp departed from the former Surfside Pier for what was intended to be a routine day of fishing. They were expected to return by the afternoon – but never did.

The alarm was not raised until late in the evening, which significantly hampered immediate response efforts. By that time, it was too late to deploy search boats or aircraft to the area the boat had reportedly travelled to.

It later emerged that the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard had received a call from one of the fishermen earlier that day, but the message was not classified as an emergency.

A large-scale search operation began the next morning, Sunday, July 13, with coordinated efforts from multiple agencies targeting the area of the last known signal. Despite extensive aerial and sea searches, no trace of the vessel or the men was found. The operation was paused at sunset.

Efforts resumed on Monday, July 14, with additional support from the coastguard, which deployed helicopters and surveillance planes. However, the intensified efforts once again yielded no results.

Last week, the Aruban police enlisted the help of Interpol, which issued a "Yellow Notice" – an international alert used to help locate missing persons. So far, this has not led to any breakthroughs.

Disappearance of fishermen in the Caribbean is unfortunately not uncommon. In August 2024, the bodies of two missing fishermen washed ashore in Aruba after days at sea. The exact circumstances of their demise remain unclear.

Fishing in local waters poses serious risks, including sudden weather changes, access to remote sea areas, drug trafficking routes and the threat of Venezuelan pirates, who have increasingly targeted small boats in the western Caribbean.

As the search comes to an end, families of the missing fishermen are left without answers and with heavy hearts. Authorities have not ruled out continuing investigations if new information surfaces.

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AB 2025, no. 29

Regulation of the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Traffic and Telecommunication of July 23, 2025, to determine the maximum wholesale price and maximum retail prices for petroleum products (Regulation maximum prices petroleum products)

Datum inwerkingtreding is 25 juli 2025

To read this regulation in full, please visit:
[Official Publications \(sintmaartengov.org\)](http://OfficialPublications(sintmaartengov.org))

Copy of this regulation is available via the Department of Legal Affairs & Legislation upon request.

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- Effective written and verbal communication skills;
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- Willingness to work flexible hours, including weekends and shifts as required;
- Prior experience in law enforcement or BAVPOL certification is an asset;
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AANKONDIGING

Op grond van artikel 5, zevende lid, van het Wetboek van Burgerlijke Rechtsvordering van Sint-Maarten. Bij exploit van **29 mei 2025**, waarvan een afschrift is gelaten aan de Ambtenaar van het Openbaar Ministerie op Sint Maarten, heb ik, Nadjesca Gumbs deurwaarder der belastingen te St. Maarten op verzoek van de **Ontvanger, aan CERANT, VINES** voorheen wonende te zonder bekende woon- of verblijfplaats op Sint Maarten of elders, een dwangschrift betekend, welke uitgevaardigd is op d.d. **27 mei 2025**, door de Ontvanger te St. Maarten, met bevel om binnen twee dagen aan de inhoud daarvan te voldoen.

De deurwaarder voornoemd,
Nadjesca Gumbs,
Deurwaarder der belastingen

AANKONDIGING

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Nadjesca Gumbs,
Deurwaarder der belastingen

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De deurwaarder voornoemd,
Nadjesca Gumbs,
Deurwaarder der belastingen



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PNP on AOV hike: 'Where there's a will there's a way'

WILLEMSTAD--Debate over the long-delayed adjustment to the basic old-age pension AOV continues to dominate Curaçao's political discourse, with "Partido Nashonal di Pueblo" (PNP) now calling on Finance Minister Javier Sylvania (MFK) to take immediate and decisive action. Despite frequent discussions and blame-shifting between parliamentary factions about who is responsible for the inaction, the current opposition party has chosen to bypass the technical/financial arguments, instead focusing on the rising cost of living that affects all citizens, especially retirees.

According to PNP, the law already mandates that the AOV be increased in times

of economic growth – something Curaçao experienced after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that still hasn't happened due to various governmental technicalities.

The party led by former Minister of Social Development, Labour and Welfare Ruthmilda Harmonie-Cecilia is now urging Sylvania to leave bickering over the past behind and act as a creative, compassionate and solution-oriented leader.

PNP pointed out that for many pensioners, the AOV is their sole source of income. In some cases, retirees even use it to support other family members, such as grandchildren or nieces and nephews.

Sylvania has previously stated that it would take more than a year to implement the increase responsibly, including a full commission study on how best to proceed.

While PNP agrees that such due diligence is necessary for significant increases – such as raising pensions to the levels seen in Aruba or St. Maarten – they argue that this case is different. "This is a simple adjustment, not a major overhaul," the party emphasised. "Waiting over a year for that is unjustifiable."

PNP also took issue with the minister's claim that International Monetary Fund (IMF) advice is required. "The IMF is a financial institution that only looks at numbers, not the social realities of our people," the party stated, adding that the IMF is not elected by the people and should not dictate domestic social policy.

They pointed to previous decisions made by Sylvania during the election campaign – decisions that involved large expenditures and did not require IMF consultation or commission approval. "If those decisions were made to ease the pain of some citizens, why not do the same now for retirees who are simply asking for what they are entitled to?"

PNP concluded with a clear recommendation: ask the commission to propose the fastest and most efficient route for implementing the pension adjustment, so retirees don't have to wait another year while struggling with high food prices and inflation.

"Minister, we all know that 'where there's a will, there's a way,'" the party declared. "Let's get this done. Our pensioners cannot walk into a store and ask for a 25% discount while they wait for a commission to finish its study. You have the power – just do it."



The Amsterdam Zuid branch of the gym. Photo by Ramon van Flymen via DutchNews.nl.

A'dam gym suspends bosses amid cleaning staff scandal

AMSTERDAM--Managers responsible for cleaning four luxury gyms in Amsterdam have been suspended pending an investigation into worker exploitation, owner Tom Moos said in a video message.

Newspaper "Het Parool" reported last week that Dutch labour inspectors had found 23 undocumented cleaners working at the Saints and Stars chain. Their passports had also been seized by the company.

Some of them said they had been forced to share beds

with strangers at the Amsterdam house where they lived, while being told that their work permits were being finalised.

Moos said on Sunday that the gym's staff had been spat on and had received death threats since "Het Parool's" revelations.

The story, he said, was one-sided and drew conclusions even though the official investigation was still underway.

He said the gym had worked with the same cleaning company for years and that they

had been using people "who are allowed to work within the European Union" for three months due to staff shortages.

Moos said he was completely unaware that workers were being exploited.

The company, he said, had started its own investigation into the situation and will also fully cooperate with the labour inspectorate.

Well-wishers have since launched a crowdfunding campaign for the cleaners, which has raised 34,000 euros so far.

'Zomerkarnaval' marks 40 years

ROTTERDAM--The "Zomerkarnaval" in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, marked its 40th anniversary last weekend with vibrant parades, cultural pride and over 2,500 performers across 32 carnival groups, cheered on by tens of thousands of spectators. While the celebration was a powerful showcase of heritage and community, it was also marred by dozens of arrests and a violent incident in the city centre.

The parade wound its way through the heart of the port city on Saturday. With the sounds of brass bands and live music, groups rooted in Curaçao, Aruba, Suriname, Cabo Verde, Brazil and Spain lit up the streets with colourful costumes and expressive performances.

"Zomerkarnaval is more than a parade – it's a celebration of heritage, community, and cultural identity," said Ryansley Haize, chairman of "Stichting Zomerkarnaval Nederland."

In a first for the event, Carnival King and Queen were siblings: Celine and Oneal Rodgers, joined by Princess Eden, representing "De Havenloods Zomerkarnaval."

Many of the participating groups were multi-generational family associations that have been part of the event for decades.

While the parade itself was mostly festive, the evening saw a large brawl on Coolsingel, involving around 50 individuals. One man was seriously injured and taken to hospital.

Police made no arrests during the incident but had already detained nine people earlier in the day for offences including firearm possession, public intoxication and disorderly conduct.

In total, about 450 people were subjected to preventive searches, a precaution influenced by previous shooting incidents at the 2023 edition. Authorities confiscated eight knives, pepper spray and two guns. Two men from Amsterdam and Rotterdam were arrested.

Despite the incidents, police described the overall atmosphere as largely peaceful. Organisers had taken extra security measures, including the cancellation of related nighttime programmes, to ensure public safety.

Culturally, the 40th edition held added meaning. Following previous controversy over a ban on the "bubbling" dance style, the event's regulations were revised in consultation with anti-discrimination agency Radar.

"All restrictions on bubbling or dance in general have been removed," said Leal van Herwaarden, one of the new artistic directors. The change was celebrated with a bubbling battle during the after-party.

The event also paid tribute to late rapper Def Rhymz, who passed away in March. His 2001 hit video "Schudden" was recorded at the Summer Carnival.

This year also marked a leadership transition, as long-time chairman Karel Willems stepped down after nearly 30 years of involvement. "It's time for a new generation," he said.

Founded in 1984 in Rotterdam – after earlier versions were held as Antillean Carnival in Utrecht – "Zomerkarnaval" has grown into one of the largest cultural events in the Netherlands. Since 2023, it has been officially recognised as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.



First-place winners Golden Revelers Eux dancing on the road, with troupe leader Teena Lopes in front.



The second-place winners were the Multi-Mix troupe, led by Sjudi Redan.

Golden Revelers Eux wins carnival troupe competition

ST. EUSTATUS--Golden Revelers Eux has won this year's troupe competition for Statia Carnival, netting bragging rights, a trophy and a cash prize of US \$2,500.

Garnering 162 points, the troupe led by Teena Lopes edged out the second-place Multi-Mix troupe, which received 158 points. In a distant third was Carnival Survivors, the longest-running troupe in the island's summer festival, led by Joan Windefelde.

The second- and third-place winners received cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

The awards were announced by Carnival Committee chairperson Sjahairah Fleming on Sunday after the last day's parade. The three troupes were then welcomed to the stage and given the opportunity to display their choreographed dances for the large crowd at the Carnival Village.

Awarded as Best J'ouvert Troupe was the Bacchanal Crew, and as Most Creative J'ouvert Troupe was the Bacchanal Zombies. These troupes each received a trophy and \$250.

Sharday Bennett, leader of the Happy Feet troupe, received a trophy for five years of being involved in carnival.

Windefelde was also given a medal for her decades-long contribution to carnival as a troupe leader.



Third-place winners, Carnival Survivors, performing a choreographed dance.

Focus groups start in Saba for 'Where Culture Lives' project

SABA--The first set of focus groups for the 'Where Culture Lives' project, a collaborative effort between the Saba Island Administration and the National Commission on Culture, began on Monday evening. The sessions, which are part of a larger initiative to explore and celebrate Saba's unique cultural heritage, are being held at the Saba Island Administration building. The project aims to identify and document the various cultural practices, traditions, and stories that define Saba's identity. The first focus group, led by Culture Commissioner Eivon Heyliger, was attended by a group of community members, including last year's Junior Carnival Queen Naima Smith. The sessions are designed to be interactive and inclusive, allowing community members to share their insights and experiences. The project is expected to run for several months, with more focus groups scheduled for the coming weeks. The findings from these sessions will be used to develop a comprehensive cultural heritage plan for Saba, which will serve as a guide for future cultural development and preservation efforts.



The 49th Saba Carnival, under the theme 'Small Island, Big Vibes, Endless Fete' was opened Monday evening with a jump-up from St. John's to The Bottom. In photo: Culture Commissioner Eivon Heyliger and last year's Junior Carnival Queen Naima Smith opened the gates to the Festival village.

Nevis Island Administration reports strong fiscal performance for first half of 2025

NEVIS--The Nevis Island Administration (NIA) is reporting a strong start to the 2025 fiscal year, with key financial indicators pointing to solid economic momentum and prudent fiscal management.

Reports prepared by the Ministry of Finance for the first two quarters show that tax and non-tax revenues are trending upward, and both the primary and overall balances are in a surplus position, outpacing results for the same period in 2024 and 2023.

At his monthly press conference on July 22, Premier Mark Brantley, who also serves as minister of finance, outlined the NIA's fiscal performance from January to June 2025.

"The period January to June 2025 fiscal indicators paint a positive outcome for the period," he stated. "Although the revenue generated for 2025 thus far is still below budgeted targets, revenue is trending upwards and continues to outpace results for 2024."

Current revenue for the six-month period reached \$82.15 million, comprised of \$60.83 million in tax revenue and \$21.32 million in non-tax revenue. This represents a 12.53% increase, approximately \$9.15 million, compared to the same period in 2024.

Premier Brantley highlighted the robust performance of the Value Added Tax (VAT), particularly at the Inland Revenue Department, noting that collections rose by 56.15% despite the federal government's VAT Reduced Rate Programme, which ran from January through June. Although VAT collected at Customs decreased by 27.86%, total VAT receipts amounted to \$22.68 million – an overall increase of 17.77% compared to the previous year.

He explained, "The indication then of an increase in tax revenue receipts in Nevis is really a good indication of how our local economy is performing ... VAT, the Tourism Development Levy – there's more activity. Those are taxes that apply in the context of the local economy. So to me, that's a great indicator."

Growth in tax revenue was also supported by strong performances from the Social Services Levy and Property Tax. Social Services Levy collections exceeded both the budgeted forecast and the 2024 figures, up by 4.5% and a substantial 76.18% respectively.

"Why is Social Services Levy important? As we all know, it's a levy on wages, so it's a good indicator of how the job sector is doing ... not just the number of jobs, but the value of those jobs," Premier Brantley said. Property Tax receipts, while still below budgeted targets, have shown remarkable improvement – up 144.01% over the same period last year. Offshore Financial Services revenue also performed well, increasing by 11.68% compared to 2024, though it narrowly missed the budget target by 0.06%.

Premier Brantley underscored the significance of Nevis' tax-based revenue model, especially in contrast to the larger inflows of Citizenship by Investment (CBI) funds available to the federal government.

"I think the people of Nevis would understand that we do not have the same comfort our brothers and sisters in St. Kitts do of having a torrent of CBI money flowing into the economy. We get a fixed amount monthly and that is all that we get. St. Kitts, if that amount in terms of overall income is extremely high, then they have these buffers that non-tax revenue provides."

"Put differently, this is not being diluted by any flows of revenue that are coming from other sources. So when we say that tax revenues are up in Nevis, it really means that there's more activity in the local economy."

Meanwhile, the NIA has also managed to rein in spending. Total expenditure for the first half of 2025 fell by 12.53% or \$13.76 million compared to the same period in 2024 and is down 15.45% or \$17.56 million compared to budgeted projections.

"I just wanted to say that fiscally the island seems to be on the right path," Premier Brantley concluded.

CSS deepens community engagement amid 76% drop in homicides

ST. KITTS--The Citizen Security Secretariat (CSS) continued its dynamic engagement strategy throughout July 2025, reinforcing the government of St. Kitts and Nevis' data-driven, public health-centred approach to crime prevention. These efforts form part of a wider national strategy that has supported a remarkable 76% reduction in homicides over the past year.

On July 28, CSS Coordinator Eartha Carey and Research Analyst and Public Health Consultant Hance Richards served as guest speakers at the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force's (RSCNPF) third Annual Crime Intervention Summer Soccer Camp, held at the NCI Grounds. Speaking to dozens of youth and volunteers, Carey and Richards led interactive sessions on citizen security, youth responsibility, and the importance of community unity in reducing violence. The camp, which began on July 21, is one of several national interventions designed to guide at-risk youth towards positive pathways.

"Our mission is not just to respond to crime, but to transform the environment that allows it to take root," said Carey. "By working directly with our youth and engaging families, churches, and communities, we are building a safer Federation from the inside out."

Earlier in July, Carey and Richards also made tailored presentations to the Antioch Baptist Church Prayer Group, as well as to the Pastors' Conference on Nevis and members of the RSCNPF High Command. These forums provided meaningful faith-based platforms to raise awareness on citizen security, and to equip clergy and national security

leaders – who serve as key community anchors – with evidence-based strategies for promoting safety and social resilience.

Minister of National Security, Prime Minister (PM) Dr. Terrance Drew, publicly commended the CSS during a recent Cabinet press conference, praising the secretariat's dedication and the measurable success it continues to deliver. He reaffirmed that the CSS's work is essential to government's broader violence prevention framework, which treats crime as a symptom of deeper social imbalances rather than relying solely on punitive measures.

"The secretariat's outreach is not only transforming our communities but gaining regional recognition," PM Drew stated. He further noted that neighbouring Anguilla recently held high-level talks with the Drew administration to better understand how St. Kitts and Nevis has achieved such significant reductions in crime since the Citizen Security Task Force was launched in August 2024.

By proactively engaging with vulnerable groups and addressing the socioeconomic drivers of antisocial behaviour, the CSS is living up to its mandate to foster lasting change. Its July engagements exemplify the Federation's leadership in modern citizen security reform and offer a compelling model for other nations seeking sustainable approaches to crime and violence. ~ SKNIS ~

National Assembly meets on Thursday

ST. KITTS--Notice has been given for a sitting of the National Assembly to be held at the National Assembly Chambers, Government Headquarters, Basseterre, on Thursday, July 31, 2025, at 10:00am. The Order Paper and other Papers will be issued at a later date.

The National Assembly will be broadcast live on ZIZ Radio (96 FM) and participating radio stations. It can also be viewed live on TV Channel 5 in St. Kitts and Channel 98 in Nevis. It will also be streamed live at www.zizonline.com.

Copies of Bills are posted when they become available on the website (sknis.gov.kn) of the St. Kitts and Nevis Information Service under the section: bills.

Travellers' organisation critical of A'dam public transport plans

AMSTERDAM--Passenger advocacy group Rover is sounding the alarm over proposed changes to the Amsterdam metro system, warning that the new plans will result in poorer service, longer travel times and overcrowded trains, particularly on busy routes like Gein and Sloterdijk.

According to Rover, the problems will be especially noticeable outside peak hours. Travellers will be forced to make more transfers, spend more time in transit and deal with increasingly crowded metro cars.

"If a metro runs more often, but passengers are on the road longer, have to transfer more, and are packed into crowded trains, you simply lose those travellers," said Rover chairman Marinus de Jong. "Then the plan backfires."

The restructured metro lines are scheduled to launch in 2027. In recent months, commuters, residents and organisations have been invited to share their views on the proposed network redesign.

Rover is calling on authorities to reconsider the plans before a final decision is made.

"Higher frequency isn't a magic solution," De Jong said.

AGENDA

ST. EUSTATIUS

Police Station 182333
Emergency 111
Hot Line 108
Fire Department 120
Hospital 182211/182371
Landsradio 182210
Post Office 182207
St. Eustatius Historical Foundation Museum 182288
Winair Office 182362
Lions Club meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday at the "Den" next to the Airport
Drug Prevention Foundation meets every Tuesday 5:30pm at the Golden Era Hotel.
Coastguard NA&A 113
St. Eustatius National parks: Gallows Bay: 318 2884

SABA

Police Station
The Bottom, tel. 4163237
Emergency 111/112
Hospital
The Bottom, tel. 4163288/4163289
Fire Department Airport
Flat Point, tel. 4162210
SATEL
The Bottom, tel. 4163211
WINAIR, Airport
Flat Point, tel. 4162255/2173
Taxi Service Airport
Flat Point, tel. 160
Administration Building
The Bottom, tel.
4163311/4163312/4163313
Tourist Office
Windwardside, tel. 4162231
Harbour Office
Fort Bay, tel. 4163294
Saba Marine Park
Fort Bay, tel. 4163295
Nature & Hike Guide
James Johnson
The Bottom, tel. 4163307
Service Club
Saba Lions Club general meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday 8:00 p.m. at Eugenius A. Johnson Center.
Coastguard NA&A 113
Red Cross
General meeting every last Monday, 6 p.m., Eugenius A. Johnson Center.

