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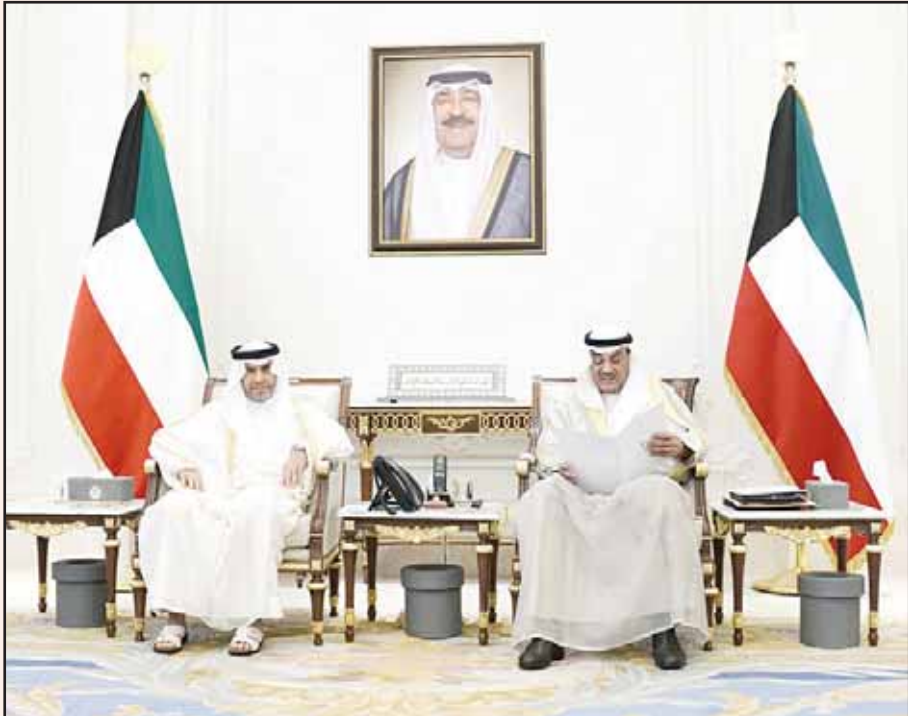


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Crown Prince receives UN Chief's Iraq envoy, invite from Qatar PM



Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince receives UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq and Head of UNAMI.



Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince receives Qatar's Ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud.

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Tuesday received UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Ambassador Dr. Mohammad Al-Hassan at Bayan Palace on his visit to Kuwait.

Crown Prince's Office Director Lieutenant General Jamal Al-Theyab and Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Crown Prince's Diwan Mazen Al-Issa attended the meeting.

Also on Tuesday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace an invitation from Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

The invitation is for participating in the fifth edition of Qatar Economic Forum, scheduled in cooperation with Bloomberg, from May 20 to 22, 2025, which will be held under the patronage of Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

The invitation was delivered to His Highness by Qatar's Ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud.

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2 NCCAL launches art exhibition marking 60 years of Kuwait-Canada relations

5 UAE, Kuwait strengthen scientific and space ties



9 Warba Bank acquires Alghanim Trading in KD 498.2 million deal

Newswatch

Kuwait records mild 3.2 magnitude quake

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced Monday that the Kuwait National Seismic Network recorded a 3.2 magnitude earthquake southwest of Kuwait in the Manaqeeh area.

In a press statement, KISR said the earthquake occurred at 11:45 p.m. local time at a depth of 13 kilometers underground.

TEHRAN: The "indirect" talks with the US on the Iranian nuclear file will begin next Saturday in the Sultanate of Oman, said Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Tuesday.

According to the Iranian Islamic News Agency (IRNA), the Araghchi released a statement on X indicating that talks would be held on the level of senior officials. (KUNA)

NEW YORK: Commander UNIFIL Lieut General Aroldo Lazaro affirmed that a ceasefire between Lebanon and the Israeli occupation must go through a political path that addresses issues of sovereignty and regional safety.