ANGUILLA

EMERGENCY
Police 911
Fire 911
Ambulance 911
Police Station 497 2333
Hospital 497 2551
Disaster Department 497 2926
Radio Anguilla 497 2218
Tourism 497 2759

AIRLINES
Anguilla Air Services 498 5922
Trans Anguilla 497 8690

COURIER SERVICE
DHL 497 3400
Fedex 497 2719
UPS 497 2239

SERVICE CLUBS
Rotary
Meets at Roy's Restaurant
Every Thursday 6 pm
Soroptimist International
Meets at Day Care Centre
2nd Tuesday in month 4.30 pm
Lions Club
1st and 3rd Tuesday
Arts and Craft Centre 5.30 pm
Toastmasters Club
Every 2nd and 4th Saturday
Anguilla Community College
6.45pm

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United States President Donald Trump shaking hands with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Photo by Brendan Smialowski via DutchNews.nl.

US, EU trade deal results are 'not ideal,' say Dutch

BRUSSELS--The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) have struck a last-minute trade agreement that averts an escalation in tariffs, but key Dutch sectors still face significant hurdles.

US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen shook hands on the agreement in Scotland on Sunday evening, in which the US will impose a 15% import tariff on goods from the EU, although some products are exempt.

Caretaker Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said on social media that while "no tariffs would have been better," the deal provides greater clarity for Dutch companies and more stability in the markets.

"The next step is to implement the agreement

as quickly as possible," he said.

Caretaker Dutch State Secretary of Foreign Trade Hanneke Boerma said the agreement is "not ideal" and "could still have a big impact on many Dutch and European businesses."

She said the Dutch government is urging the European Commission to continue negotiating with the US on lowering tariffs and improving economic cooperation.

The deal leaves in place a 50% tariff on European steel and aluminium, which Trump said would not be reduced and is likely to have a significant impact on Tata Steel in IJmuiden.

However, Von der Leyen told reporters there would be a quota system in place.

Employers' federation VNO-NCW described the

deal as a temporary reprieve.

"It ends the uncertainty for now, but a general 15% tariff on all European products remains a painful measure for entrepreneurs," the lobby group said.

ING economist Bert Colijn told public broadcaster NOS that the deal brings welcome certainty after weeks of volatility, but warned that the outcome was still a step back compared to the situation before April.

"For companies, the agreement offers more predictability," he said. "We saw trade data fluctuate wildly due to the uncertainty. Deals were cancelled and projects postponed."

Products exempt from the 15% tariff include aircraft and aircraft parts, chip-making equipment, certain types of agricultural machinery, and selected chemicals.

Von der Leyen said after the talks that she would work to expand the list of exemptions.

The Netherlands has had a structural trade deficit with the US for years, according to figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Meanwhile, oil and gas imports have become more important since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

US crude oil imports now account for 23% of the Dutch total, making the US the most important supplier.

The US is also the biggest supplier of medical instruments and pharmaceutical products to the Netherlands.

Germany, France, Ireland, and Italy all have significant trade surpluses with the US, while Belgium, like the Netherlands, has a deficit.

Experts urge review of burn-out diagnoses in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM--Psychiatrists and occupational health experts are calling for a review of how the Netherlands diagnoses and treats burn-out, after Sweden announced it would drop the term following updated guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO), newspaper "De Volkskrant" reported on Monday.

The Netherlands and Sweden were the only two countries that still recognise burn-out as a formal diagnosis.

While symptoms such as exhaustion, concentration problems and sleep issues are real, critics argue the label lacks scientific precision and may delay access to more targeted treatment.

Psychiatrist Christiaan Vinkers, professor of stress and resilience at Amsterdam UMC teaching hospital, told the paper that many patients now diagnosed with burn-out could be more effectively helped if diagnosed with conditions such as depression or anxiety.

"Burn-out is poorly defined and creates a separate treatment market outside psychiatry," he said.

The Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) dropped the term in 2023, and WHO's guidelines now define burn-out as an "occupational phenomenon rather than a medical condition."

However, occupational health and family doctors say the current approach works well. They use structured criteria to assess symptoms and suggest tailored interventions such as sleep routines, exercise or therapy.

The Hague family doctor Richard Starmans told the paper the diagnosis is meaningful to patients and gives direction to care.

Although he agrees that treatments are often based on experience rather than hard evidence, he stressed that most patients recover within six months.

Meanwhile, Vinkers is now leading a new study on early detection of stress symptoms, aiming to bring together general practitioners, psychiatrists, occupational doctors and psychologists to design better coordinated care.

"We need to break down silos and understand what this kind of stress really involves," he said.

Dutch research institute TNO said in 2023 that one in four employees between 18 and 34 years old reported burn-out symptoms.

That report, commissioned by the Dutch ministry of social affairs and employment, found burn-out cases were becoming more common and more severe, with the biggest increase among young women.

Dutch tourists spark search after jumping in Italian lake

TREMEZZINI, Italy--Two Dutch tourists are facing legal action after sparking an unnecessary search by Italian emergency services when they jumped off a ferry on Lake Como last Friday, local media reported.

The pair -- 23 and 26 years old -- jumped off the ferry and swam to the 18th-century village of Laglio.

Once out of sight, it was unclear whether they had reached the shore and emergency services were called.

The two were later sighted at Laglio and received a visit from local police at the campsite where they were staying in Tremezzini, some 30 minutes from Laglio.

They have been charged with causing a search and rescue operation without reason.

Scooter rider hurt in crash

ST. EUSTATIUS--A scooter rider was injured and had to be taken to hospital after colliding with a car on Dr. H.A. Korthalsweg in St. Eustatius last Saturday afternoon.

According to the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force KPCN, its central control room received a report about a crash at 2:40pm.

An ambulance took the rider to hospital, but KPCN did not disclose the extent of their injuries.

KPCN also did not mention anything about the cause of the collision or details about the car and its occupants.

New director of immigration named



Stephen LaRoda (right).

NASSAU, The Bahamas—Amid growing concerns over reports of an immigration crisis and questions about the operations of the Department of Immigration, Stephen LaRoda was appointed as the new director of immigration last week.

LaRoda, a 38-year veteran who previously served as assistant director, replaces William Pratt who was reappointed in 2023 and whose contract was due to expire later this year.

Speaking at a ceremony at the British Colonial Hilton, during which a total of 21 officers were honoured and Perry Davis and Andrea Moxey were also appointed as the newest deputy directors of immigration, LaRoda pledged to “uphold the highest standards of the Department of Immigration”.

“Immigration officers are public servants; we must therefore be mindful of the service

that we provide to the public,” LaRoda said as he addressed his colleagues during the ceremony.

“We must be honest in our dealings with the public. As law enforcement officers, we are called to a higher standard. We must uphold the law. We must also be fair in our dealings with the members of the public.”

When asked about how he plans to improve the perception of the Department of Immigration as it relates to transparency, accountability and fairness, LaRoda said that is his mandate.

“That is definitely my mandate. Maybe we need to have more public awareness programmes so that they can understand what it is that we do, but I talked about being servants of the public, and I believe that, and I’m going to ensure that the team provides the best service that we can.

There’s always room for improvement, and I believe that we’re ready to do that, too.”

Asked specifically about recent concerns raised by Free National Movement (FNM) Leader Michael Pintard, who claimed that there’s an immigration crisis, that there has been a rise in immigration-related irregularities and that the system is mismanaged and “wide open to abuse”, LaRoda said it follows global trends with respect to the perception of immigration.

“Immigration is a hotbed item globally, not just in The Bahamas, and so it’s not surprising,” he said.

“However, I see some things that we could do with respect to enforcement. We’re doing very well with revenue collection. We’re doing very well with, as former director Pratt said, with our computerisation and updates and upgrades, we’re going to look at what we can do on the enforcement side, being firm but being fair.”

As he congratulated LaRoda and the other promoted officers, Prime Minister (PM) Philip Davis said the Bahamian people are expecting results.

The PM assured that the government is not anti-immigrant, but said it will not stand for “systems that disadvantage Bahamians in their own country”.

“We must continue to build an immigration department that works,” PM Davis said.

“One that is prepared, disciplined, and aligned with the needs of a modern nation. That’s why these promotions matter. Mr. LaRoda, Mr. Davis, Ms. Moxey – the weight of the country’s expectations is now squarely on your shoulders.

“This is a time for serious leadership. You must rebuild morale. You must cut through inefficiency. You must lead a department that Bahamians trust – not fear, not question, but trust. This country wants results. And let’s be honest: immigration is a sensitive topic.

“Bahamians want to know that their communities are safe, that their jobs are secure, and that the rules apply to everyone – no matter their background, nationality, or connections. We are not anti-immigrant. We are anti-lawlessness. We are not against workers who follow the law, but we will not tolerate systems that disadvantage Bahamians in their own country.

“That’s why our policy is simple: Where Bahamians are available and qualified, they must come first. Where foreign labour is necessary, it must be legal, it must be regulated, and it must respect the rules.” ~ *The Nassau Guardian* ~



Skyport has launched legal action against BermudaAir alleging unpaid airport charges.

Skyport sues BermudaAir over unpaid airport charges

HAMILTON--Bermuda’s main airport operator, Bermuda Skyport Corporation Ltd., has launched legal proceedings against BermudaAir Ltd., alleging that the island-based airline owes millions in unpaid airport fees.

Skyport, a private company responsible for managing LF Wade International Airport under a long-term public-private partnership with the government of Bermuda, filed the writ on July 11 through local law firm Wakefield Quin. The action claims that BermudaAir has repeatedly failed to hand over mandatory airport charges it collected from passengers.

In a public statement, a Skyport spokesperson said: “After unsuccessfully attempting to work with BermudaAir for over a year, Skyport has been forced to initiate a legal process to recover the significant owing balance and ensure payment going forward.”

The charges in question are airport usage fees, which under the Bermuda Airport

Authority Act 2017, are to be collected by airlines on behalf of Skyport and remitted to the operator. These fees are levied on both passengers and carriers to support airport maintenance and operations.

“BermudaAir has been collecting these charges for an extended period of time and not paying them to Skyport,” the statement alleged. It also noted that Skyport had supported the airline’s launch with approximately US \$700,000 in fee concessions to help develop new services.

BermudaAir, which launched in September 2023 as Bermuda’s first locally registered commercial airline, acknowledged in a statement that it is working through “a number of commercial issues” with Skyport and is aiming to resolve them in the near future.

Though relatively new, BermudaAir has grown quickly since its debut. The airline began with two Embraer E175 jets and initially operated short-haul flights from

Bermuda to Boston and Westchester, New York. It has since expanded its fleet and introduced routes to Toronto, Halifax, Charleston, Orlando, Richmond, Baltimore, and Montreal.

In 2025, BermudaAir also announced the launch of a new brand, AnguillaAir, which will begin offering direct flights from Boston and Baltimore to Anguilla starting in December.

The legal dispute with Skyport arises during Bermuda’s peak travel season, which could mean the amount owed by BermudaAir has grown significantly since the writ was filed earlier this month.

LF Wade International Airport, located in St. George’s Parish, is Bermuda’s only airport and a critical hub for both tourism and business travel to the island. Skyport has operated the airport since 2017 under a 30-year concession agreement as part of a public-private partnership with the government of Bermuda. ~ *The Royal Gazette* ~

Teens embark on ocean innovation programme

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados—Sixty students from nineteen secondary schools across Barbados have embarked on a first-of-its-kind, four-week programme aimed at shaping the island’s next generation of ocean advocates and innovators.

The new pilot, which was launched on Monday at the Oceana Innovation Hub headquarters in Bay Street, brings together young minds from across the country for an immersive experience in marine science, conservation, and advocacy under the banner of the Oceana Innovation Hub Summer Programme.

Che Greenidge, Head of the Oceana Innovation Hub, expressed her enthusiasm during the opening ceremony, describing the initiative as both timely and transformative.

“I feel like we’re shaping the next generation of ocean stewards, and I’m so excited to see all of the students here today [Monday, July 28, 2025 – Ed.]. This pilot is very special, not only because of its innovative approach but because of the diversity that it represents,” she said.

Greenidge added, “We’re proud to have 19 different secondary schools from across Barbados participating in our summer pilot programme. Each of the 60 students registered, from both the senior and junior cohorts, will bring a unique voice and perspective. This is to ensure that the ideas, the creativity, and the energy that we cultivate over the next four weeks reflect the perspectives of our island’s future leaders – our young people.”

The curriculum will expose students to marine conservation, marine pollution, disaster management, the law of the sea, advocacy, and water safety. The programme includes a “learn to swim” component and a water safety certification aimed at building both confidence and respect for the marine environment.

“No one can fully appreciate the ocean without first feeling safe in it,” Greenidge explained. “Our learn-to-swim programme, and water safety certification – which will be for the stronger swimmers – will empower students with the confidence they need in open water, while also teaching respect for marine environments, the dangers of unsafe swimming conditions, and how they can navigate our seas and feel safe.” ~ *Barbados Today* ~

Caribbean seeks stronger Africa trade as traditional routes waver

ST. GEORGE’S, Grenada—Caribbean nations are looking to “decisively” broaden opportunities for trade with Africa, the secretary-general of its regional bloc said on Monday, in view of looming uncertainty with its more traditional trade partners.

Stronger trade ties with Africa would signal a key economic shift in a region that relies heavily on trade with the United States (US), Canada and Europe, in a period of growing protectionism.

In April, Washington imposed a baseline 10% tariff on nearly all its trade partners. It has been levying its power to influence domestic Caribbean policies on issues such as Cuban medical services and citizen-by-investment (CBI) programmes.

“We must decisively open the door to greater trade between our regions,” Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretary-General Carla Barnett said at the opening of the fourth Annual AfriCaribbean Trade and Investment Forum (ACTIF 2025) in Grenada.

“CARICOM trade with the continent must grow beyond the current levels of less than 3% of our overall trade, particularly with the uncertainty that currently looms over trade with traditional partners.”

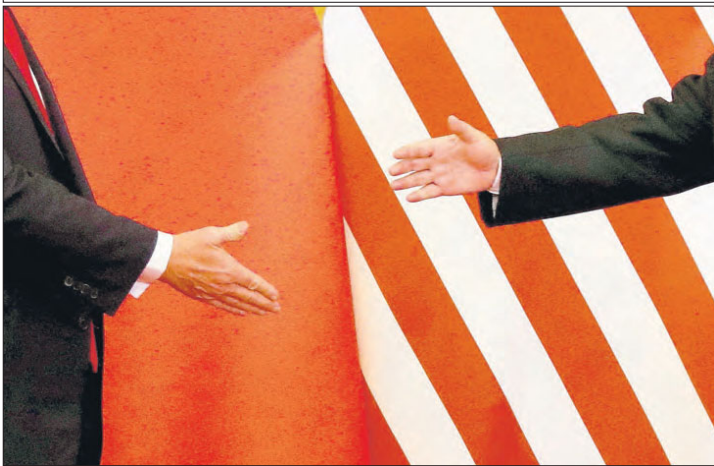
The US is CARICOM’s largest trading partner, according to latest data from the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC).

The US bought a quarter of the bloc’s \$38.8 billion

in exports shipped throughout 2023, according to OEC data, and sold 39% of the \$43.4 billion worth of goods imported into the region.

Caribbean nations remain particularly vulnerable to global economic shocks such as inflation and pandemics, due to their reliance on tourism, imported food and fuel, and their exposure to climate-related disasters.

Barnett said the region has already collaborated with Africa on so far unsuccessful campaigns for slavery reparations from former colonisers and for compensation from rich nations for climate change, which disproportionately affects small island states. ~ *Reuters* ~



U.S. President Donald Trump and China's President Xi Jinping shake hands after making joint statements at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, November 9, 2017.

Trump sets new deadline of 10 or 12 days for Russia to act on Ukraine

TURNBERRY, Scotland--U.S. President Donald Trump set a new deadline on Monday of 10 or 12 days for Russia to make progress toward ending the war in Ukraine or face consequences, underscoring frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin over the 3-1/2-year-old conflict.

Trump has threatened sanctions on both Russia and buyers of its exports unless progress is made. The fresh deadline suggests the U.S. president is prepared to move forward on those threats after previous hesitation to do so.

Speaking in Scotland, where he was holding meetings with European leaders and playing golf, Trump said he was disappointed in Putin and shortening a 50-day deadline he had set on the issue earlier this month.

"I'm going to make a new deadline of about ... 10 or 12 days from today," Trump told reporters during a meeting with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. "There's no reason in waiting... We just don't see any progress being made."

There was no immediate comment from the Kremlin. In a post on X, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, a close ally of Putin, said Trump was playing "a game of ultimatums" that could lead to a war involving the U.S. Medvedev wrote: "Each new ultimatum is a threat and a step towards war. Not between Russia and Ukraine, but with (Trump's) own country."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised Trump's "particularly significant" statement as timely in

trying to move forward to a peace settlement. "Clear stance and expressed determination by @POTUS – right on time, when a lot can change through strength for real peace," Zelenskyy wrote on X.

"I thank President Trump for his focus on saving lives and stopping this horrible war," Zelenskyy said.

Ukraine, he said later in his nightly video address, favoured tougher sanctions as a "key element" in ending the war. "Russia pays atten-

tion to sanctions, pays attention to such losses," he said.

Trump, who has expressed annoyance also with Zelenskyy, has not always followed tough talk about Putin with action, citing what he deems a good relationship that the two men have had previously. On Monday, Trump indicated he was not interested in more talks with Putin. He said sanctions and tariffs would be used as penalties for Moscow if it did not meet Trump's demands.

US Democrats, Republicans plan bills to pressure China

WASHINGTON--U.S. senators from both major parties plan to introduce bills this week targeting China over its treatment of minority groups, dissidents and Taiwan, emphasizing security and human rights as President Donald Trump focuses on trade with Beijing. The three bills, seen by Reuters ahead of their introduction, have Democratic and Republican sponsors, a departure from the fierce partisanship dividing Washington.

Trump's push to reach economic agreements between the world's two biggest economies has strong support in the U.S. Congress, especially from his fellow Republicans, but has prompted some China hawks to worry that the U.S. government is de-emphasizing security issues.

"It does appear that President Trump is keen to negotiate some kind of deal with China, and gaps are opening between his approach to China and the approaches of some members of his team, as well as with Congress, which overall has been quite hawkish on China," said Bonnie Glaser, an Asia expert at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

The desire for a hard line on China is one of the few truly bipartisan sentiments in the perennially divided Congress, even as many lawmakers support Trump's efforts to rebalance the bilateral trade relationship. "The United States cannot afford to be weak in the face of the People's Republic of China and its aggression around the world,"

said Democrat Jeff Merkley of Oregon, a lead sponsor of all three bills.

"No matter who is in the White House, America's values of freedom and human rights must remain at the heart of a clear and principled vision that guides our leadership on the global stage," Merkley said in a statement.

Trump administration officials have said that Trump remains fully committed to Asia-Pacific security issues as he pursues his trade agenda and a good personal relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Asked for comment on Monday, White House Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly said administration officials do not get ahead of the president on pending legislation.

"President Trump has pub-

licly discussed his desire for a constructive relationship with China. He is focused on advancing American interests, such as leveling the playing field for American industries and getting China to stop the flow of fentanyl into our country," she said via email.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters query about the bills.

One bill, co-sponsored by Republican John Cornyn of Texas, would deny entry into the United States of current or former Chinese government officials who were deemed to have engaged in the forced repatriation of members of China's Uyghur minority. Human rights groups accuse China of widespread abuses of Uyghurs, a main-

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Trump asks for swift deposition of Murdoch in Epstein defamation case

NEW YORK--Donald Trump on Monday asked a U.S. court to order a swift deposition for billionaire Rupert Murdoch in the U.S. president's defamation lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal over its July 17 article asserting Trump's name was on a 2003 birthday greeting for the late financier and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The Republican president on July 18 sued the Journal, its owners, including Murdoch, and the reporters who wrote the story, which said Trump's letter included a

sexually suggestive drawing and a reference to secrets they shared.

Trump's lawsuit called the alleged birthday greeting "fake" and said the Journal published its article to harm the president's reputation. In a court filing on Monday, Trump's lawyers said Trump told Murdoch before the article was published that the letter referenced in the story was fake, and Murdoch told Trump he would "take care of it."

"Murdoch's direct involvement further underscores

Defendants' actual malice," Trump's lawyers wrote, referring to the legal standard Trump must clear to prevail in his lawsuit.

His lawyers asked U.S. District Judge Darrin Gayles in Miami to compel Murdoch, 94, to testify within 15 days. Gayles ordered Murdoch to respond by August 4.

Dow Jones, the Journal's publisher, declined to comment. Dow Jones has said the Journal stood by its reporting and would vigorously defend against the lawsuit.

WASHINGTON--Federal employees may discuss and promote their religious beliefs in the workplace, the Trump administration said on Monday, citing religious freedoms protected by the U.S. Constitution.

Agency employees may seek to "persuade others of the correctness of their own religious views" in the office, wrote Scott Kupor, director of the Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. government's human resources agency.

Supervisors can attempt to recruit their employees to their religion, so long as the efforts aren't "harassing in nature," according to Kupor's statement. Agencies can't discipline their employees for declining to talk to their coworkers about their religious views.

The statement represents the latest effort of the six-month-old Republican Trump administration to expand the role of religion in the federal workplace. Courts have long held that employers cannot suppress all religious expression in the workplace, but can lawfully curb conduct that is disruptive or imposes an undue hardship as long as it applies equally to members of any religion.

The U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protects individuals' rights to practice their religion while preventing the government from favoring one religion or another or religion in general. OPM in mid-July said agency workers can get permission to work from home or adjust their hours to accommodate religious prayers, after previously

demanding that workers report to offices fulltime.

The new statement cites President Donald Trump's February executive order calling on agencies to eliminate the "anti-Christian weaponization of government." That order directs cabinet secretaries to identify federal actions hostile to Christians. Trump has embraced the conservative Christian world view and promoted policies that speak to concerns that their religious liberty is under attack.

Federal employees can also set up prayer groups in the workplace, so long as they don't meet during work hours, Kupor's statement said. The memo references Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a law that prohibits workplace discrimination based on a person's religion or religious practices. Kupor in the memo said that means the law requires employers to allow workers to proselytize, organize prayer groups on non-working time, and display religious icons.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces Title VII, has said that proselytizing in the workplace can amount to unlawful religious harassment if it is unwelcome and is so severe or pervasive that it creates a hostile or abusive work environment. "A consensual conversation about religious views, even if quite spirited, does not constitute harassment if it is not unwelcome," the agency said in a 2008 guidance document.

Pro-Ukrainian hackers claim massive cyberattack on Russia's Aeroflot

MOSCOW--Russian airline Aeroflot was forced to cancel more than 50 round-trip flights on Monday, disrupting travel across the world's biggest country, as two pro-Ukraine hacking groups claimed to have inflicted a crippling cyberattack.

The Kremlin said the situation was worrying, and lawmakers described it as a wake-up call for Russia. Prosecutors confirmed the disruption at the national flag carrier was caused by a hack and opened a criminal investigation.

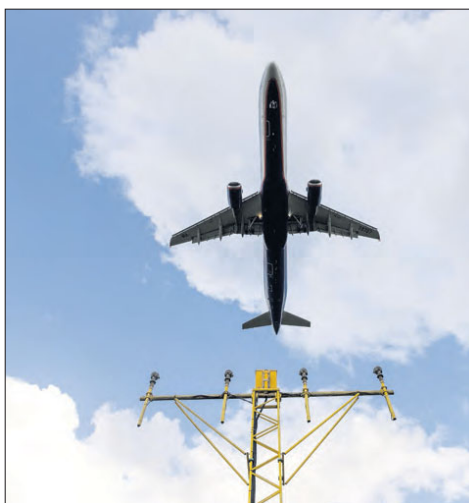
Senior lawmaker Anton Gorelkin said Russia was under digital attack. "We must not forget that the war against our country is being waged on all fronts, including the digital one. And I do

not rule out that the 'hacktivists' who claimed responsibility for the incident are in the service of unfriendly states," Gorelkin said in a statement.

Another member of parliament, Anton Nemkin, said investigators must identify not only the attackers but "those who allowed systemic failures in protection."

Aeroflot did not say how long the problems would take to resolve, but departure boards at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport turned red as flights were cancelled at a time when many Russians take their holidays. The company's shares were down by 3.9% by 1533 GMT, underperforming the wider market, which was 1.3% lower.

A statement purporting to be from a hacking group



An Aeroflot passenger plane descends before landing at the Sheremetyevo international airport outside Moscow, Russia, in this file photo.

called Silent Crow said it had carried out the operation together with Belarusian Cyberpartisans, a self-styled hacktivist group that opposes president Alexander Lukashenko and says it wants to liberate Belarus from dictatorship. "Glory to Ukraine! Long live Belarus!" said the statement in the name of Silent Crow.

Belarusian Cyberpartisans said on its website: "We are helping Ukrainians in their fight with the occupier, carrying out a cyber strike on Aeroflot and paralysing the largest airline in Russia."

There was no immediate comment from Ukraine. Silent Crow has previously claimed responsibility for attacks this year on a Russian real estate database, a state

telecoms company, a large insurance firm, the Moscow government's IT department and the Russian office of South Korean carmaker KIA. Some of those resulted in big data leaks.

"The information that we are reading in the public domain is quite alarming. The hacker threat is a threat that remains for all large companies providing services to the population," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Aeroflot said it had cancelled 54 round-trip flights but planned to operate the remaining 206 out of a total of 260 scheduled for Monday. An online departure board for Sheremetyevo airport showed dozens of flights were delayed by hours.

Firefighters battle blazes in Turkey, Greece and Albania

ATHENS--Firefighters battled on Monday to put out wildfires in three separate provinces of Turkey, in Greece and near a tourist resort in Albania, stoked by strong winds after days of searing heat across the Mediterranean region.

Smoke billowed over the mountainous Black Sea province of Karabuk, 200 kilometres (125 miles) north of the capital Ankara, as a wildfire which raged for a sixth day forced the evacuation of more than a dozen villages and burnt swathes of forests.

In the northwestern province of Bursa, three firefighters were killed on

Sunday when their vehicle crashed, Turkey's Forestry Ministry said on Monday. Crews fought two separate blazes there on Monday, following the evacuation of more than 3,600 people from settlements in the southern provinces of Mersin and Antalya.

Turkey has suffered dozens of wildfires in recent weeks as temperatures have soared, and 10 firefighters were killed last week battling a blaze in the central Eskisehir province.

Hot and dry summers are common in the Mediterranean region, but more intense heatwaves have

contributed to destructive wildfires in recent years amid fast-rising temperatures across the globe. At least 44 wildfires broke out in Greece in the past 24 hours, the fire brigade said on Monday afternoon.

On the southern Greek island of Kythera, strong winds rekindled a blaze burning since Saturday. In Athens, firefighters quickly contained a fire that broke out at the foot of Mount Hymettus, near a university campus and densely populated suburbs.

In Albania, over 900 firefighters assisted by the army battled to control a wildfire before it reached



A drone view shows damaged cars near a burned workshop following wildfires in the village of Buchinci, near Skopje, North Macedonia on Monday.

the seaside city of Saranda and other tourist resorts in the south of the country on the Ionian coast. Some 13 people have been arrested for arson-related offences in the past three days, po-

lice said.

Bulgaria, assisted by several European countries, deployed firefighting planes to help tame a large wildfire near the Bulgarian-Turkish border. So far,

the flames have scorched about 16,000 acres in total. Two people have been detained by authorities investigating the cause of the fires, according to local media.



Emergency personnel work in a flooded area of the town of Brosteni in Suceava county, Romania, in this handout image released on Monday.

Floods in Romania kill 3, hundreds evacuated

BUCHAREST--Severe overnight floods in eastern Romania killed three elderly people and damaged thousands of homes, with hundreds of people evacuated and four helicopters searching for stranded villagers, officials said on Monday.

Some 25 villages across nine counties were affected by heavy rain and high winds, which tore off roofs and uprooted trees, blocking traffic on some national roads, ac-

cording to the emergency response agency. It released footage showing wooden houses and cars swept away by the floodwaters, with rescue workers checking vehicles for potential victims.

The worst hit were Neamt and Suceava counties in eastern Romania, where two rivers burst their banks, killing a 66-year-old man and forcing hundreds of people to evacuate. All access roads to the village of Brosteni

in Suceava county were blocked.

The emergency response agency later said that two women, an 85- and an 83-year-old, were also victims of the flood. Firefighters had to use an excavator to retrieve one of the bodies from a riverbed. The Environment Ministry's water management agency said some rivers rose to record high water levels. Repair works on collapsed bridges were underway, it said.

Trump says many are starving in Gaza, vows to set up food centres

CAIRO/GENEVA--U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday many people were starving in Gaza and suggested Israel could do more on humanitarian access, as Palestinians struggled to feed their children a day after Israel declared steps to improve supplies.

As the death toll from two years of war in Gaza nears 60,000, a growing number of people are dying from starvation and malnutrition, Gaza health authorities say, with images of starving children shocking the world and fueling international criticism of Israel over sharply worsening conditions.

Describing starvation in Gaza as real, Trump's assessment put him at odds with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said on Sunday "there is no starvation in Gaza" and vowed to fight on against the Palestinian militant group Hamas - a statement he reposted on X on Monday. However, Netanyahu later on Monday described the situation in Gaza as "difficult", saying

his country was working to ensure aid delivery to the besieged strip.

"Israel will continue to work with international agencies as well as the U.S. and European nations to ensure that large amounts of humanitarian aid flows into the Gaza Strip," Netanyahu said, according to a statement from his office.

Trump, speaking during a visit to Scotland, said Israel has a lot of responsibility for aid flows, and that a lot of people could be saved. "You have a lot of starving people," he said.

"We're going to set up food centres," with no fences or boundaries to ease access, Trump said. The U.S. would work with other countries to provide more humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza, including food and sanitation, he said. A White House spokesperson said additional details on the food centres would be "forthcoming."

On Monday, the Gaza health ministry said at least 14 people had died in the

past 24 hours of starvation and malnutrition, bringing the war's death toll from hunger to 147, including 88 children, most in just the last few weeks.

Israel announced several measures over the weekend, including daily humanitarian pauses to fighting in three areas of Gaza, new safe corridors for aid convoys, and air-drops. The decision followed the collapse of ceasefire talks on Friday.

Wessal Nabil from Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza described the struggle of trying to feed her three children. "When you go to bed hungry, you wake up hungry. We distract them with anything ... to make them calm down," she told Reuters. "I call on the world, on those with merciful hearts, the compassionate, to look at us with compassion, to be kind to us, to stand with us until aid comes in and ensure it reaches us."

Two Israeli defence officials said the international pressure prompted the new Israeli measures, as did the worsening conditions on the



A Palestinian youth holds a can of chickpeas from an aid package dropped from an airplane, amid a hunger crisis, in Zawayda, in the central Gaza Strip, on Monday.

ground.

U.N. agencies said a long-term and steady supply of aid was needed. The World Food Programme said 60 trucks of aid had been dispatched - short of target. Almost 470,000 people in Gaza are enduring famine-like conditions, with 90,000 women and children in need of specialist nutrition treatments, it said.

"Our target at the moment, every day is to get 100 trucks into Gaza," WFP Regional Director for the Middle East,

North Africa and Eastern Europe, Samer AbdelJaber, told Reuters.

Jan Egeland, head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, told Reuters the situation is catastrophic. "At this time, children are dying every single day from starvation, from preventable disease. So time has run out."

Netanyahu has denied any policy of starvation towards Gaza, saying aid supplies would be kept up whether Israel was negotiating a ceasefire or fighting. A spokesper-

son for COGAT, the Israeli military aid coordination agency, said Israel had not placed a time limit on the humanitarian pauses in its military operation, a day after U.N. aid chief Tom Fletcher said Israel had decided "to support a one-week scale-up of aid".

"We hope this pause will last much longer than a week, ultimately turning into a permanent ceasefire," Fletcher's spokesperson, Eri Kaneko, said on Monday.

Viral 'honour' killing in southwest Pakistan triggers national outrage

KARACHI--A viral video of the "honour killing" of a woman and her lover in a remote part of Pakistan has ignited national outrage, prompting scrutiny of long-standing tribal codes and calls for justice in a country where such killings often pass in silence.

While hundreds of so-called honour killings are reported in Pakistan each year, often with little public or legal response, the video of a woman and man accused of adultery being taken to the desert by a group of men to be killed has struck a nerve.

The video shows the woman, Bano Bibi, being handed a Koran by a man identified by police as her brother. "Come walk seven steps with me, after that you can shoot me," she says, and she walks forward a few feet and stops with her back to the men.

The brother, Jalal Satazkai, then shoots her three times and she collapses. Seconds later he shoots and kills the man, Ehsan Ullah Samalani, whom Bano was accused of having an affair with.

Once the video of the killings in Pakistan's Balochistan province went viral, it brought swift government action and condemnation from politicians, rights groups and



Policewomen escort Gul Jan Bibi (C), mother of Bano Bibi, who along with a man was killed after being accused of having an affair, in a so-called honour killing after a video showing the couple being shot went viral on social media, at a local court in Quetta, Pakistan July 26, 2025.

clerics. Civil rights lawyer Jibril Nasir said, though, the government's response was more about performance than justice.

"The crime occurred months ago, not in secrecy but near a provincial capital, yet no one acted until 240 million witnessed the killing on camera," he said. "This isn't a response to a crime. It's a response to a viral moment."

Police have arrested 16 people in Balochistan's Nasirabad district, including a tribal chief and the woman's mother. The mother, Gul Jan Bibi, said the killings were carried out by family and local elders based on "centuries-old Baloch traditions", and not on the orders of the tribal chief.

"We did not commit any sin," she said in a video statement that also went viral.

"Bano and Ehsan were killed according to our customs."

She said her daughter, who had three sons and two daughters, had run away with Ehsan and returned after 25 days. Police said Bano's younger brother, who shot the couple, remains at large.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said it was a "test" case and vowed to dismantle the illegal tribal courts operating outside the

law. Police had earlier said a jirga, an informal tribal council that issues extrajudicial rulings, had ordered the killings.

The video sparked online condemnation, with hashtags like #JusticeForCouple and #HonourKilling trending. The Pakistan Ulama Council, a body of religious scholars, called the killings "un-Islamic" and urged terrorism charges against those involved.

Dozens of civil society members and rights activists staged a protest on Saturday in the provincial capital Quetta, demanding justice and an end to parallel justice systems. "Virality is a double-edged sword," said Arsalan Khan, a cultural anthropologist and professor who studies gender and masculinity. "It can pressure the state into action, but public spectacle can also serve as a strategy to restore ghairat, or perceived family honour, in the eyes of the community."

Pakistan outlawed honour killings in 2016 after the murder of social media star Qandeel Baloch, closing a loophole that allowed perpetrators to go free if they were pardoned by family members. Rights groups say enforcement remains weak, es-

pecially in rural areas where tribal councils still hold sway.

"In a country where conviction rates often fall to single digits, visibility - and the uproar it brings - has its advantages," said constitutional lawyer Asad Rahim Khan. "It jolts a complacent state that continues to tolerate jirgas in areas beyond its writ."

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported at least 405 honour killings in 2024. Most victims are women, often killed by relatives claiming to defend family honour.

Khan said rather than enforcing the law, the government has spent the past year weakening the judiciary and even considering reviving jirgas in former tribal areas. "It's executive inaction, most shamefully toward women in Balochistan," Khan said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in recent months has asked senior ministers to evaluate proposals to revive jirgas in Pakistan's former tribal districts, including potential engagement with tribal elders and Afghan authorities. The Prime Minister's Office and Pakistan's information minister did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Ceasefire takes effect between Thailand and Cambodia after five-day border battle

BANGKOK/PHNOM PENH--A ceasefire between Cambodia and Thailand came into effect at midnight on Monday, hours after they agreed to halt their deadliest conflict in more than a decade following five days of intense fighting that displaced over 300,000 people.

After efforts by Malaysia, chair of the ASEAN regional bloc, the United States and China to bring both sides to the table, the two countries' leaders agreed during talks in Putrajaya to end hostilities, resume direct communications and create a mechanism to implement the ceasefire.

"This is a vital first step towards de-escalation and the restoration of peace and security," Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim earlier told a press conference, flanked by the Thai and Cambodian leaders, following more than two hours of talks at his residence in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

At least 38 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in clashes in multiple locations along their 800 km (500 miles) border since fighting between the two Southeast Asian neighbours erupted on July 24. There were no official reports of unrest from either side in the hours leading up to the ceasefire taking effect.



Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim looks on as Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thailand's acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai take part in mediation talks on the Thailand-Cambodia border conflict, in Putrajaya, Malaysia on Monday.

The truce talks followed a sustained peace push by Anwar and U.S. President Donald Trump's phone calls to both leaders at the weekend, where he said he would not conclude trade deals with them if fighting continued. Both sides face a tariff of 36% on their goods in the U.S., their biggest export market.

Trump in a post on Truth Social on Monday congratulated all parties and said he had spoken to the leaders of Thailand and Cambodia and instructed his trade team to restart negotiations. "By ending this

War, we have saved thousands of lives ... I have now ended many Wars in just six months — I am proud to be the President of PEACE!" Trump said.

The two countries have wrangled for decades over border territory and have been on a conflict footing since the killing of a Cambodian soldier in a skirmish late in May, which led to a troop buildup on both sides and a full-blown diplomatic crisis that brought Thailand's fragile coalition government to the brink of collapse. They accuse each other of starting the fighting

last week that within hours escalated from small arms fire to heavy artillery and rockets and Thailand's unexpected scrambling of an F-16 fighter jet to carry out airstrikes.

Thai acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayacha praised Trump for pushing the peace effort and said trade negotiations would start from a good place. "I thanked him from my heart for what we received from him and helped our country move beyond this crisis," he told reporters on his return from Malaysia after speaking to Trump. "After today

the situation should de-escalate."

Simmering tensions boiled over last week after Thailand recalled its ambassador to Phnom Penh and expelled Cambodia's envoy, in response to a second Thai soldier losing a limb to a landmine that Bangkok alleged Cambodian troops had laid. Cambodia has strongly denied the charge, as well as Thai accusations that it has fired at civilian targets including schools and hospitals. It had accused Thailand of "unprovoked and premeditated military aggression."

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in a statement said he and Trump expected all sides to "fully honour their commitments to end this conflict."