Briefing a meeting for the UNSC on UN Peacekeeping operations (HOMC) late Monday, Lazaro indicated that the strategic context and balance of power had largely shifted with the road for a permanent ceasefire might be slowly achieved on the long term. (KUNA)

TOKYO: Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya and his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelatty affirmed on Tuesday they would continue to work together to restore calm, improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza and realize peace and stability in the region in the medium-to-long term. Japan's Foreign Ministry said.

During their 35-minute telephone conversation, Abdelatty explained the Gaza reconstruction plan led by Egypt, and in response, Iwaya expressed his appreciation for the important move by the Arab countries in presenting a unified plan to the international community, the ministry said in a press release. (KUNA)

Kuwait launches power-saving drive as demand reaches peak

Production boost spares homes from blackouts

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The electricity load index continued to rise Tuesday, reaching the orange zone at several points during peak hours, due to the high temperatures.

The highest load recorded reached 11,545 megawatts at a temperature of 37 degrees Celsius -- an increase of 355 megawatts; compared to the highest load on Monday that reached 11,190 megawatts.

Reliable sources said the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy did not cut off power in any area despite the significant increase in power consumption during peak hours; as the new units with a total capacity of 600 megawatts entered the grid upon completion of maintenance works.

Sources confirmed that this is in addition to the 600 megawatts, which will be imported from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) this month.

Sources added the ministry is keen on providing the necessary productivity and is counting on rationalizing consumption this summer.

Consequently, Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem issued a ministerial decision to form a committee that will focus on rationalizing electricity and water consumption.

According to the decision, the committee will be chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity Dr. Adel Al-Zamil. Members of the committee will include specialists from the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Information, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, and the Kuwait Industries Union.

The committee's duties include:

■ Developing a comprehensive system of awareness programs that highlight the importance of rationalizing electricity and water consumption, and its direct impact on preserving public funds and the environment. These programs will be presented in various media outlets and social media platforms.

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Minister of Justice unveils plan to review Kuwait's legislative system

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait revealed a plan to review the entire legislative system in the country.

In response to a question about the potential introduction of new draft laws, Minister Al-Sumait explained that there will be a comprehensive review of Kuwait's legislative framework.

Kuwait currently has 982 laws in force, and the first phase of the review

will focus on ten percent of these laws. It will be divided into stages, beginning with the most important ones over the course of a year.

Speaking at a celebration held by the Embassy of Ghana to mark Independence Day a few days ago, Al-Sumait also announced the formation of a committee to study the timing of the implementation of the Personal Status Law.

He explained that the committee includes several judges, as well as heads and directors of the Public Prosecution Offices, and will consult with specialists as needed. All articles of the Personal Status Law, including those related to alimony, will be thoroughly reviewed. The committee has already begun its work and is expected to complete the task within the coming months.

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PM Diwan photo

Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

Kuwait gov't postpones work plan presentation

Cabinet lauds anti-money laundering efforts

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet on Tuesday heaped praise on the diligent efforts of state bodies to combat money laundering and terror financing, saying that such measures are firmly backed by the government.

Amid its weekly session presided over by Acting Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, the Cabinet lauded the efforts of Finance Minister and State Minister for Economic and Investment Affairs Nora Al-Fassam, in addition to Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Askar, saying that the measures introduced by the ministers serve to bolster Kuwait's reputation

as an active participant in the fight against money laundering.

Discussing the matter, the Finance Minister presented to the Cabinet a visual display over the intricacies of the aforementioned efforts, which include Kuwait's compliance with the objectives of global financial crime watchdog, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), she said, citing a monthly report by an ad hoc committee to clamp down on money laundering and terror financing.

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4th Ring overhaul on under new contracts

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan has announced the continuation of radical maintenance work on the Fourth Ring Road, as part of the new radical maintenance contracts for highway and internal roads, which include 18 major road maintenance projects in various governorates.

In a press statement Monday, Al-Mashaan affirmed the continuation of the implementation of road maintenance projects in all regions, with a full commitment to ensuring quality and meeting international standards.

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Workers carry out radical maintenance on the Fourth Ring Road as part of Kuwait's ongoing infrastructure upgrade projects.

Day by Day

DEAR Ministry of Public Works and Kuwait Municipality, beautifying Kuwait's facade is very important, but I would like to remind you not to overlook parking lots.