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said his Thai counterpart had played a positive role and he deeply appreciated Trump's "decisive mediation" and China's constructive participation. In social media posts, Hun Manet said he had returned to Cambodia "with brilliant results" and had spoken with Trump, who expressed a desire for lasting peace.

The fighting has scarred border communities on both sides. In Thailand's Sisaket province, a house was reduced to splintered wood and twisted beams after it was struck by artillery

fire from Cambodia. The roof had caved in, windows hung by the frame and power lines drooped over the structure.

Amid the din of occasional artillery fire, homes and shops remained shut and a four-lane road was deserted except for a few cars and military vehicles. Dozens of displaced residents lined up quietly for their evening meal at an evacuation centre about 40 km away from the frontlines. A few children played with dogs, others swept the dusty floor.

Fifty-four-year-old Nong Ngarmrsi just wanted to go back to her village. "I want to go to my children who stayed back," she said. "I want them to cease firing so that I can go home."

North Korea says Trump must accept new nuclear reality

SEOUL--North Korea said on Tuesday the United States must accept that reality has changed since the countries' summit meetings in the past, and no future dialogue would end its nuclear programme, state media KCNA reported.

Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un who is believed to speak for her brother, said she conceded that the personal relationship between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump "is not bad."

But if Washington intended to use a personal relationship as a way to end the North's nuclear weapons programme, the effort would only be the subject of "mockery," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by KCNA.

"If the U.S. fails to accept the changed reality and persists in the failed past, the DPRK-U.S. meeting will remain as a 'hope' of the U.S. side," she said. DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea's capabilities as a nuclear weapons state and the geopolitical environment have radically changed since Kim and Trump held talks three times during the U.S. president's first term, she said. "Any attempt to deny the position of the DPRK as a nuclear weapons state ... will be thoroughly rejected," she said.

North Korea calls South's peace overtures 'great miscalculation'

SEOUL--North Korea has no interest in any policy or proposals for reconciliation from South Korea, the powerful sister of its leader Kim Jong Un said on Monday, in the first response to peace overtures by the South's liberal President Lee Jae Myung.

There had been cautious optimism in the South that the North might respond positively and even show willingness to return to dialogue after Pyongyang also shut off its propaganda loudspeakers, a move that Lee said came sooner than expected.

Kim Yo Jong, a senior official of North Korea's ruling party who is believed to speak for its leader, said Lee's pledge of commitment to the South Korea-U.S. security alliance showed he was no different from his hostile pre-

decessor. "If South Korea expects to reverse all the consequences of (its actions) with a few sentimental words, there could be no greater miscalculation than that," Kim said in comments carried by the official KCNA news agency.

Lee, who took office on June 4 after winning a snap election following the removal of hardline conservative Yoon Suk Yeol over a failed attempt at martial law, has vowed to improve ties with Pyongyang that had reached their worst level in years. Among gestures to ease tension, Lee suspended loudspeaker broadcasts blasting anti-North propaganda across the border and banned the balloon drops of leaflets by activists that had angered Pyongyang.

Kim, the North Korean official, called those moves



Troops march during a parade commemorating the anniversary of the Korean War armistice in Pyongyang, North Korea, July 27, 2025 in this picture released by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency.

merely a reversal of ill-intentioned activities South Korea should never have initiated. "In other words, it's not even something worth our assessment," she said. "We again make clear the official position that whatever policy is established in Seoul or proposal is made, we are not interested, and we will not

be sitting down with South Korea and there is nothing to discuss."

Following the KCNA comments on Monday, Lee said it was important to restore trust between the neighbours. South Korea's Unification Ministry, charged with handling ties between the two countries, said Kim Yo Jong's comments "show

the wall of distrust between the South and the North is very high as a result of hostile and confrontational policy over the past few years."

South Korea will keep up efforts for reconciliation and cooperation with the North, ministry spokesperson Koo Byoung-sam told a briefing.



Prada accessories are displayed at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City, U.S., July 24, 2025.

Trump's tariffs will be test of luxury brands' pricing power

PARIS/NEW YORK—Luxury goods companies were spared their worst case scenario in Sunday's EU-U.S. trade deal but they face a delicate balancing act as already weak consumer demand tests their ability to raise prices further. Big labels like Chanel and LVMH's Louis Vuitton and Dior have relied on dramatic price increases in recent years to drive a chunk of their profit growth.

Jacques Roizen, managing director, China, at Digital Luxury Group, said the deal struck by U.S. President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Sunday, imposing a 15% tariff on EU goods, brings much needed certainty to luxury's key U.S. market. Yet, "brands are treading carefully with further price hikes to avoid alienating younger and occasional shoppers," he said.

Although baseline duties are below a hefty 30% levy that Trump had threatened just a couple of weeks ago, they are a far cry from the zero-for-zero tariff deal Brussels was hoping to clinch. Fresh tariffs also come as the luxury goods industry is counting on the U.S. as former growth engine China sputters and sales globally are in decline.

"Tariffs are definitely going to affect my buying behaviour, depending on the rate of the tariff. I would think twice before I just pick things up," said Abida Taher, a 53-year-old physician who was out shopping at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City last week and likes Valentino among other Italian and French brands.

Bernard Arnault, chairman and CEO of French luxury giant LVMH, embarked on an

intense lobbying campaign with EU leaders to ease tensions with the Trump administration and last week announced plans for a new Louis Vuitton factory in Texas. Such a move, however, would be too complicated and costly for most European brands - involving the transfer of local skills that take years to build up, industry experts caution.

Some high end labels say they will be able to draw on pricing power to offset the cost of tariffs, but analysts and industry practitioners warn some players have limited wiggle room after a series of outsized price tag hikes. Big luxury companies profited from a rebound of consumer demand after the pandemic, hiking prices by 33% on average between 2019 and 2023, according to RBC estimates. The price tag of Chanel's classic quilted flap bag more than tripled between 2015 and 2024, while the Lady Dior bag and Louis Vuitton Keepall travel bag more than doubled, according to UBS analysts.

Half of the luxury industry's sales growth came from price hikes in the four years from 2019, compared to a third between 2016 and 2023, UBS analysts said. Yet the sector lost 50 million customers last year, according to consultancy Bain, as economic pressures and price fatigue dampened appetite for designer clothing and handbags.

Brands that got the pricing balance wrong are the ones struggling more today, said Flavio Cereda, who manages GAM's Luxury Brands investment strategy. "The significant deceleration in momentum, uneven as it was, is a natural consequence of a period of excess," said Cereda.

Visa, Mastercard set for higher profits

NEW YORK—Visa and Mastercard are expected to report higher quarterly profits this week on steady consumer spending, and analysts will scrutinize how demand for travel and discretionary purchases is shaping up in the face of tariff uncertainty.

The results from the world's biggest payment processors will help flesh out the broader financial outlook that major banks such as JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo presented earlier this month, signaling a resilient consumer.

"Visa and Mastercard remain top ideas, particularly in an uncertain macro environment, given their broad-based exposure to discretionary and non-discretionary spend, geographic reach, and proven ability to stabilize their expense increase in downturns," Oppenheimer analysts said in a note.

Billions of people worldwide use Visa and Mastercard for their everyday

spending and other purchases, making the card networks better equipped to weather downturns. They also have more expense flexibility to support profit growth.

In recent years, the companies have diversified their business model by building out value-added services such as threat intelligence and fraud reduction. Still, some analysts expect a potential spending slowdown in the back half of 2025. Cross-border travel, a high-margin business for payments companies, has come under some pressure due to trade tensions and geopolitical risks.

Slower travel from Canada to the U.S. and fresh tensions in the Middle East in June have raised concerns over a potential drag on growth. Analysts will also examine whether elevated volumes are being driven by a pull-forward in spending, as consumers pre-purchase goods they expect to get costlier after tariffs are

imposed.

In the second quarter, total card spending volumes modestly increased across bank issuers. Across credit and debit cards, Bank of America showed an increase of 110 basis points, while JPMorgan Chase showed a 40 bps rise, according to data compiled by RBC Capital Markets.

"On balance and relative to expectations, data seems neutral for the networks and acquirers, considering overall spending trends appear at least stable compared to last quarter's growth, which we think should be good enough considering the macroeconomic volatility since last quarter's earnings," J.P. Morgan analysts said in a note.

Investors will also zero in on the forecast around stablecoins. While both the card giants plan to launch products linked to the cryptocurrency, the recent passing of the Genius Act has raised some concern that

stablecoins could eliminate the need for payment intermediaries in the long term.

Visa, the larger of the two by market value, will announce quarterly results after markets close on Tuesday, while Mastercard will report on Thursday.

Trump eyes 'world tariff' of 15-20% for most countries

TURNBERRY, Scotland—President Donald Trump said on Monday most trading partners that do not negotiate separate trade deals would soon face tariffs of 15% to 20% on their exports to the United States, well above the broad 10% tariff he imposed in April.

Trump told reporters his administration will notify some 200 countries soon of their new "world tariff" rate. "I would say it'll be somewhere in the 15 to 20% range," Trump told reporters, sitting alongside British Prime Minister Keir Starmer at his luxury golf resort in Turnberry, Scotland. "Probably one of those two numbers."

Trump, who has vowed to end decades of U.S. trade deficits by imposing tariffs on nearly all trading partners, has already announced higher rates of up to 50% on some countries, including Brazil, starting on Friday. The announcements have spurred feverish negotiations by a host of countries seeking lower tariff rates, including India, Pakistan, Canada, and Thailand, among others.

The U.S. president on Sunday clinched a huge trade deal with the European Union that includes a 15% tariff on most EU goods, \$600 billion of investments in the U.S. by European firms, and \$750 billion in energy purchases over the next three years. That followed a \$550-billion deal with Japan last week and smaller agreements with Britain, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Other talks are ongoing, including with India, but prospects have dimmed for many more agreements before Friday, Trump's deadline for deals before higher rates take effect.



Aluminum cans are shown during a production run before being filled with craft beer at Black Plague Brewery in Oceanside, California, U.S., March 14, 2025.

Canada-US trade talks are at an intense phase, some tariffs likely, says Carney

OTTAWA—Talks between Canada and the United States on a trade deal are at an intense phase, Prime Minister Mark Carney told reporters on Monday, reiterating that an agreement without any tariffs at all was unlikely.

The two sides are working towards an agreement by August 1, the date U.S. President Donald Trump is threatening to impose a 35% tariff on some Canadian imports. "The nego-

tiations are at an intense phase. It's a complex negotiation ... we will only sign a deal that's the right deal," Carney said.

"There is a landing zone that's possible, but we have to get there, and we'll see what happens," he told a televised press conference in the Atlantic province of Prince Edward Island.

The United States struck a framework trade agreement with the European Union on Sunday, impos-

ing a 15% import tariff on most EU goods.

Carney said earlier this month that Canada - which sends 75% of its exports to the United States - would most likely have to accept some tariffs. "It's improbable that there will be deals without any tariffs at all," he said when asked whether Canada would escape being hit. "But there is a question about the level, there are questions about the size of tariffs."

CLASSIFIEDS

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VACANCIES

Environmental Protection in the Caribbean. IC is seen in a recent Manila report. Send C and contact info or three references to o s epicislands.org. Further information on our website at https://epicislands.org/.

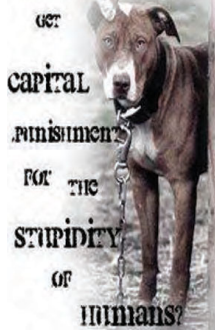
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WHY DO DOGS



How US-EU aerospace rivals united to preserve tariff-free aircraft trade

PARIS--A provisional deal between the United States and European Union to exempt aircraft from tariffs avoids a potential threat to jet production and deliveries in both regions and caps months of uncharacteristic unity among plane-making rivals.

The framework deal, announced on Sunday, will see the U.S. impose a 15% import tariff on most EU goods but offer protection for industries including aerospace, with zero-for-zero tariffs on aircraft and parts, European officials said.

Following intense lobbying, it spares an industry that is often a lightning rod for trade tensions, with the World Trade Organization tested to its limits by a 17-year dispute over Airbus and Boeing subsidies before a truce in 2021. Aircraft, engines, spare parts, and components from landing gear to seats had faced potentially higher costs and some jet deliveries looked set to be disrupted by the threatened U.S. tariffs that would have compounded supply chain problems.

Still, questions remain over detailed implementation of the deal and whether it will extend to other components like space. "We are just waiting until we see these things written down," one European industry official told Reuters.

Airbus said it had taken note of the deal. "A stable and predictable trade environment is essential for our highly integrated global aerospace industry," it said.

Boeing had no immediate comment.

United Campaign

Sunday's agreement follows a discreet and unusually united campaign to revert to a landmark 1979 agreement



A Ryanair Boeing 737 and an EasyJet Airbus A320 are seen at Luton Airport, in Britain, in this file photo.

between over 30 nations that mandated duty-free trading in civil aircraft. An industry that only a few years earlier had torn itself apart over trade disputes on subsidies involving Airbus and Boeing found itself in lockstep on both sides of the Atlantic.

But two terms from the industry's previous trade handbook were quietly dropped, sources said: multilateral and WTO. The 1979 Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft that

eliminated tariffs on aircraft and parts is one of a handful of industry-specific deals that survived from an earlier round of trade talks when the World Trade Organization opened in 1995. U.S. President Donald Trump, who once called the WTO "the single worst trade deal ever made," appears to prefer bilateral deals over broad alliances from trade to security, and "multilateralism" is one of the biggest bugbears of his America First philosophy.

USA CHINA

Continued from page 15.

ly Muslim ethnic minority numbering about 10 million in its northwestern region of Xinjiang. Beijing denies any abuses.

Another bill, co-sponsored by Republican John Curtis of Utah, aims to help Taiwan as the island faces increasing pressure from China. It would support countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that maintain official diplomatic relations with Taiwan and would take other steps to deepen coordination with Taipei.

China claims the democratically governed island as its own and has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. Beijing has stepped up military and political pressure against the island in recent years.

A third bill, co-sponsored by Republican Dan Sullivan of Alaska, seeks to combat "transnational repression" - efforts by any foreign government to reach beyond its own borders to intimidate, harass or harm dissidents, journalists or activists.

trade negotiations. GE's Culp and Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian mentioned the deal as a template to follow.

The agreement stops short of restoring the whole 1979 agreement and focuses on the single largest aerospace markets. Boeing typically delivers 17% of its jets to Europe while Airbus delivers some 12% to the United States, some of which are assembled locally, according to Boeing and Cirium data.

But Europe and the U.S. are each other's largest market for aircraft components, according to French industry lobby Gifas. Although the agreement relieves one significant source of pressure, there are concerns that Boeing, Airbus and their suppliers could still be caught up indirectly in trade tensions between Washington and China, as they seek to do business there.

Aerospace companies are also awaiting findings from an ongoing U.S. trade investigation into aerospace. In May, the U.S. Commerce Department launched a "Section 232" national security investigation into imports of commercial aircraft, jet engines and parts that could form the basis for tariffs or quotas.

U.S. airlines who met the department say much of the focus has been on China and concerns over potential further disruption to key supplies, on top of rare earths and magnets. It could also be used to impose new tariffs on Brazil, home to Embraer, for whose regional jets there are few alternatives.

U.S. carriers currently face 50% tariffs on imports of the jets, which Embraer says could add \$9 million per plane. Alaska Air said last week it could defer some deliveries.

Template For Talks

After the US-UK trade deal, aerospace industry officials urged the White House to use it as a template for future

Brazil coffee growers wary of incoming Trump tariffs

VASSOURAS, Brazil--Coffee growers in Vassouras, in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro state, are hoping for an eleventh-hour reprieve before the country is subject to tariffs of 50% on its exports to the United States.

Earlier this month, U.S. President Donald Trump announced new tariffs, which included raising duties on Brazilian imports to 50% from 10%, effective August 1. Producers of coffee and other goods hope a solution can be found before then.

"Brazil is the largest producer and exporter (of coffee)

in the world," coffee farmer Thiago Garcia told Reuters at his farm in Vassouras.

Around a third of the coffee consumed in the U.S., the world's largest drinker of the beverage, comes from Brazil, which has in recent years been shipping about 8 million 60-kilogram bags (132 pounds) a year there, according to industry groups. "There will be a surplus of coffee here in Brazil and the tendency is for (the price) to decrease, until they find another way to export to other countries," Garcia said.



A worker checks roasted coffee beans at a farm near Brasilia, Brazil July 15, 2025.

EU's pledge of \$250 billion-per-year spending on US energy is unrealistic

BRUSSELS/HOUSTON-

The European Union's pledge to buy \$250 billion of U.S. energy supplies per year is unrealistic because it would require the redirection of most U.S. energy exports towards Europe and the EU has little control over the energy its companies import.

The U.S. and EU struck a framework trade deal on Sunday, which will impose 15% U.S. tariffs on most EU goods. The deal included a pledge for the EU to spend \$250 billion annually on U.S. energy - imports of oil, liquefied natural gas and nuclear technology - for the next three years.

Total U.S. energy exports to all buyers worldwide in 2024 amounted to \$318 billion, U.S. Energy Information Administration data showed. Of that, the EU imported a combined \$76 billion of U.S. petroleum, LNG and solid fuels such as coal in 2024, according to Reuters' calculations based on Eurostat data.

More than tripling those imports was unrealistic, analysts said. Arturo Regalado, senior LNG analyst at Kpler, said the scope of the energy trade envisioned in the deal "exceeds market realities."

"U.S. oil flows would need to fully redirect towards the EU to reach the target, or the val-

ue of LNG imports from the US would need to increase sixfold," Regalado said.

There is strong competition for U.S. energy exports as other countries need the supplies - and have themselves pledged to buy more in trade deals. Japan agreed to a "major expansion of U.S. energy exports" in its U.S. trade deal last week, the White House said in a statement. South Korea has also indicated interest in investing and purchasing fuel from an Alaskan LNG project as it seeks a trade deal.

Competition for U.S. energy could drive up benchmark U.S. oil and gas prices and encourage U.S. producers to favour exports over domestic supply. That could make fuel and power costs more expensive, which would be a political and economic headache for U.S. and EU leaders.

Neither side has detailed what was included in the energy deal - or whether it covered items such as energy services or parts for power grids and plants. The EU estimates its member countries' plans to expand nuclear energy would require hundreds of billions of euros in investments by 2050. Its nuclear reactor-related imports, however, totalled just 53.3 billion euros in 2024, trade data shows.

The energy pledge reflected the EU's analysis of how much U.S. energy supply it could accommodate, a senior EU official said, but that would depend on investments in U.S. oil and LNG infrastructure, European import infrastructure, and shipping capacity. "These figures, again, are not taken out of thin air. So yes, they require investments," said the senior official, who declined to be named. "Yes, it will vary according to the energy sources. But these are figures which are reachable."

There was no public commitment to the delivery, the official added, because the EU would not buy the energy - its companies would.

Private companies import most of Europe's oil, while a mix of private and state-run companies import gas. The European Commission can aggregate demand for LNG to negotiate better terms, but cannot force companies to buy fuel. That is a commercial decision.