Many countries have already advanced in these projects by constructing multi-story parking facilities, both above and below ground. Some of these parking lots are being developed on a Build-Operate-Transfer (B.O.T.) basis by forming a partnership between companies and the government, which benefits everyone. Isn't it important to see such a beautiful sight in our country?

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:09	Asr	15:23
Sunrise ..	05:30	Maghrib ..	18:10
Zohr	11:50	Isha	19:29

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light variable wind to light to moderate north-westerly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.
By Night: Rather hot to mild with light variable wind to light

Weather			
to moderate southwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	37	20	

Abdaly	36	20
Jahra	37	22
Salmiyah	33	24
Jal Aliyah	35	21
Nuwaisib	36	22
Wafra	36	19

NCCAL launches art exhibition marking 60 years of Kuwait-Canada relations



Kuwaiti and Canadian artists Thuraya Al-Baq sami and Reda Dost.



Thuraya Al-Baq sami and Reda Dost with the Canadian ambassador to Kuwait.



KUNA photos

Some paintings on display at the exhibition.

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): The Kuwait National Council for Culture Arts and Literature (NCCAL) organized on Monday an artistic exhibition for Kuwaiti and Canadian artists Thuraya Al-Baq sami and Reda Dost respectively marking the 60 years of Kuwait-Canada partnership. Delivering a speech during opening the exhibition, Kuwait's Ambassador to Canada Aliya Mowani said art is an international language that could unify nations and cultures.

She noted that the exhibition sheds light on human innovation and shows arts as a bridge between the two countries. The ambassador pointed out that Al-Baq sami is an inspiring and pioneering personality on Kuwait's arena. The exhibition's coordinator Sara Khalaf said Kuwait and Canada have robust diplomatic ties since 1970s. She elaborated that cultural relations between the two countries are key part of collaboration.

Cultural activities and programs between the two sides witness prosperity as artistic exhibitions, cultural days and workshops are organized to boost the mutual understanding among nations, she noted. Al-Baq sami told KUNA that her artistic pieces stem from imaginative worlds based on female heroines and flying fish as well as childhood memories. Dost also said his portraits and collages are about human expressions, adding each piece shows a different human experiment.

Kuwait-Benin to ink MoU on house help, visa waiver

Tajik envoy hosts ceremony for outgoing envoy

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait Dr. Zubaydullah Zubaydov recently organized a ceremony, honoring Ambassador of Benin to Kuwait Moudgaidou Soumanou Issoufou on the occasion of the end of his tenure in the country.

The ceremony was held at the St. Regis Hotel, with several heads and representatives of diplomatic missions and a representative from the Protocol Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in attendance.

On this occasion, Zubaydov welcomed all those who attended the farewell ceremony for the outgoing Beninese Ambassador.

In his speech, Zubaydov praised the achievements of the outgoing ambassador throughout his eight years of work in Kuwait; during which he developed relations between the two countries and raised the level of cooperation in various fields.



Dr. Zubaydov

He revealed that Ambassador Soumanou presented his credentials to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait on Feb 7, 2017. "Over the course of eight years, he distinguished himself by representing his country in Kuwait in addition to being accredited as its ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)," he said.

He added Ambassador Soumanou, 66, a married father of three, proudly carried the flag of Benin. "During his tenure, he contributed significantly to strengthening bilateral relations and mutual cooperation between the Republic of Benin and the countries to which he is accredited," he added.

He also pointed out Ambassador Soumanou's cooperation with his fellow heads of diplomatic missions in the country, wishing him success in his future assignments.

Meanwhile, Soumanou praised the development of relations between Kuwait and the Republic of Benin in

many areas.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the celebration, he revealed that "important draft agreements have been initiated and are nearing completion. These include a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on domestic workers and an agreement on mutual exemption from visa requirements for holders of diplomatic, official and special passports. Remarkable progress has also been made in economic and development cooperation."

He cited the intensification of co-operation with Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), which has led to major investments in infrastructure projects.