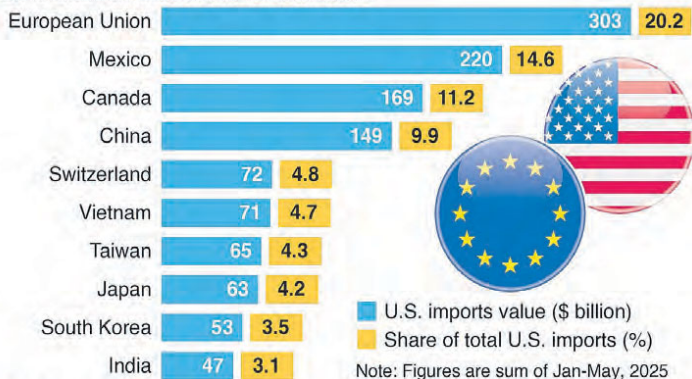
"It's just unrealistic," ICIS analysts Andreas Schröder and Ajay Parmar said in written comments to Reuters. "Either Europe pays a super high non-market reflective price for U.S. LNG or it takes way too much LNG volumes, more than it can cope with."

EU and U.S. agree broad tariff deal

The trade deal ends a months-long standoff between two of the world's biggest economic partners



EU IS BIGGEST SOURCE OF U.S. IMPORTS



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM EU-U.S. TRADE DEAL

- 15% tariffs on most EU goods entering U.S., instead of 30% that had been threatened
- Zero tariffs on certain goods, including aircraft and plane parts, some chemicals and some agricultural products
- EU to boost its investment in U.S. by \$600bn, including purchase of military equipment, and spend \$750bn on U.S. energy
- EU steel and aluminium will continue to face 50% tariff when sold into U.S.

Sources: BBC, Bloomberg

Picture: Getty Images

© GRAPHIC NEWS

Heineken shares slide 8% over tariff uncertainties

LONDON--Dutch brewer Heineken's shares slid over 8% on Monday as a forecast-beating profit rise was eclipsed by investor worries over second-half profits and volumes, which Heineken warned may be softer as tariffs weigh on confidence.

The world's No.2 brewer welcomed a trade deal struck between the European Union and the United States and said on Monday that it was weighing all options to deal with growing tariff challenges in the long term, including shifting manufacturing.

Its shares closed down 8.45% despite a 7.4% rise in first-half profit, above analyst estimates, for which it credited growth in once-difficult regions like Africa and Asia as well as cost savings. Beer sales volumes, however, dipped 1.2%.

Analysts and investors pointed to Heineken's warning that volumes would be softer than ex-

pected for the remainder of the year as U.S. President Donald Trump's trade salvoes disrupt markets in the Americas. A price dispute with retailers meanwhile dented sales in Europe.

The company exports beer, especially its namesake lager, to the U.S. from Europe and Mexico, and has also suffered from the indirect impact on consumer confidence in key markets like Brazil. CEO Dolf van den Brink welcomed the certainty brought by the trade deal clinched on Sunday, which reduced a threatened 30% U.S. tariff on EU goods to 15% - a rate that would still hit Heineken's U.S. profits.

While some in the industry, such as spirits makers, are hopeful for an exemption, this does not appear to be a prospect for beer. All options are being considered to mitigate tariffs long-term, including shifting manufacturing, he said, but added that such moves



Bottles of Heineken beer are displayed in a cooler at a bar in Gurugram, India, November 26, 2024.

were capital intensive and would first need more consistency in policy.

"We look at all options from ... continuing with our current setup, a more hybrid version, or otherwise," he told journalists on a call. "If and when we deem them financially to be

more attractive in the mid-to-long-term, we would for sure explore them."

Heineken still faces U.S. tariffs of up to 30% on products it produces in Mexico unless the Mexican government can reach an agreement with Washington ahead of an August 1

deadline. Executives told journalists that since the first quarter, Heineken has also seen economic uncertainty hit spending and confidence in the U.S., Brazil and Mexico.

In Mexico, remittances from the U.S. have fallen significantly, impacting

beer industry sales. And U.S. Hispanic consumers were also spending less, van den Brink said.

Heineken continues to expect annual profit growth of between 4% and 8%. The company also beat forecasts for second quarter revenue and volume, with growth in markets like Vietnam and India, and increased an annual cost-saving goal by a quarter to 500 million euros (\$586 million).

"They have slightly downgraded their volume guidance," said Ryann Dean, global analyst at Heineken investor Aylett Fund Managers. "Given everything going on in the world... that to me doesn't feel like a terrible outcome."

Heineken's strong growth in markets like India and China, and consistent profitability, more than offset this, he continued, adding that emerging markets would drive Heineken's long-term volume growth.

Donald Trump's yellow brick road doesn't lead to Oz

Kathleen Parker

We owe author L. Frank Baum eternal gratitude for writing "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz". In addition to entertaining generations of children, the story has proved endlessly useful to columnists in search of metaphors.

Let me put it this way: I think Donald Trump is beginning to melt.

It was bound to happen. His near-constant barrage of dubious policies, power grabs and assaults on freedom and liberty have led to his own unraveling. With each new action and reac-

tion, he seems to be pouring buckets of water over his own head.

I know. He's not a witch in the usual sense. Trump has an airplane, not a broom. He has a Secret Service attachment rather than high-stepping Winkies chanting "Oh-Ee-Yah" outside Mar-a-Lago. But he does command an army of flying monkeys, a.k.a. MAGA minions, ICE agents and his inner circle.

In psychology circles, "flying monkeys" is a term often used to describe people who carry out the work of a narcissist/abuser. The narcissist/abuser controls the monkeys by providing something they need emotionally or physically – love-bombing them to secure their fealty. The monkeys aren't inherently evil, just under the Wicked Witch's control.

Clinical psychologist Lauren Kerwin has written that

it can be difficult to recognize a flying monkey, "as they may seem like normal people who are simply taking sides in a disagreement or conflict."

See what I mean about Baum? He foreshadowed everything.

Trump's self-soaking manifested recently in turning against his own, saying that Republicans who demand release of the Jeffrey Epstein files are "stupid."

Then things got worse. Late Wednesday, three House Republicans – Nancy Mace (South Carolina), Scott Perry (Pennsylvania) and Brian Jack (Georgia) – voted with Democrats to subpoena the Justice Department's files on Epstein.

Trump ought to know that when you're the conspirator-in-chief and promise to release the Epstein files upon becoming president but fink out, your co-conspirators are going to conspire right back at you. What's he hiding? How many times does his name appear? What gives?

In fact, Attorney General Pam Bondi reportedly told Trump in May that his name appeared multiple times in the case documents. She said she wouldn't release them because they contain child pornography and personal information about the victims.

Trump attempted to appease his base by saying he'd get the grand jury records released in the case. But a Florida federal judge nixed that, saying that the public's need to know was inadequate to the greater need to observe rules protecting the records. Nice try.

Then the dam broke. The Justice Department is meeting with Epstein's imprisoned partner-in-crime, Ghislaine Maxwell. And Senator Adam Schiff (Democrat-California) has called on Bondi and FBI Director Kash Patel to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Trump says the Epstein controversy is a "witch hunt." His words.

However the White House may spin these cascading events, we seem to be poised for a Trump meltdown. When narcissists lose control, they often react with rage. Trump is flailing at his perceived enemies, including late-night comedians, who routinely skewer the president for laughs.

"I absolutely love that Colbert got fired," he posted

on Truth Social. "His talent was even less than his ratings." He wrote that next to go would be Jimmy Kimmel and Jimmy Fallon – giving all three men more material than they could ever hope for.

CBS and its parent company, Paramount Global, are ending not just Colbert but also "The Late Show," effective next year. Strictly for financial reasons, they say. This could well be true because nothing is more financial than an \$8.4 billion merger, which Paramount was trying to finalize with Skydance Media, pending regulatory approval from the federal government, which the FCC provided Thursday night.

The timing of Colbert's firing came just three days after the comedian called CBS's \$16 million settlement with Trump in his election interference lawsuit against "60 Minutes" "a big fat bribe" to secure approval of its merger. But, sure, there probably was no connection.

"I hope I played a major part in it!" Trump crowed on Truth Social.

Into this noisy fray stepped Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard on Wednesday with a barely-noticed news conference announcing that a GOP report had found that former president Barack Obama had led a "years-long coup and treasonous conspiracy against the American people." Wow. The Justice Department has formed a task force to examine Trump's claims that Obama and his aides ordered an investigation into the 2016 Trump campaign's connections to Russia to try to derail the soon-to-be president.

The thing about Trump's transparently retributive investigations and lawfare is – no damages. He wins lawsuits through intimidation and bullying rather than legal merits. What Obama really did to Trump surpasses the question of Russian interference in the 2016 election, which did happen through hacking and other dastardly deeds, but without effect, according to several other previous reports. As Obama pointed out in a rare response to the Trump allegations, Russian chatbots and other efforts produced no quantifiable effect on votes. But this new attack on Obama most likely goes back to April 2011, when Obama roasted

Trump at the White House correspondents' dinner. I think it's fair to say that Trump hates comedy.

For months leading to Obama's 2008 election to the presidency, Trump had been haranguing Obama about his alleged birth in Kenya, demanding his birth certificate, and Obama decided to return the fun. His monologue was hilarious to everyone except Trump, who, according to his adviser Roger Stone, likely decided in that moment to run for president. I happened to be seated within arm's length of Trump at the table behind him and you could feel the fury building as Obama proceeded to humiliate his future successor. I can't be sure, but I think I saw steam coming from Trump's ears.

In a "Frontline" documentary about then-presidential opponents Obama and Hillary Clinton, "The Choice 2016," which premiered the night after the first presidential debate, Omarosa Manigault, a former contestant on "The Apprentice" and eventually Trump's director of African American outreach, said about the WHCD: "I thought, 'Oh, Barack Obama is starting something that I don't know if he'll be able to finish.'" "Every critic, every detractor, will have to bow down to President Trump," she added. "It's everyone who's ever doubted Donald, whoever disagreed, whoever challenged him – it is the ultimate revenge to become the most powerful man in the universe."

Which is to say, anyone who has trespassed on Trump's fragile ego is forewarned. But surely – surely! – the most powerful man in the universe has more important things to do than punish past transgressors. Trump holds the future in the palm of his hand and has the opportunity to do great things befitting his office and, one hopes, his noblest aspirations. If only he could shed this monkey business and recognize his power to do good. But current events and his history of revenge bode otherwise.

Things didn't end well for the Wicked Witch of the West. As Trump feels threatened by exposure and, possibly, shame, we can expect him to become more frantic, erratic, vengeful and combustible. Tread lightly, my friends – and keep your hoses primed.

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so every row, column and 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

Previous puzzle solution

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

7/29 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆
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- ACROSS**
- Film award
 - Defeat in sports
 - President Gerald
 - Opposite of tight
 - Card game payment
 - Not at home
 - Down in the
 - Apple desktop
 - Take a taxi
 - Photo holder: 2 wds.
 - French port city
 - Took a spill
 - "Butter" band
 - Hockey puck shape
 - Small jeweled crowns
 - Painting or sculpture
 - " does it!"
 - Got ready to pray
 - Farm buildings
 - Colorful card game
 - Lawn-trimming tool
 - French "goodbye"
 - Clothing labels
 - Nest egg option: Abbr.
 - Feast
 - Ear-splitting
 - Pig enclosure
 - "Now hear ___!"
 - Home made of twigs
 - Athlete who cleans and snatches
 - "So be it"
 - In this place
 - Dog-___ page
 - Shoe bottom
 - College freshman, often
 - Cloudless
 - Hang onto
 - Raced
 - Cuddly bear
- DOWN**
- Ancient
 - Minestrone or borscht

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33

34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70

Created by Stella Zawietowski 7/29/25

Monday's Puzzle Solved

W	R	A	T	H	T	U	T	U	A	D	D	S
A	I	M	E	E	A	T	I	T	C	R	E	W
S	T	E	M	S	L	A	T	E	T	A	M	E
H	A	R	P	S	I	C	H	O	R	D	P	O
I	T	E	M	S	U	R	G	E	N	T		
A	R	C	S	A	E	R	O	S	O	L		
P	E	A	G	R	A	D	P	O	R	T	S	
P	A	N	T	E	A	T	I	B	O	R	E	
S	P	O	O	L	S	O	S	A	L	I	N	
C	E	R	E	A	L	T	E	A	M			
A	X	E	F	U	R	T	H	E	R	M	O	R
R	I	N	G	R	A	R	E	R	A	D	A	R
A	L	T	O	A	M	E	N	E	L	E	N	A
T	E	S	T	L	I	E	S	D	E	L	T	S

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- "Garfield" or "Peanuts": 2 wds.
- Group for pet lovers: Abbr.
- Took a time-out
- Animal's den
- "My treat!": 2 wds.
- Employees
- Top-___ information
- Acreage for growing crops
- Boo-boo
- "Awesome!"
- Easter egg coloring
- Pound, yard, or hour
- Identically
- Kiddie-lit elephant
- Swap
- Close up
- Ear passage
- Formally enrolled
- Phone notification
- Get sidetracked
- Neighbor of Ghana
- Tidied up
- Raw fish dish
- Gymnast Lee
- Ballerina's stockings
- Flaw
- Rams and ewes
- Opposite of fresh
- "___, I'll be!"
- Maple or magnolia
- Loan
- Enjoy a magazine
- Cigar residue
- Cow's sound
- Moisture-free

Trump refuses to be restrained by isolationists

By Marc A. Thiessen

The neo-isolationist right does not like being called isolationist, a term they know is sullied in the American psyche by its association with the 1940s isolationists who fought to keep the United States out of World War II. So, they are coming up with new euphemisms to describe their noninterventionist approach to the world.

They now want to be called “restrainers.” The restrainers don’t want to retreat from the world, they claim; they simply want to restrain the use of force, the growth of U.S. military spending and U.S. security commitments abroad.

But their moniker begs a question: Who, exactly, are the restrainers seeking to restrain?

Answer: Donald Trump. Unfortunately for them, six months into his second presidency, Trump is proving to be quite unrestrainable.

The restrainers did not want Trump to bomb the Houthis in Yemen, arguing the terrorist attacks on ships and tankers crossing the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden were primarily a European problem. They would have effectively continued the feckless policies of President Joe Biden, who allowed these terrorist proxies of Iran to fire with virtual impunity more than

140 times at merchant vessels and 174 times at U.S. warships.

Trump was having none of it. “The Houthi attack on American vessels will not be tolerated,” he declared on Truth Social. He warned the Houthis, “YOUR TIME IS UP, AND YOUR ATTACKS MUST STOP, STARTING TODAY. IF THEY DON’T, HELL WILL RAIN DOWN UPON YOU LIKE NOTHING YOU HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE!” And he warned Iran that “Support for the Houthi terrorists must end IMMEDIATELY! Do NOT threaten the American People, their President, who has received one of the largest mandates in

Presidential History, or Worldwide shipping lanes. If you do, BEWARE, because America will hold you fully accountable and, we won’t be nice about it!”

When the Houthis failed to comply, Trump launched a 51-day military campaign, during which U.S. forces struck more than 1,000 Houthi targets, killed hundreds of Houthi fighters and leaders, and destroyed their headquarters, weapons depots and missiles poised to be launched – until the fighting ended with a ceasefire agreement brokered by Oman.

Not very restrained!

The restrainers also did not want Trump to bomb Iran’s nuclear program,

warning Trump not to listen to the “neocons” and “warmongers” (as Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard put it). Trump ignored their warnings and gave Iran a deadline to peacefully give up its nuclear weapons program.

When it failed to do so, he launched Operation Midnight Hammer, deploying a squadron of B-2 bombers that “obliterated” Iran’s nuclear sites. He warned Iran he would subject its Supreme Leader to “A VERY UGLY AND IGNOMINIOUS DEATH” if they killed a single American in retaliation. And, to the horror of the neo-isolationists, he declared on Truth Social soon after the attack: “It’s not politically correct to use the term, ‘Regime Change,’ but if the current Iranian Regime is unable to MAKE IRAN GREAT AGAIN, why wouldn’t there be a Regime change??? MIGA!!!” Iran backed down. With his decisive action, Trump delivered a devastating setback to Iran’s nuclear ambitions and brought an end to the Iran-Israel war after just 12 days of fighting.

The restrainers also did not want Trump to arm Ukraine. Indeed, restrainers inside the Pentagon suspended U.S. weapons shipments to Ukraine without Trump’s knowledge. They were not paying attention to Trump’s repeated warnings that if Russian leader Vladimir Putin did not agree to his efforts to broker peace, he would give Ukraine more weapons than it has ever received from the U.S. and impose crippling secondary tariffs on all oil coming out of Russia. Now that Putin has rejected Trump’s peace efforts, Trump is delivering on those promises – sending Ukraine advanced U.S.-made weaponry (purchased for Kyiv by European allies), including rockets, artillery and Patriot air defense systems, and giving Putin 50 days to come to the peace table or see his economy crushed.

None of this should come as a surprise. Trump’s second term actions are consistent with his first term record, when he drove the Islamic State from its caliphate, bombed Syria

(twice) for using chemical weapons on its people, gave the green light for the U.S. military to take out hundreds of Wagner Group mercenaries in eastern Syria, launched a cyberattack on Russia targeting St. Petersburg’s Internet Research Agency, armed Ukraine with Javelin anti-tank missiles and killed then-leader of Iran’s Quds Force Qasem Soleimani. Trump is not, and never was, an isolationist.

Neither are his supporters. A CBS News poll finds that 94 percent of self-identified MAGA Republicans support Trump’s strikes on Iran’s nuclear facilities. And 65 percent of Trump voters say they agree with his decision to increase the sale of weapons to Ukraine, while just 22 percent are opposed, according to a new Echelon Insights poll.

This should not be a surprise either. Polling by the Ronald Reagan Institute has consistently shown that MAGA Republicans are more hawkish and supportive of U.S. leadership on the world stage than establishment Republicans: 73 percent of MAGA Republicans want the U.S. to be “more engaged and take the lead” on foreign policy; 74 percent say that “U.S. involvement with international affairs is mostly beneficial for the U.S.”; 84 percent say “the U.S. has a moral obligation to stand up for human rights and democracy whenever possible in international affairs”; 71 percent support “the U.S. responding with military force if a NATO ally in Europe was attacked”; and 73 percent would support “taking military action to defend Taiwan” if China were to attack or blockade the island.

In other words, the “restrainers” are out of step with both Trump and his supporters. They are a tiny minority in the GOP, which has tried to hijack the MAGA movement to advance their neo-isolationist agenda – and are now finding just how isolated they really are. Indeed, the only thing as satisfying as watching Trump exercise bold American leadership on the world stage over the past six months has been watching the isolationists realize that Trump is not one of them.

Dictators win as Trump cuts aid to human rights groups in Cuba, Venezuela

By Andres Oppenheimer

The dictators of Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua are breathing more easily these days. Human rights groups and independent media in their countries are being decimated, courtesy of President Trump’s massive foreign aid cuts to pro-democracy groups abroad.

In the wake of Trump’s July 18 law slashing \$9 billion from foreign aid and public broadcasting, many pro-democracy groups in Latin America are drastically downsizing. Some are considering shutting down altogether, activists tell me.

Trump’s budget cuts stripped \$8 billion from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other organizations that provided foreign assistance. Nearly half of that – \$4 billion – had funded international organizations and pro-democracy groups, countering China and Russia’s outsized cultural and political propaganda programs in developing countries.

If you think that America is spending too much on foreign aid to promote democracy, think again. Trump’s recently passed ‘Big Beautiful’ law injects \$170 billion in new funds – over 4,000% more – to arrest and imprison undocumented immigrants. That includes \$45 billion earmarked for immigration detention centers – critics call them

concentration camps – to keep mostly hard-working undocumented people who have committed no serious crimes.

Many human rights groups in Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador and other countries are now facing “an existential threat” because of U.S. budget cuts, says Juan Pappier, Latin America director at the Human Rights Watch advocacy group. Much of this aid flowed through the International Republican Institute (IRI), a nonprofit group linked to the Republican Party.

But since the start of Trump’s second term, the IRI has had to suspend 92 of 95 programs to defend democracy in authoritarian countries, the Miami Herald reported in March. About 85% of the IRI’s staff have been laid off, and all of its 64 overseas offices have been closed, according to TheHill.com. On Wednesday, the Republican-led House Appropriations Committee approved legislation that could restore some of the foreign aid programs that Trump wants to defund, but the scope and fate of that congressional effort is still unclear.

Laritz Diversent, the U.S.-based executive director of CubaLex, one of Cuba’s best-known human rights groups, told me that “there will be a major weakening of human rights

organizations that are operating in Cuba” as U.S. foreign aid dwindles. Her own group, which gathers data on political prisoners and provides them with legal help, has had to layoff some employees and cut 50% of its contract workers, Diversent told me.

Justicia 11J, another Cuban human rights group, has had to cancel presentations before the United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to denounce the plight of Cuban prisoners. The group helps hundreds of political prisoners arrested during the massive demonstrations of June 11, 2021.

Camila Rodriguez, head of Justicia 11J, told me the group was informed earlier this year it would lose 90% of its U.S. funding for a key project. Later, they were told some aid would be restored, but it’s not clear how much, or when.

Right now, Justicia 11J is operating with a skeleton crew that is doing all of its work on a voluntary basis, Rodriguez said. This has caused “a significant decrease in the production and dissemination of content aimed at documenting and denouncing systematic violations of the right to peaceful protest in Cuba,” she added.

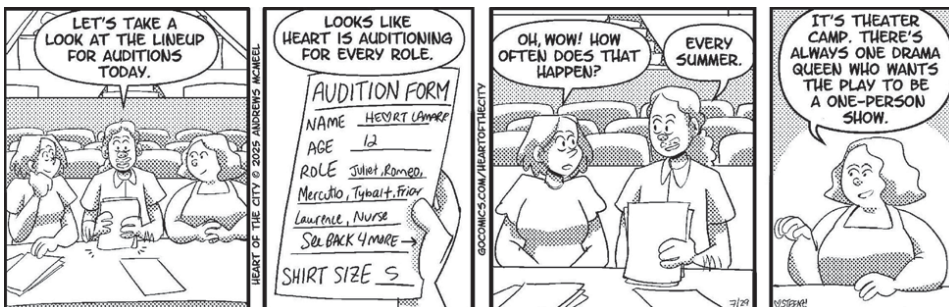
A similar crisis is hitting the Voice of America and independent news websites in Cuba, Venezuela

and Nicaragua, El Salvador and other countries, as their U.S. funds are being cut. In many countries, these websites are the only sources of critical news, and are competing against Russia’s state-run Russia Today en Español and Telesur regional TV network, funded by the Venezuelan and Cuban regimes.

“Trump’s budget cuts to USAID and the Voice of America are manna from heaven for China and Russia,” Arturo Sarukhan, a former Mexican ambassador to the United States, told me. He added, “This withdrawal of U.S. soft power, the abandonment of public diplomacy, and the capacity to counter Russian propaganda in Latin America is an own goal for the United States.”

I agree. Worst of all, these cuts to support human rights groups and independent media in Latin America amount to peanuts compared to the astronomical sums the Trump administration plans to spend arresting mostly hard-working immigrants who are doing jobs that most Americans won’t do.

Indeed, the dictators of Russia and China, and their allies in Latin America, will have a field day, thanks to Trump’s abrupt end to the post-World War II bipartisan consensus that promoting democracy abroad is a moral duty, and a smart thing to do to keep the U.S. safe.



By Magi Helena

ARIES (March 21-April 19): People may not know how to respond today, or a partner could be more reactive than usual. Take time to deepen your understanding of money; small insights can lead to big shifts. A task may require extra effort.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Share your wisdom generously but be mindful: you might be misunderstood or come across more strongly than intended. A financial windfall could come your way – do the homework and trust your gut.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take time to understand yourself, uniqueness is a strength. Financial growth is possible now, so stay open to opportunity. Avoid digging too deep into old issues today, instead, offer your truth with kindness.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Money may be on your mind, focused research could bring. In your career, consistency is key; steady effort builds momentum. At home, try a fresh approach – small changes can shift the energy in meaningful ways.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Stay in your lane and resist the urge to push your opinions. A partner may offer surprisingly useful ideas. Creative inspiration could arrive unexpectedly, keep your mind open and ready to explore something new and refreshing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Use logic to ease financial discomfort, but back it up with solid research. Your career or sense of purpose can truly flourish now. If possible, carve out time to meditate – it may bring clarity and calm where it's most needed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Try to build some self-care into the day, your wellbeing matters. An old mystery may finally start to make sense, offering relief or insight. If you're single, dating might seem like a rollercoaster, don't settle for less that you deserve.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may come across as both charismatic and trustworthy today. Avoid getting pulled into tension between friends – it's not your battle. Sharpen your focus and stay mentally engaged; clarity and insight can make all the difference.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stay alert for subtle signs and unexpected blessings and let them guide you. Take thoughtful, practical steps in your external world. A partner might offer financial insight worth considering, so keep communication open.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Find calm within – inner peace is the best foundation. Seek out the knowledge that empowers you, don't wait for it to come to you. Show top-tier loyalty where it counts; your consistency will speak louder than words.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Believe in your abilities. Whether you're learning something new or sharing a breakthrough, let it inspire growth. Choose your words with care; thoughtful communication will strengthen your connections and keep your message clear.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Seek clarity on unsettling – don't let confusion linger. Step back from the details and look at the bigger picture. Someone may need your support today, and your presence could mean everything. Financial flow at home may soon ease.



Speak your mind
By Queenie

SEND LETTERS TO
P.O. BOX 828
FAX +721 542 5913
OR E-MAIL
queenie@thedailyherald.com

Dear Queenie,

I have been married for 10 years and all that time my husband has had other women too. If I complain, he says if I don't like it I can leave, but we have 4 children under 10 years old and I only have a part-time job and I don't have any family here to go to.

Now he brought home an STD from one of his outside women and he gave it to me and I can only guess when he'll bring home AIDS! I can't go to Safe Haven because he doesn't beat me up.

Queenie, I don't have any money to leave him. What can I do?—Desperate

Dear Desperate,

First, go to a doctor *at once* to be treated for the STD and tested for AIDS.

Next, make a list of all of his assets: house, car, furniture, bank accounts, *everything*. If (when) you leave him, he will still be responsible for supporting his children and your lawyer will need this information.

Then call the Women's Desk and/or Safe Haven's hotline. Even if Safe Haven won't take you in, they can help you make plans to get away from this abusive man.

There are other kinds of abuse besides physical (beating you). Making a woman live in constant fear of being infected with a fatal disease certainly should qualify as mental and emotional abuse.

Only notices and events of non-profit or educational organisations will be placed in the Events/Notices column. Notices/Events should be sent to notices@thedailyherald.com in the wording format used on this page. Do not send fliers, photos, locked files or press releases to this address.

NOTICES**Prosecutor's Opening Time**

Prosecutor's Office is now open in the morning and afternoon Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 12:30pm and 2:00pm to 4:00pm. During those hours, the public may visit the office to get information, pay fine (by debit/credit cards only), and access other services. The Prosecutor's Office is located on Emmaplein behind Orco Bank (formerly CIBC First Caribbean Bank) and is also reachable via telephone 542-2243 or email infosxm@OMCarib.org

Domain Affairs Walk-ins

The Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure VROMI Domain Affairs Department informs the public that walk-in hours for domain affairs services will be available every Thursday from 9:00am to 11:00am. No appointment is necessary. For more information, contact domainaffairs@sintmaartengov.org or call 542-4292 ext 2425.

Free Senior Yoga

Gentle stretch and breath Senior Yoga, in person, at the Lions Club Commu-

nity Center in Sucker Garden, Mondays and Fridays from 10:00-11:00am. Mats provided. Also, streamed live on Facebook at Yoga with Lisa SXM. For more info contact Lisa at 554-0115 or email davisburnettlisa@gmail.com.

Volunteers Needed

St. Maarten AIDS Foundation is looking for motivated women and men to become facilitators for Girl Power and Real talk workshops. For more information call 523-2626 or 553-2626 or email: coordinatorsxmaidsfoundation@gmail.com

Church Service

Island Church invites you to its Sunday Morning services from 10 to 11 o'clock in the Simpson Bay Resort Conference Center in Pelican Key. Follow us on Facebook at Island Church SXM for the live stream. Visit our website at islandchurchsxm.com. Email: info@islandchurchsxm.com for more information.

Club Meeting

Calling all book lovers, no matter your age or gender! Join The Happy Bookers for laughs, literary love affairs (on the page!), and occasional existential crises disguised as book discussions. They meet once a month to discuss a wide array of books. WhatsApp +590690663716 for more information.

Toastmasters Meets

Creative Intellect Toastmasters meets the first and third Sundays of each month 5:00pm at the John Larmonie Center, Longwall Road 20, Philipsburg, or online via Zoom. For more information about the club, visit Creative Intellect Toastmasters Club on Facebook, email creative.intellect.tmc@gmail.com or calling: 586-5172.

Youth Wing

Persons 13-20 years old are invited to join SAF Youth wing. We organize monthly meetings at the St. Maarten AIDS Foundation office, located in the Sun Building Cole Bay. For more information call 523-2626 or 553-2626 or email: coordinatorsxmaidsfoundation@gmail.com

Volunteers Needed

Animal Defenders SXM could use some volunteers to help feed cats and dogs at several different locations (own transportation is important). We are also looking for help with admin work and creative computer skills. Please call or contact ADS for more information at 553-3116.

Volunteer.sx Registration

St. Maarten Development Fund (SMDF) and Foresee Foundation invite persons and non-profit organisations to register on volunteer.sx to find volunteering opportunities and/or to post volunteer events. To register go to volunteer.sx, follow the sign up process.

Duplicate Bridge

The St. Maarten Duplicate Bridge Club is now meeting Wednesday nights at 7:15pm at La Vista Resort on Billy Folly Road in Pelican Key. Bring a partner for a fun night of bridge. US \$10 per person, coffee and water provided, cash bar. Proof of COVID vaccination is required, masks optional. For information call Jan Peter 520-0594.

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AA Meetings

Al-Anon is a non-profit 12-step programme of men and women who may have a common problem and solution to stop drinking. The support group meets at Red Cross on Airport Boulevard every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:00pm, and on Sundays at Guana Bay Beach (near old restaurant) at 8:30am.

Club Meeting

Elite Soualiga Toastmasters Club meets virtually on Zoom from 2:00 to 3:30pm on the first and fourth Sunday of every month. For more information, please email: elite.soualigatm@gmail.com

Consular Services

The Office of the Honorary Consul of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana operates on Wednesdays from 2:00 to 5:30pm and on Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:30pm by appointment only. For more information call 527-3198, or 527-0704. email: guyanahonoraryconsulsxm@gmail.com, guyanaconsulatesxm@gmail.com

Homework Guidance

Oranje Community School is looking for dynamic youth leaders and homework guidance persons. Pass by the Oranje Community School at 11:00am or call 580-2882.

Positive Thinking

Brahma Kumaris St. Maarten invites persons to its ongoing free meditation and Positive Thinking courses at Raj Yoga Centre, 16 Front Street. Call 524-2554 or 542-0541 for more information.

Club Meeting

Soualiga Corporate Toastmasters Club meets at the new Government Administration Building on the second and fourth Wednesday every month from 5:30 to 7:00pm.

Club Meeting

SXM Achievers Toastmasters Club meets on Zoom every second and fourth Thursday (except on holidays) of the month from 7:30 to 9:00pm. All are welcome to join. Please email sxmachieverspresident@gmail.com for the Zoom meeting details.

Community Service

Is your organization seeking assistance with various tasks such as cleaning, washing, gardening, moving, carpeting, painting, maintenance, and more? Contact the SJIS-Probation Department at 526-4322, 542-3449, or lloyd.beaton@sjis-sxm.org to explore how you can become a community service workplace. This opportunity is available for non-profit community or governmental organizations. Community Service assistance is provided free of charge!

Foster Parents Needed

Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands (FJIWI)/Stichting Justitieel Inrichtingen Bovenwinden (SJIB), is looking for foster parents: Interested persons ages 24-67 can apply. Contact 526-4310.

Volunteers Needed

St. Maarten Animal Welfare Foundation is seeking volunteers for special activities. For more information call 520-8887.

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Juan Fuentes, 90, and Zandra Pedraza, 77, co-founder of Club Tobias, dance during the weekly gathering of the club at a shopping mall, in Caracas, Venezuela July 17, 2025.

Venezuela's seniors find lifeline on the dance floor

CARACAS--In a bustling Caracas shopping mall, the sound of music and laughter signals another meeting of Club Tobias. This is no ordinary social club; it's a lifeline for Venezuelans aged over 60, many of whom live alone after their children and grandchildren emigrated.

Angela Graterol, 93, is a regular. Three of her six children live abroad, one of whom encouraged her to join. She says dancing every Thursday brought her "back to life."

"Music fills me up," she beams. "My feet just start moving on their own."

Graterol is often joined by Juan Fuentes, a 90-year-old retired soldier whose daughter lives in Europe. He walks from his house, where he practices his favourite songs, writing down the lyrics he fears he might forget.

Venezuela is home to an estimated 3.5 million seniors. Nearly 8 million of the country's citizens have left in recent years, according to the UN. "With migration, many

of us seniors are left alone," says Zandra Pedraza, 77, who co-founded the club three years ago to combat loneliness among seniors.

Club Tobias now has 15 locations. Co-founder Jose Rafael Quintana motivates everyone with a simple motto: "If you don't move, you seize up." For Graterol, Fuentes, and hundreds of others, the club is more than just a place to dance; it's a vibrant community that proves a good time has no age limit.

Shaolin Temple's 'CEO monk' probed for embezzlement and relations with women

BEIJING--The abbot of China's famed 1,500-year-old Shaolin Temple is under criminal investigation for alleged embezzlement, "improper relationships" with women and fathering illegitimate children, religious authorities said.

Shi Yongxin, 59, previously a member of China's parliament, is "suspected of criminal offences, misappropriating and embezzling project funds and the temple's assets," the temple said in a statement, adding Shi is under joint investigation by multiple agencies.

Shi could not immediately be reached for comment. The temple did not answer a call from Reuters.

Nicknamed the "CEO monk" and known for his commercial ambitions, Shi

sought to capitalise on the monastery's fame during his decades-long tenure at Shaolin Temple, the fabled birthplace of kung fu and the setting for many martial arts films in the central Chinese province of Henan. Shi has "seriously violated Buddhist precepts, maintained improper relationships with multiple women over a long period of time" and fathered at least one "illegitimate" child, the temple said in its statement released on its social media account on Sunday.

In a statement issued on Monday, the state-supervised Buddhist Association of China said it approved the revoking of Shi's ordination certificate, adding that his "behaviours are extremely deplorable in nature, have seriously damaged the reputation of the Buddhist community and tarnished the image of monks."

In 2015, a letter circulated online accusing Shi of mis-



Buddhist abbot Shi Yongxin, a delegate of the National People's Congress (NPC), walks towards the Great Hall of the People for a plenary meeting of the NPC, China's parliament, in Beijing, China, March 4, 2016.

conduct and improper sexual relations. The temple denied the allegations at the time.

Shi, known as Liu Yingcheng before he became a monk in 1981, has overseen the temple since 1987 and became its abbot in 1999, the temple's website showed. In 2008, the temple opened an online store, offering a range of goods including shoes, tea, T-shirts, and a kung fu instruction manual for 9,999 yuan (\$1,395).

Its business ventures over the years also included book publishing, medicine, kung

fu performances, film production, asset management and real estate.

Shi posted daily on his social media account on Weibo with more than 882,000 followers. Shi was a delegate of

China's rubber-stamp parliament, the National People's Congress, for around two decades until 2018. He has also been deputy head of China's Buddhist association.



TV-CARIB (local)
WTN Channel 010

Tuesday, July 29

8:00am Good Morning Beautiful
9:00am Morning Show (Pearl FM)
12:05pm Viewpoint (PJD2)
5:00pm Animated Kids Program
6:30pm Voice of Our Kids News
7:00pm Special
7:30pm TV-Carib Informer
8:00pm Special
10:00pm Noticias en Español
10:20pm Late Night

Program Rotation



TeleCuraçao
TelTV Channel 035
WTN Channel 202

Tuesday, July 29

6:30am Mòru Bon Dia
9:30am Programa Santísima Trinidad
10:00am Gostoso ku Ulrich
12:00pm Resumen Informativo AIL
12:30pm Extra Journaal
1:00pm Tra'i Mèrdia 3.0
3:30pm Punto Final (r)
5:00pm TCFM Live
6:00pm Bonochi Kòrsou
7:00pm VVRP ta Informa
7:30pm Home Team (r)
8:00pm TeleNotisia
9:00pm Wega di Number Kòrsou
9:10pm Partisipashon di Morto
9:15pm Pagina Sosial
9:30pm Punto Final
10:30pm Music Videos
11:00pm TeleNotisia (r)



ST. MAARTEN
TV15 (local)
TelTV Channel 001

Tuesday, July 29

6:30am TV15 News
7:00am Fashion News
8:00am News and Sports
9:00am Documentary
10:00am DComm Special Program
10:30am SXM Sports
11:00am Late Night
12:00pm Local Entertainment
1:00pm Romance Movies
3:00pm International Entertainment
4:30pm Special Events
6:30pm TV15 News
7:00pm DComm Special Program
7:30pm Sports Report
8:30pm Special Reports
9:00pm Late Night
10:00pm PBS Special/Caribbean Lottery
11:00pm TV15 News
11:30pm Theatre Movies



BVN (Dutch/Flemish) TV
Channel 122 SXM Cable
Channel 204 WTN

Tuesday, July 29

12:00pm NOS Journaal
12:15pm Nederland in Beweging
12:30pm MAX Geheugentrainer
NOS Journaal
1:05pm BinnensteBuiten
1:15pm Tussen Kunst en Kitsch Extra
Hollandse Meesters in de 21e Eeuw
2:00pm NOS Journaal
2:15pm De Geknipte Gast
2:30pm Sesamstraat
2:50pm Sesamstraat 10 voor...
3:05pm Klaas kan alles kort
3:15pm Het Klokhuis
3:30pm NOS Jeugdjournaal
3:50pm NOS Journaal in Makkelijke Taal
4:10pm Gort over de Grens
4:20pm NOS Journaal
5:00pm MAX Skutsje Journaal
5:15pm Expeditie Nederland
5:45pm EenVandaag
6:15pm De Bauers - 20 jaar later
6:40pm NOS Journaal
7:15pm Weerbericht Europa/Afrika
7:40pm Geheimen van het museum
7:45pm Holland drugsland
8:30pm Nieuwsuur
9:10pm Weerbericht Amerika/Caribiën
9:40pm Goedenavond Nederland
9:45pm Avondetappe: Tour de France Femmes
10:35pm NOS Journaal
11:20pm Adieu God?

Edinburgh university confronts slavery links

LONDON--The University of Edinburgh benefited financially from transatlantic slavery and served as a haven for scholars developing racist theories in the 18th and 19th centuries, a review has found.