He also confirmed that negotiations are underway with Gulf airlines and shipping companies to establish direct air routes, which will open new channels for trade and investment between Benin and the Gulf region.

He added the number of the Beninese community in Kuwait has grown from 900 individuals in 2017 to more than 8,800; reflecting successful efforts in this area.

Regarding the appointment of a new ambassador for his country to Kuwait, he affirmed that a new ambassador has been appointed and will begin his duties within a month.



KUNA photo

Guests at the inauguration of the exhibition.

'Art turns weapon to face Israeli occupation'

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub said recently artistic action has become one of the main weapons to confront the Israeli occupation and shed light on all facts related to Palestine's cause.

Tahboub made the statement to KUNA on the sidelines of opening artistic activities on Palestine, saying they aim to permanently highlight the Palestinian cause and refute the

claims of Israeli occupation about this issue.

Displaying movies will continue for three days, and the biggest show will be on Tuesday at the American University Theater, he stated.

"From Ground Zero" movie was directed by Palestinian Rashid Masharawi, who photographed it in Gaza three weeks after the start of the war of genocide, he said, noting that the movie was nominated for the 100th film festivals

in the world.

The activities began with Gaza Habibiti Photography exhibition by Palestinian photographers who documented life in Gaza without destruction and collected inspiring and diverse stories about Palestinian people, Shahboub pointed out.

The festival, which will last till Thursday, is organized by Palestine Embassy and the American University, Jump Kuwait and others.

Other Voices

Power rationing in mosques & more years at work

By Ahmad alsarraf

The retirement age varies between civilian and military government employees, with factors such as gender, years of service, and the nature of the job influencing the retirement age.

For male civil workers, the standard retirement age is 55, provided they have completed at least 15 years of service to qualify for a full pension. There are exceptions based on illness, job type, or death.

Women, on the other hand, are entitled to retire at age 50 after completing 15 years of service for a full pension. However, retirement can be taken as early as age 45 with 15 years of service, though this results in a reduced pension. This provision, often seen as controversial, was introduced by the religious political movement in the National Assembly with the aim of encouraging women to retire earlier and focus on staying at home.

Military employees are eligible for retirement at age 50, provided they have completed at least 15 years of service. There are some exceptions for special cases, and it is common in many armies worldwide to shorten the duration of military service.

When comparing these figures to those in European countries, where there is less demand for labor, working hours are longer, and retirement ages are significantly higher for both military personnel and civilian government employees. In most European countries, the retirement age is 65, with a maximum of 43 years of service required to qualify for a full pension.

Many European Union countries are gradually raising the retirement age in response to their aging populations. This is driven by economic factors and the need to reduce pressure on social security funds.



alsarraf

I write this in light of rumors that the government may seek to amend the law and raise the retirement age to 60. This move would be in response to the increase in life expectancy in Kuwait over the past three decades and to protect the Public Institution for Social Security from potential financial strain.

I believe this amendment is a positive step and should be part of a gradual increase in the retirement age over the next ten years, so that it is in line with, or at least close to being in line with, the standards set by most countries worldwide.

Beyond the economic benefits of delayed retirement, this amendment would allow experienced professionals in academic, technical, technological, and consultation fields to remain in the workforce, continue contributing, and pass on their knowledge to younger generations.

The Ministry of Islamic Affairs has issued a circular to all mosques urging them to rationalize electricity and water consumption and to avoid prolonging prayer times.

These decisions, such as turning off all mosques' air conditioning units (6,000 units) immediately after the Isha prayer and turning them back on one hour before the Fajr prayer, are measures we have long advocated for.

I had also previously offered to donate the cost of installing sensor-powered water taps on a trial basis in several mosques, with the idea that if they proved effective in significantly reducing water consumption, they could be implemented in the rest of the mosques. Unfortunately, I have received no response from the ministry, despite writing repeatedly about this matter.

The ministry's latest announcement is disappointing and highlights the lack of planning and careful thought in religious institutions. It reflects an inability to proactively save money and energy, instead of dealing with these issues only after disasters occur.

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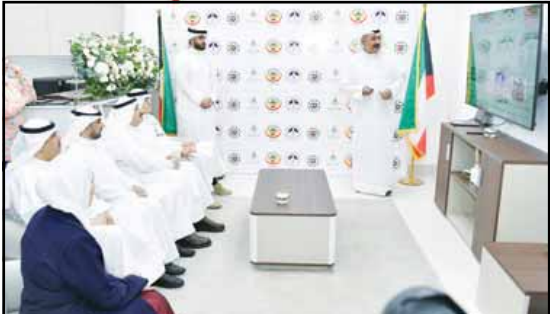
email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi inaugurates the center.



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and the officials .



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi gets an overview.



KUNA photos
Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi being briefed on the ambulances.

Dr Al-Awadhi graces opening ceremony

New ambulance center to provide 'high-end' medical care for public

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi has inaugurated the Al-Othman Ambulance Center in Hawally as part of the expansion plan of the ministry to increase the number of ambulance centers, improve the quality of medical services, and increase the speed of response to emergency cases.

In a press statement following the opening of the center, Al-Awadhi confirmed that the center is a welcome addition to the health system, which the ministry seeks to provide within a clear strategy to guarantee high-quality medical services for citizens and expatriates.

He stated that the center's opening was made possible through the generous support of the Al-Othman Family and a third of the late Abdullah Abdullatif Al-Othman's estate, in a commendable national initiative that reflects the spirit of community partnership and contributes to strengthening the health system and developing its services.

He pointed out that the center aims to serve the residents of Hawally and neighboring areas, and meet the growing demand for emergency services in one of the most active and vibrant areas of the country.

He added that Hawally is one of the vital areas in the country, containing large residential communities and extensive commercial and service activity, as well as number of schools and educational institutions, including schools for people with special needs. "This makes the presence of an integrated ambulance center essential to enhance the speed of response and the provision of emergency care," he clarified.

He said the Medical Emergency Department is looking forward to increasing the number of ambulance centers to improve the medical services and respond quickly to all

emergency cases requiring medical care.

On the other hand, Assistant Undersecretary for Medical Support Services Dr. Abdullah Al-Fars disclosed that the newly-opened center has 27 qualified emergency medical technicians, along with three ambulances with the latest medical equipment.

He said the center is the seventh in Hawally, following the opening of the Boulevard Complex Ambulance Center in 2024 and the Salwa Area Ambulance Center in 2022, in addition to the Mubarak, Salmiya and Rumaithiya centers.

He praised the efforts of the 212 emergency medical technicians, supported by 34 ambulances, currently operating in the area; indicating that the Hawally ambulance centers handled 6,318 reports last March.

Hawally Governor Ali Al-Asfar commended the vital role played by the Minister of Health and the highly accurate medical and treatment services provided by the ministry. He asserted that Al-Othman Ambulance Center will serve many areas, while praising the role of the Al-Othman family and their efforts to serve the people of Kuwait and the expatriates.

He pointed out that this humanitarian initiative reflects the spirit of giving and social responsibility. "The family of the late Abdullah Al-Othman generously donated a 109-square-meter site on the ground floor of the Al-Othman Commercial Center to establish the Al-Othman Ambulance Center, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health," he elaborated.

He said the center aims to enhance the speed of response to emergency cases and provide advanced ambulance services at the highest level of readiness. He revealed it was designed according to international standards with comprehensive medical equipment to meet the needs of the Emergency Department.

'Pilgrims enter S.Arabia April 13, leave April 29'

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has announced that April 13 will be the final date for pilgrims to enter the Kingdom for the Hajj season while April 29 is the last day for their departure, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a statement released on Monday by the Saudi Press Agency, the ministry warned that staying beyond the specified date will be considered a violation subjecting violators to legal penalties.

The ministry urged individuals, Umrah companies and institutions to comply with the regulations and instruc-

tions regarding the departure of pilgrims on time.

It clarified that any delay in departure -- beyond the deadline -- will be dealt with as a violation. Companies failing to report overstaying pilgrims may face fines of up to 100,000 Saudi Riyals; in addition to legal action against those responsible.