The review, commissioned in 2021 and published on Sunday, found the university profited from slavery through individual donations to endowments that have funded bursaries, scholarships, chairs and fellowships. Donations were traced to profits made by individuals and industries involved in enslavement through the cultivation, production and sale of colonial commodities, such as tobacco, sugar and cotton.

Edinburgh follows in the footsteps of other UK universities that have acknowledged historical ties to slavery in recent years, including the University of Glasgow, University of Bristol and University

of Cambridge.

Founded in 1583, Edinburgh holds 15 historic endowments linked to African enslavement and 12 tied to British colonialism in India, Singapore, and South Africa. Some remain active, the review said.

"We cannot have a selective memory about our past, focusing only on the historical achievements which make us feel proud," the university's principal Peter Mathieson said. "We are right to address its complexities too."

The report said that between 1750 and 1850 the university served as a "haven" for professors and alumni who promoted ideas of African inferiority and played an "outsized role" in developing racial pseudo-sciences that justified slavery and colonial expansion.

Among the review's recommendations were the creation of a research and community

centre focused on racism, colonialism, and anti-Black violence, and action to address under-representation of Black staff and students, degree awarding disparities and support barriers for those facing racism.

As well as universities, other major UK institutions, such as the Church of England and the Bank of England, have also started to recognise how they benefited from slavery's injustices. Some activists and scholars have criticised such efforts as largely symbolic, arguing that true commitment to addressing historical injustices requires meaningful reparations, not just acknowledgements and reports.

Calls for reparations have been gaining momentum but the backlash against it has also been growing, with critics saying modern institutions should not be held responsible for historical wrongs.



Director Tim Story (Far right) and cast members Pete Davidson, Keke Palmer and Eddie Murphy attend the world premiere for the film "The Pickup" in Los Angeles, California, U.S., July 27, 2025.

Eddie Murphy and Pete Davidson flex comedy muscles in The Pickup

LONDON--Actor-comedians Eddie Murphy and Pete Davidson team up for "The Pickup", a heist movie that sees them sparring as a pair of incompatible armoured truck drivers.

Starring opposite Murphy, 64, was "a bucket list thing" for Davidson, 31, who had admired Murphy's work since he was seven. Unlike their characters, the two had much in common.

"Pete comes from SNL. He's a standup comic. We're both from the East Coast," said Murphy. "I love to get into a scene with somebody else that's funny, improvise with them and start playing, I love it."

On a routine round of cash pickups, Murphy's Russell and Davidson's Travis get targeted by criminals. Things get personal when Travis discovers that the thieves are led by his one-night-stand from the night before, played by Keke Palmer, and the life of Russell's hot-headed wife, played by Eva Longoria, comes under threat. The duo must pull together to save the day.

The script, by Kevin Burrows and Matt Mider, served as their blueprint and director Tim Story encouraged them to go off it, the two said.

"We would do one as written and then Tim and everyone was like, 'Just go

nuts' and we would end up just trying to one-up each other, we were just trying to make each other laugh," said Davidson.

"They were improvising constantly and it was really sweet to see. It's so cool because you see two different generations," added Palmer.

The generational differences also seeped into the scenes, with the fighting taking its toll on Russell's body. "Usually in these types of movies or my early movies like the 'Beverly Hills Cop' and '48 Hrs.', I was the young maverick and now I'm the older guy," said Murphy.

Murphy has been making movies for 43 years and said new challenges were few and far between. "I've played different ethnicities and different genders. I've been inanimate, I've played spaceships. I've played every type of role you could possibly imagine," he said, but added he was working on "something fresh and new". "We're doing George Clinton, Parliament Funkadelic, we're doing his life. And there's no one like George. So I'll be in uncharted waters."

"The Pickup" starts streaming on Prime Video on August 6.



Numbered dog-related figures are seen while Gabarro's relatives and friends count them for the Guinness World Record in Terrassa, north of Barcelona, Spain, March 15, 2025.

Collector sets world record with over 5,000 dog figurines

TERRASSA, Spain--Spanish collector Marià Gabarro did not care for real dogs but won a posthumous place in the Guinness World Records this year for the largest collection of canine-related items - 5,025 figurines, soft toys or dog-head walking sticks.

Gabarro, a sales manager from Terrassa, a town about 30 km (19 miles) from Barcelona, started his mammoth collection of figurines in his 60s. When he died last year, aged 94, his children decided to see if the haul could claim a record as a tribute to their parents.

Gabarro acquired the figurines at markets and stored them in two houses. Teresa Gabarro, 54, one of four siblings who now lets her West Highland White Terrier play with the soft toys, said: "(My parents) really liked the non-real dogs, but not the live ones."

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THE VOICE OF SINT MAARTEN

Moment with the Master
5 am - 6:30 am

Lady Grace & the Breakfast Lounge
7 am - 10 am

Joanne Lewis - The Mid-Morning Show
10 am - 2 pm

Wendell Moore - View Point
12 pm - 1 pm

Deelo's House
2 pm - 5 pm



Henderik Ekema representing The Friendly Islands participates in the parade of athletes at the World Championships in Scotland.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Continued from page 32.



Henderik Ekema on his way to winning two bronze medals at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.

marking the close of a distinguished and passionate journey in the sport. He extended sincere thanks to Mr. David Oliver for his leadership in organizing the championships and praised Scotland for hosting such a well-executed, spirited event in Glasgow. Ekema also expressed deep gratitude to those who stood behind him: "I would especially like to thank my sister, Anna Ekema, and my Taekwon-do Academie Jan Ekema for coaching, guiding, and believing in me and of course, all of my sponsors who made this journey possible." As he looks toward the final chapters of his competitive career, Henderik Ekema continues to embody the values of perseverance, humility, and excellence a true martial artist in every sense.

Liberty, without Stewart, stumble against Wings

TEXAS--Arike Ogunbowale compiled 20 points and 14 assists, Paige Bueckers scored 20 points and the Dallas Wings held off the Breanna Stewart-less New York Liberty 92-82 on Monday in Arlington, Texas.

The Wings led by 30 points early in the third quarter and were up 85-62 at the end of the period. However, the Liberty pulled within six with 1:44 left in the game as Dallas went scoreless for more than six minutes before Bueckers and Dijonai Carington each made two late free throws.

Luisa Geiselsoder added 14 points for the Wings (8-19), who entered the game with the second-worst record in the league. They won for just the second time in eight games.

The defending WNBA champion Liberty (17-8), who have the second-best record in the league, were playing their first full game without Stewart this season. The All-Star forward hurt her lower right leg three minutes into a 101-99 home loss to the Los Angeles Sparks on Saturday. Jonquel Jones scored 18 points, Sabrina Ionescu had 17 and Stephanie Talbot and Isabelle Harrison added 10 each to lead the Liberty, who were beginning a four-game road trip that they hope will feature Stewart's return at some point.

Ogunbowale scored seven points and Bueckers added five as the Wings raced to a 16-2 lead in less than four minutes. Leonie Fiebich made a layup for the Liberty to stop the surge, but Dallas took its biggest lead of the first quarter at 23-6.

Marine Johannes made a

3-pointer and another jumper to start a New York push that concluded with Talbot and Jones each making a 3-pointer to pull the Liberty within 31-19 at the end of the period.

The second quarter started much like the first. Grace Berger and Bueckers each made two field goals during

a 10-1 run that expanded the Wings' lead to 41-19. Dallas led by as many as 25 points before Natasha Cloud made New York's first field goal of the quarter with 4:37 remaining.

The Liberty stretched the gap to 63-36 going into halftime.

Andre Pallante fires 7 scoreless innings as Cards rout Marlins

ST. LOUIS --Andre Pallante allowed one hit in seven scoreless innings as the St. Louis Cardinals defeated the visiting Miami Marlins 7-1 Monday night.

Pallante (6-7) struck out four batters and walked one while enjoying quite a turnaround from his previous three starts, when he allowed 18 runs, 17 earned, on 25 hits in 15 2/3 innings.

Masyn Winn went 3-for-4 with two doubles, a run and three RBIs for the Cardinals, who won for just the fourth time in 11 games since the All-Star break. Alec Burleson had a homer, two runs and two RBIs.

Marlins starter Edward Cabrera (4-5) allowed two runs, one earned, on four hits and three walks in six innings. He fanned four.

Burleson's homer put the Cardinals up 1-0 in the third inning. The 411-foot shot to center was his 14th long ball of the year.

The Marlins threatened in the fourth inning when Jesus Sanchez walked with one out and advanced to second on a groundout. However, Pallante struck out Heriberto Hernandez to strand the runner. The Cardinals increased their lead to 2-0 in the bottom of the inning. Yohel Pozo hit a double, then took third on a wild pitch and scored on catcher Agustin Ramirez's wild throw.

Pallante held the Marlins without a hit until the sixth inning, when Graham Pauley led off with a single to right. Pauley advanced to third on two groundouts before Sanchez hit an inning-ending grounder back to Pallante.

St. Louis' Victor Scott II hit a one-out double in the seventh inning. After Scott stole third base, Brendan Donovan and Ivan Herrera walked to load the bases.

A catcher's interference call with Burleson batting forced in a run. Lake Bachar relieved Josh Simpson on the mound and fanned Willson Contreras before allowing

Winn's double that cleared the bases thanks in part to an error by left fielder Hernandez. Jordan Walker's RBI double then increased the Cardinals' lead to 7-0.

The Marlins finally got on the board in the ninth inning when Hernandez hit an RBI single against Matt Svanson.

Orioles tag Blue Jays for 16 hits in series-opening win

BALTIMORE --Cedric Mullins and Coby Mayo belted back-to-back home runs and Adley Rutschman had a big game at the plate in his first game off the injured list as the Baltimore Orioles rapped the visiting Toronto Blue Jays 11-4 on Monday night.

Ramon Laureano and Colton Cowser also homered and Jordan Westburg joined Rutschman and Mayo with three hits. Baltimore had 16 hits in the first of four meetings between the teams across three days.

Corbin Martin (1-0) was the winning pitcher with 1 2/3 innings of shutout relief. It marked his second victory in the major leagues, and his first since 2019.

Bo Bichette had four hits, and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Nathan Lukes each hit home runs for the Blue Jays, who've lost two games in a row for the first time since the All-Star break.

The Orioles, who've won four of their last five games, tagged Toronto starter Chris Bassitt (11-5) for six runs in 2 1/3 innings. He had gone 4-0 in his first four starts in July.

Baltimore starter Zach Eflin lasted 4 1/3 innings, surrendering four runs on eight hits with one walk and three strikeouts.

Lukes and Guerrero Jr. both hit their home runs in the third inning.

Colson Montgomery, Luis Robert Jr. homer as White Sox top Phillies

CHICAGO --Colson Montgomery and Luis Robert Jr. homered and Davis Martin pitched 5 2/3 sharp innings to help the host Chicago White Sox to a 6-2 victory against the Philadelphia Phillies on Monday.

Lenyn Sosa went 3-for-3 for the White Sox, including an RBI single in the eighth. Chicago has won the first game in each of its four series since the All-Star break and is 7-3 out of the break overall.

Philadelphia fell two games behind the New York Mets for first place in the National League East. The Mets were

set to play later Monday. Montgomery, a rookie, delivered his fourth home run in the past six games with a game-tying, two-run blast against Phillies left-hander Cristopher Sanchez in the third inning. Montgomery added a run-scoring single to finish 2-for-4 with three RBIs.

Robert connected for a go-ahead, two-run blast to the opposite field in the fourth as Chicago struck against Sanchez, a National League Cy Young award contender, in key spots. Sanchez (9-3) had allowed four earned runs in 30 1/3 innings over his past

four starts entering Monday. The White Sox reached him for four runs and seven hits in 6 2/3 innings. Sanchez walked one and struck out five.

Philadelphia took an early lead when Bryce Harper grounded a two-run double with two outs in the third. Martin retired the first seven Phillies before surrendering consecutive singles to the bottom two hitters in the lineup and walking Kyle Schwarber to load the bases ahead of Harper.

Harper and Brandon Marsh collected two hits apiece for Philadelphia. Miguel Vargas

had two hits for Chicago.

Martin (3-8) limited the Phillies to two runs and six hits with three walks and seven strikeouts. He also helped his effort defensively. With two on and two out in the fifth, Martin dove to scoop Nick Castellanos' soft grounder to the left side, then rose to his feet to throw Castellanos out at first base.

Chicago relievers Jordan Leasure, Steven Wilson and Grant Taylor combined to retire 10 of the 11 batters they faced.

Philadelphia stranded seven runners and struck out 11 times.

Sky's Angel Reese, Ariel Atkins could sit out again vs. Mystics

WASHINGTON --After a blockbuster matchup on Sunday that did not feature either team's headliner, the Chicago Sky hit the road to face the Washington Mystics Tuesday night in a game where both sides might need to rely on rookies to help stop their slides.

When the Sky suffered a 93-78 loss to the Indiana Fever in a matchup moved to the United Center, neither Indiana's Caitlin Clark nor Chicago's Angel Reese suited up. Reese, who leads the WNBA with 12.5 rebounds per game, missed her second game in a row with a back injury.

Moreover, the Sky (7-18) played without leading scorer Ariel Atkins (13.9 ppg) for the fourth straight game due to a leg injury. There is no official word whether Reese or Atkins will be able to face the Mystics. If not, a rookie will continue to help fill their minutes.

Former Notre Dame

forward Maddy Westbeld has averaged 4.5 points, 2.8 rebounds and 21.4 minutes over the last four games -- all dramatic increases over her previous contributions. While Westbeld is not replacing Reese and Atkins' production, the forward is giving Chicago important minutes.

"She works so hard," said Sky veteran guard Rachel Banham, who paced Chicago with a season-high 26 points on Sunday. "She's so coachable. We love playing with her. You can talk to her the entire game, get on her. She's just really great about it."

Chicago faces a Washington Mystics (12-13) squad that has been relying on All-Star rookies Sonia Citron and Kiki Iriafen to stay in the WNBA playoff hunt. However, the Mystics are on a skid of late. They have lost three of their last four, including Sunday's home game against the Phoenix Mercury.

Washington had a four-point lead heading into halftime, but struggled on both sides of the court in the second half as the Mercury outscored the Mystics 46-26 in the final 20 minutes of an 88-72 defeat.

All-Star Brittney Sykes struggled in the defeat with no points on 0-for-6 shooting from the floor. The guard also left the bench for a short period of time, leading to questions about her health.

"Slim (Sykes) could have something that I don't know about right now," said head coach Sydney Johnson. "But no, the medical didn't tell me anything in terms of her getting injured during the game."

The Mystics have two wins over the Sky this season, both in close matchups. When the two sides met on July 8, Washington defeated Chicago 81-79 on Shakira Austin's game-winning free throws with 2.8 seconds left.



Skylar Diggins (4) reacts in the fourth quarter. (Trevor Ruszkowski-Imagn Images/File Photo.)

Skylar Diggins' triple-double leads Storm past Sun 101-85

UNCASVILLE--Skylar Diggins tallied her first WNBA regular-season triple-double while leading the hot-shooting Seattle Storm to a 101-85 win over the Connecticut Sun on Monday in Uncasville, Conn.

Diggins, playing in her 318th WNBA game, had never logged a regular-season triple-double, although she posted the first triple-double in the history of the WNBA All-Star Game nine days earlier.

In just 23 minutes, Diggins logged 11 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists. She led the Seattle offense in a red-hot performance, as the Storm pulled away with a 28-5 run in the third quarter that turned a 57-48 edge to an 85-53 advantage with 2:02 left in the quarter.

Diggins drained a pair of free throws late in the quarter to complete her triple-double, and then watched the final period from the bench.

A game after scoring just 58 points, the Storm nearly matched that total by halftime, establishing a 57-46 lead. The Storm fell a point short of their season scoring high, set in a 102-82 win over the Las Vegas Aces on May 25.

Seattle shot a season-best 60.9 percent (42-for-69) from the field, including 9-for-20 (45 percent) from 3-point range.

Aside from Diggins, Seattle (16-11) was led by Nneka Ogwumike and Gabby Williams. Ogwumike scored 26 points on 11-for-13 shooting in 19 minutes of playing time,

while Williams notched 16 points on 7-for-11 shooting. Rookie Dominique Malonga added 12 points and six boards, and Ezi Magbegor tallied 10 points in the easy win.

Connecticut (4-21) was coming off a season-high 95-point output against the Golden State Valkyries on Sunday but couldn't keep up that pace. Bria Hartley paced the Sun with 17 points, though she shot just 4-for-12 from the field. Tina Charles added 11 points, and reserves Jacy Sheldon and Olivia Nelson-Ododa chipped in 11 and 10 points, respectively.

The Sun took their fifth loss in six games, while the Storm continued a nine-game stretch of alternating wins and losses.

Dream riding high off big wins as they return home to meet Valkyries

ATLANTA --Fresh off two of the season's most impressive wins, the Atlanta Dream return home for the first time in more than three weeks to face the slumping Golden State Valkyries on Tuesday in College Park, Ga.

Atlanta (15-10) went 3-3 during its recent six-game road trip, which was cut in half by the All-Star break. After dropping three of four to begin the stretch, the Dream topped the Phoenix Mercury 90-79 before picking up a 90-86 victory over the league-leading Minnesota Lynx on Sunday.

As the team returns home for the first time since beating Golden State on July 7, the Dream hope the extended time on the road will serve them well going forward.

"I do think it's important as you get into a playoff situation that you already have some experience winning big games on the road against the best teams," Atlanta head coach Karl Smesko said. "There hasn't been a better team than Minnesota this year, so to be in this environment

and play as well as we did, I think it's something that we'll remember."

Allisha Gray's 18.7 points per game lead Atlanta, while Rhyné Howard -- the team's No. 2 scorer (16.5 ppg) -- remains out with a left knee injury suffered on July 11. Howard is expected to miss at least Atlanta's next two games.

Golden State (11-13) will look to rebound from its worst loss in the franchise's young history. As the league's lone expansion team, the Valkyries are still a work in progress, as their 31-point loss at Connecticut on Sunday proved.

Golden State has dropped six of eight in July, including its 95-64 defeat against the Sun, in which the Valkyries turned the ball over 24 times.

"(Connecticut) just played harder than us," Golden State head coach Natalie Nakase said. "Things were just not clicking. We weren't connected because our energy level, our organization, our minds, just weren't connected with our body."

A bad stretch was made worse this week, as leading

scorer and rebounder Kayla Thornton (14.0 points, 7.0 rebounds per game) underwent season-ending knee surgery after injuring herself in practice.

Tiffany Hayes, who adds 12.5 points per contest, will try to shoulder the load and bounce back from an 0-for-8 shooting output on Sunday.

Brewers overcame a shaky first inning from All-Star rookie Jacob Misorowski to rally for an 8-4 victory over the visiting Chicago Cubs on Monday in the opener of the three-game series between NL Central leaders.

The Brewers, who moved into first place one game ahead of the Cubs, erased a 3-0 first-inning deficit with four runs in the third off Matthew Boyd (11-4).

Andrew Vaughn had a

solo homer, his ninth, in the fifth and Sal Frelick had a solo shot, his eighth, an inning later to make it 6-3.

The Cubs pulled within 6-4 in the seventh on Kyle Tucker's RBI single. Yelich followed a leadoff single by William Contreras in the bottom half with his 20th homer to put the Brewers up 8-4.

Misorowski finished his 80-pitch outing with three scoreless innings, allowing three runs, two earned, on three hits, striking out seven and walking two. Nick Mears (2-3), one of seven relievers used by the Brew-

ers, got the win with one scoreless inning. Trevor Megill came on with two aboard in the ninth and struck out Seiya Suzuki for his 24th save in 27 chances.

In the third, Frelick singled to open and took second on Contreras' one-out single. Yelich followed with an RBI double to right and Vaughn walked to load the bases. Isaac Collins tied it with a two-run single to right and Brice Turang followed with a go-ahead sacrifice fly.

The Cubs took a 3-0 lead in the first with the aid of a wild pitch and throw-

ing error in a 40-pitch inning against Misorowski, named to the All-Star team after just five big league starts.

Chicago loaded the bases with none out when Michael Busch singled, Kyle Tucker walked and Suzuki lined an infield single that caromed off Misorowski.

Busch scored when Pete Crow-Armstrong struck out on a wild pitch. Carson Kelly struck out and Ian Happ dribbled a single in front of the mound, but Misorowski threw wildly past first, allowing Suzuki to score.

Brewers overcome rough first inning to take down rival Cubs



Japan's Naomi Osaka in action.

Osaka parts company with coach Mouratoglou after Washington exit

WASHINGTON-- Naomi Osaka has parted company with coach Patrick Mouratoglou less than a year after the pair began working together, the four-times Grand Slam champion said days after her defeat to Emma Raducanu at the Washington Open.

The 27-year-old began working with Mouratoglou ahead of the China Open in September last year, as she sought to reignite her career following a patchy run of form after returning to the tour from a long maternity break.

"Merci Patrick. It was such a great experience learning from you. Wishing

you nothing but the best. You are one of the coolest people I've ever met and I'm sure I'll see you around," Osaka wrote in a post on Instagram on Sunday.

Under Frenchman Mouratoglou, who previously guided Serena Williams to 10 of her 23 major titles, Osaka won her first WTA title since 2021 at the L'Open 35 de Saint-Malo in May - a WTA 125 tournament.

She also reached the final of the Auckland Classic in January, where she was forced to retire with an injury, and suffered a frustrating first-round exit from

this year's French Open at the hands of Paula Badosa.

"Nothing lasts forever. What counts is what a collaboration has brought to each other and what lasts after," Mouratoglou wrote on social media.

"After 10 months of collaboration, we have decided to part ways professionally. I am grateful for the trust, the journey and what we have built together. I will always root for you and wish you nothing but the best."

Osaka is next in action at the Canadian Open in Toronto, where she takes on Ariana Arseneault later on Monday.

Wiebes wins chaotic sprint in Tour de France Femmes stage three as Vos reclaims yellow

FRANCE-- Lorena Wiebes prevailed in a chaotic sprint to claim victory in the third stage of the Tour de France Femmes on Monday, edging fellow Dutch rider Marianne Vos who took the overall lead after a 163.5km ride from La Gacilly to Angers.

Sprint specialist Wiebes (SD Worx-Protime), who narrowly lost stage two to Mavi Garcia, made an explosive push for the finish as a crash in the final four kilometres temporarily took out several riders including 2023 champion Demi Volterling (FDJ-Suez).

Opening stage winner Vos (Visma-Lease a Bike) lost a photo-finish to Wiebes but reclaimed the yellow jersey from Kim Le Court Pienaar (AG Insurance-Soudal), who led the general classification after Sunday's second stage but dropped to second with a six-second deficit.

"It was very hectic... I think when we went right on to the river there was a big crash behind me. I hope everyone is well," Vos said.

The stage, mostly on a flat terrain, began without Giro d'Italia winner Elisa Longo Borghini, who withdrew from the race due to a stomach infection.

Four riders made an early attack to form the leading pack, with Alison

Jackson (EF Education-Easy) winning a mountain sprint to the top of Cote de La Richardiere.

But others slowly caught up, with Lotte Kopecky expertly leading her teammate Wiebes to the front, setting up the final sprint just before the crash derailed a number of riders behind them.

New Zealand's Ally Wol-

laston (FDJ-Suez) finished third as her teammate Volterling, who recovered from the crash, remained in contention in the general classification, sitting 19 seconds behind Vos.

The Tour continues on Tuesday with stage four, a 130.7km ride from Saumur to Poitiers through another mostly-flat terrain.

Junior Caminero's homer sparks Rays' win over Yankees

NEW YORK--Junior Caminero hit a two-run homer and the Tampa Bay Rays pulled back above .500 with a 4-2 victory over the host New York Yankees on Monday night.

Rays starter Drew Rasmussen allowed a pair of run-scoring walks in the first inning before pitching five innings holding the Yankees scoreless the rest of the way.

Rasmussen (8-5) gave up four hits and two walks while striking out five.

Caminero gave the Rays a 2-0 lead four batters into the contest when he blasted a 2-1 slider into the left field seats off New York rookie Cam Schlichter (1-1). It was Caminero's 27th

homer and fourth since the All-Star break.

In the bottom of the inning, Rasmussen allowed consecutive one-out singles to rookie Jasson Dominguez, Cody Bellinger and Giancarlo Stanton. He walked Jazz Chisholm Jr. on a full count, struck out Paul Goldschmidt, then issued a full-count free pass to Ryan McMahon.

Rasmussen recovered from the walks and retired 12 straight before Dominguez singled with two outs in the fifth. The right-hander ended his outing by getting Bellinger on a fly ball.

The Rays went back ahead when Josh Lowe hit an RBI single in the fifth off Schlichter, who walked Yandy Diaz and allowed a single to Jonathan Aranda ahead of the clutch hit.

Three Tampa Bay relievers followed Rasmussen and threw a combined four scoreless innings. Edwin Uceta fanned four in two innings, Garrett Cleavinger got two outs, and Pete Fairbanks notched the final four outs for his 18th save. With a runner on second, Rays center fielder Jonny DeLuca made a running catch on a fly ball by Austin Wells to end the game.

Diaz added a bases-loaded sacrifice fly in the eighth off Tim Hill after the Rays got a three singles, two of them in the infield.

Schlichter allowed three runs on seven hits in 4 1/3 innings during his third career start. The hard-throwing right-hander struck out five and walked four.

The Yankees fell to 4-8 in their past 12 games and mustered only three baserunners after the opening inning.

Paraguay's Arrieta nets dramatic late winner to secure 2027 Pan Am Games spot

QUITO--- A stunning stoppage-time strike from Camila Arrieta handed Paraguay a dramatic 1-0 victory over Chile in Monday's Women's Copa America fifth-place playoff in Quito, securing the final berth for the 2027 Pan American Games in Lima.

The victory sends Paraguay to their fourth Pan Am Games, where they will aim to surpass their best-ever fourth-place finish from Lima 2019.

"It was a difficult match," the 23-year-old Arrieta said after the game. "We know what Chile are capable of, but we managed to get through the game and we deserved this victory."

Chile dominated possession but failed to create clear-cut chances, while Paraguay stayed compact and looked threatening on the counter-

attack through tournament leading scorer Claudia Martinez.

Just as the match appeared destined for penalties, Arrieta broke the deadlock two minutes into stoppage

time, her precise low drive deflecting off the post before nestling into the net to seal a hard-fought triumph.

"I had chances to shoot at goal earlier in the game, but I couldn't convert them. I kept

trying," Arrieta said.

"After all the hard work we've put in, this means a lot to us. We'll prepare as best we can for the World Cup qualifiers."

Later on Monday, Argen-

tina will face Colombia in the first semi-final of the tournament, with an Olympic spot at stake.

Defending champions Brazil take on Uruguay in Tuesday's second semi-final.

Yoshinobu Yamamoto strikes out 9, leads Dodgers over Reds

CINCINNATI --Yoshinobu Yamamoto allowed just one run with nine strikeouts over seven innings, and Shohei Ohtani hit a two-run double to send the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers to a 5-2 win over the Cincinnati Reds Monday night.

Yamamoto (9-7) matched a season-high seven innings, allowing just four hits and one

run with two walks. The right-hander improved his road record to 6-3 in 11 starts. The only blemish on his slate was an RBI groundout by former Dodger Gavin Lux in the first inning.

Ohtani walked twice and cashed in a pair of runners to break a 1-1 tie with a double to center field off Cincinnati starter Chase Burns (0-3).

Teoscar Hernandez had two hits and drove in two runs while Mookie Betts also had a pair of hits and three runs for the Dodgers, who bounced back after losing two of three in Boston to open their three-city, nine-game road trip.

Burns failed again in his bid for his first Major League win in his sixth career start. The righty was charged with three

runs on six hits over 5 2/3 innings while walking one.

But the highly-touted rookie did achieve another historic milestone, striking out 10 for a third straight start to become just the second Cincinnati pitcher with 10+ strikeouts in three straight starts, joining Raisel Iglesias in 2015.



Seattle Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh (29) hits a home run. (Kiyoshi Mio-Imagn Images.)

Cal Raleigh passes Aaron Judge as AL MVP favorite

SEATTLE --Mariners catcher Cal Raleigh has taken over as the American League MVP favorite with his closest rival, Aaron Judge, heading to the injured list.

Raleigh hit home runs in consecutive games over the weekend to extend his major league lead to 41. It is already seven more than his career high, and Raleigh has tied Todd Hundley (1996) for the most home runs in a season by a switch-hitting catcher.

Judge has led the MVP race most of the season, but the New York Yankees slugger will miss an undetermined amount of time due to a flexor strain. The two-time AL MVP currently paces the majors in batting average (.342), on-base percentage (.449) and slugging percentage (.711).

However, Raleigh has now passed Judge for the AL RBI lead, 86 to 85, and is only one behind Arizona's Eugenio Suarez for the major league lead.

Raleigh is now the -130 AL MVP favorite at DraftKings and is -135 at BetMGM. Judge has the second shortest odds at +100 of +105, respectively. It's still a two-player race, with the third-shortest odds belonging to Detroit Tigers ace Tarik Skubal at +4000 at both books.

Currently a +8000 longshot.

The gap between Raleigh and Judge could continue to widen depending on how long the Yankees star is sidelined.

Judge experienced discomfort, wincing on a throw during New York's three-game series in Toronto last week. He was in more discomfort Friday and the Yankees sent him

for tests that revealed only the strain and no damage to the ulnar collateral ligament.

"All in all, we got good news," manager Aaron Boone said. "I think all of us feared the worst."

Los Angeles Dodgers superstar Shohei Ohtani remains the prohibitive NL favorite at -2000 at both books.

Tigers' Troy Melton dominates Diamondbacks, earns first win

DETROIT --Troy Melton tossed seven shutout innings to collect his first career victory as the host Detroit Tigers downed the slumping Arizona Diamondbacks, 5-1, on Monday night.

Melton (1-1) scattered five singles and didn't issue a walk while striking out five in his second career start after being promoted from Triple-A Toledo.

Dillon Dingler led the offense for the Tigers with three hits, including a solo homer, and two runs scored. Andy Ibanez, recalled from Toledo earlier in the day, supplied a double and a solo homer and also scored twice. Matt Vierling added an RBI double as the Tigers won their second straight following a six-game losing streak.

Diamondbacks starter Eduardo Rodriguez (3-7) gave up five runs and eight hits while striking out five in six innings. Alek Thomas hit a solo homer for Arizona, which has lost six of its last seven contests.

Arizona third baseman Eugenio Suarez, one of the prominent names on the trade market, was removed after being hit in the hand by a Will Vest pitch in the ninth. Suarez

is among the top five in the league in homers with 36.

The Tigers scored a gift run in the first. Gleyber Torres drew a one-out walk and Jahmai Jones hit into a fielder's choice. Spencer Torkelson then hit a short fly ball. A trio of Diamondbacks converged but left fielder Lourdes Gurriel Jr. couldn't hang onto it. Jones came around to score on the play.

Ibanez led off the second inning with a double and moved to third on a Dillon single. One out later, Javier Baez had a bloop single to center as Ibanez scored.

Detroit extended its lead to 4-0 in the fourth. Ibanez led off and ambushed a Rodriguez fastball over the left field wall. Dingler followed with a single and moved up on a grounder. With two out, Vierling doubled to center to bring home Dingler.

Rodriguez recorded four straight strikeouts before Dingler pulled a hanging Rodriguez slider to make it 5-0.

The Diamondbacks got on the board when Thomas blasted a Tommy Kahnle changeup over the right-center field wall with one out in the eighth.

Bouchard extends career with first-round win at Canadian Open

MONTREAL - Hometown hero Eugenie Bouchard beat Emiliانا Arango 6-4 2-6 6-2 in the first round of the Canadian Open in Montreal on Monday, a win that delayed the former world number five's retirement.

Bouchard announced earlier this month she would walk away from the sport after the tournament but added a condition to that plan in the wake of her thrilling victory in front of a packed crowd.

"If I win this tournament, I will not retire," she said in an on-court interview.

Playing in only her second singles match of the year, Bouchard blasted a forehand winner to take the first set but Colombian Arango turned the tables in the second set amid a cascade of unforced errors from her opponent.

However, Bouchard broke for a 3-1 lead in the decider and hammered a swinging volley to extend the advantage to 4-1.

The 31-year-old wildcard put her hands on her head and then her heart after securing the victory to set up a second round meeting with 17th seed Belinda Bencic of Switzerland.

Briton Emma Raducanu beat her good friend Elena-Gabriela Ruse of Romania 6-2 6-4 and will next meet 32nd seed Peyton Stearns.

"It's very difficult to play someone who you are close to," Raducanu said. "I'm really glad about how I was able to put that to one side for the match and back up a good week in D.C."

Four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka of Japan beat Canadian qualifier Ari-

ana Arseneault 6-4 6-2 in breezy conditions to set up a second-round meeting with 13th seed Liudmila Samsonova of Russia.

In the men's tournament, which is being played in Toronto, Australian Adam Walton roared back from a set down to defeat Frenchman Benjamin Bonzi 4-6 6-0 6-3 and set up a second-round meeting with top seed Alexander Zverev of Germany.

Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta, the tournament's 2022 champion, came from behind to defeat Liam Draxl 2-6 6-4 6-4.

Several top players withdrew ahead of the Masters and WTA 1000 tournament including world number ones Aryna Sabalenka and Jannik Sinner, Carlos Alcaraz, Novak Djokovic and Jack Draper.

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SPORTS ARENA



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates winning.

Canadian teen, American Brianna Do among AIG Women's Open qualifiers

WALEES--American Brianna Do and Canadian Anna Huang were among the 17 players to earn spots in this week's AIG Women's Open via Monday's 18-hole qualifier.

The AIG Women's Open begins Thursday at Wales' Royal Porthcawl.

Huang, the youngest player on the Ladies European Tour at 16, posted the low round Monday with her 4-under par 67 at Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club. She was followed by Ireland's Anna Foster and Thailand's Arpi-chaya Yubol at 3 under.

"I'm delighted with my score," said Huang, who is No. 521 in the Rolex Women's Rankings. "I don't play links golf, so it took a couple of practice rounds to get used to it, but I think I handled it pretty well. I played in the U.S. Open this year so this will be my second major championship. I learned a lot from that week and bringing more patience into this week will be really helpful."

Do, 35, tied for eighth at 1 under. The 2011 Women's Amateur Public Links champion will play in her first Women's Open since 2016. Ranked 351st, she is coming off a T23 in June at the KPMG Women's PGA

Championship and a T59 three weeks ago at the Evian Championship.

"A few years ago, I was first alternate for the Evian, and I didn't get in, so I came over to Scotland and played quite a bit of golf," Do said. "I played the Old Course, Prestwick, Elie, so I played quite a bit for fun, and it was amazing. I learned quite a bit there but not in a tournament sense."

Among the five Americans who fell short in qualifying was 2017 major champion and four-time United States Solheim Cup player Danielle Kang, who shot a

73. Despite failing to qualify for her 13th Women's Open, Kang said she is not disappointed.

"Not even a little bit," she said. "I met unbelievably great people here. I got to play with a bunch of members at Porthcawl, and I got to know everybody at Pyle and Kenfig. It's been great."

Australia's Hira Naveed (69) and New Zealand's Momoko Kobori (70), teammates at Pepperdine from 2017-19, both qualified. All 17 qualifiers for this week's 144-golfer field finished under par.

Red Bull adviser confirms Max Verstappen staying for 2026

BELGIUM --Red Bull Racing will have Formula 1 superstar Max Verstappen for at least another season.

Team adviser Helmut Marko said Monday that the four-time defending F1 champion would return to the team in 2026 despite reported interest from Mercedes.

A widely reported exit clause in Verstappen's Red Bull contract would have allowed him to leave the team at year's end if he were fourth or lower in the championship standings as of the Hungarian Grand

Prix, which takes place this Sunday.

Following the Belgian Grand Prix last Sunday, Verstappen sits in third place in the F1 standings and far enough ahead of fourth-place George Russell (28 points) that he cannot be caught in Hungary.

The understanding of Verstappen's situation was confirmed when Marko spoke to German outlet SportDe.

"Yes, I can confirm that Max Verstappen will drive for Red Bull in 2026," Marko said.

Mercedes' cars are currently occupied by Russell and potential rising star Kimi Antonelli, but Mercedes boss Toto Wolff has not denied looking into pursuing Verstappen, the winningest F1 driver since his first championship in 2011.

Earlier this month, Red Bull abruptly dismissed team principal Christian Horner and replaced him with Laurent Mekies. Verstappen's agent told a Dutch outlet at the time that Verstappen remained committed to the team despite the change.

Henderik Ekema shines at World Championships in Scotland

GLASGOW— Henderik Ekema, earned two bronze medals at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.

After seven years away from international competition, Australian martial artist Henderik Ekema marked a powerful return at the World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland. Following months of disciplined training, Ekema delivered an inspiring performance that earned him both individual and team bronze medals and

reignited a deep passion for the sport.

Returning to the ring after such a long hiatus, Ekema described the experience as transformational. "To feel the adrenaline, the spirit, the energy of the ring again it was like coming home," he said. Among his matches, one of the most intense was against a Scottish opponent. Though Ekema lost by just a few points in a tightly fought contest, his pride remained intact particularly as his opponent went on to win

the World Champion title. Ekema ultimately claimed third place individually, a remarkable achievement after such an extended absence. "This tournament was more than a competition it was a personal milestone," he shared. "Fighting again reignited the passion that had quietly burned all these years." With his eldest son present to witness the occasion, the moment held even deeper personal meaning.

Ekema was also honoured to compete for

Team Australia, invited by team coach Tony Curtis. The Australian squad finished with a strong third-place result in the team competition. "It was a true honour to stand with the team and contribute to such a meaningful result," Ekema said. Looking ahead, Henderik Ekema has confirmed he will continue competing. His next goal is the 2026 World Cup, with plans to end his competitive fighting career at the 2027 World Championships.

Continued on page 28

Dusty Baker to manage Nicaragua at 2026 World Baseball Classic

NICARAGUA --Former MLB manager Dusty Baker is reportedly set to manage Nicaragua during the 2026 World Baseball Classic.

Baker, 76, retired from the major leagues two years ago after winning a World Series with the Houston Astros in 2022 and being named National League Manager of the Year three times. Baker is the eighth-winningest manager in major league history.

Baker also played in the majors for 19 seasons.

"I'm excited," Baker told USA Today, "...I know baseball is trying to get going in Nicaragua, and I want to help."

Nicaragua finished 19th in the 2023 WBC but secured a 3-0 record in qualifying for the 2026 tournament and will play in Pool D against Venezuela, Israel, the Netherlands and the Dominican Republic.



Henderik Ekema, wearing red head gear competes at the TaeKwon-Do International World Championships.