Moreover, the Saudi Ministry of Interior stated that it will impose fines on any company or institution offering services to pilgrims if they fail to notify the relevant authorities about any pilgrim who does not depart by the end of their authorized stay period.

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Tariffs shot in the foot ... Where are the skilled Trump advisers?

“PRESIDENT Donald Trump decided to impose tariffs on goods from other countries, believing this measure will generate significant revenue for his country. However, countries around the world will be forced to impose tariffs on US goods as well,”

Ahmad Al-Dawas wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“This measure will harm the American consumer, who will pay an additional cost estimated at \$3,800 per year. In other words, Trump’s tariffs will rebound on his own citizens at a time Americans are complaining about their declining purchasing power.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

“The United States imports fruits and vegetables from Canada and Mexico; coffee from Brazil and Colombia; olive oil from Italy, Greece and Spain; and rice from Thailand. The technology sector will also be affected, as China and Taiwan still produce the majority of Apple mobile phones. Some Asian countries export clothing and textiles to the United States, so prices will rise in the US market, harming consumers.

“Other countries will impose taxes on American cars, for example, and their prices will rise; prompting foreign consumers to reduce their demand for them and instead purchase cars from other countries.

“Thus, other countries will impose taxes on American imports, and public demand for imported American products will decline.

“The average American household will suffer an average loss of \$3,800 per year. As we write these lines, Americans have rushed to purchase imported televisions and sports equipment.

“Trump’s tariffs will fuel a global trade war, raise inflation in America and the world, and shake markets.

“Therefore, we are surprised that the US Secretary of Economy or the Secretary of the Treasury has no role at all in government decisions. Why didn’t this secretary prevent President Trump from making the decision to raise tariffs on imports?

“In America, there is no prime minister, and we know that the head of State there is the head of the Army or Armed Forces. But isn’t there an economics professor who can advise the president on the adverse consequences of his decision?

“Where are the high-ranking officials, the holders of advanced degrees who boast of their achievements and advise their leaders?

“Please excuse me, as many readers are more concerned about following useless and unhelpful social media sites than keeping up with everyday life. Politics and economics are extremely important in people’s lives. Here, we see peoples affected by their internal situations, the environment or disasters; while other countries are ruled by loyal leaders. I am writing the above lines to you, hoping they will be useful.”

Also:

“Over the past few decades, the state has played an important role in developing Kuwaiti human resources and society. Kuwait has achieved notable progress in human development indicators, and without a doubt, the Kuwaiti people possess an advanced culture, specialized expertise, and an enlightened public opinion,” columnist **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“We have heard many insightful national perspectives on the global trade war triggered by U.S. President Donald Trump’s decisions regarding tariffs. Kuwait, too, has been directly and indirectly affected by these decisions.

“Reports indicate that many countries around the world anticipated these decisions and the potential impact on their economies and the global market. After studying and analyzing them, these countries publicly announced their reactions. However, we have yet to hear any official statement or vision regarding the repercussions of these decisions on Kuwait and how they will be addressed.

“The public reaction preceded the official response. Nevertheless, it is important to understand the official stance in order to know how we will navigate the upcoming trade war and what the future holds for our national economy. We are left wondering how these decisions will affect our sovereign fund, which invests in the same markets that have been severely impacted. Can’t the relevant authorities offer us some reassurance?

“While there may be preparations or measures we are unaware of, it is essential for Kuwaiti citizens and investors to be informed about the official assessment of the new U.S. tariffs, their potential repercussions for us, and the strategies in place to

address and confront them.

“There is no doubt that the current state of the global economy and the ongoing international trade war could lead to a global inflationary recession, with its effects being particularly felt as oil prices decline.

“These developments certainly present significant challenges. However, they also provide an important opportunity to prepare for what lies ahead, create a clear economic vision, and implement reforms that will strengthen our national economy and address its imbalances.

“This is a huge opportunity, and we possess the necessary capabilities, distinguished expertise, and qualified human resources. All of this will greatly support us and strengthen national collaboration in tackling the challenges we face.

“The world is moving forward, so let us not miss the train.”

“In the world of education, two contrasting personalities stand out - the “professional teacher” who engages with parents in a purposeful and constructive manner, and the “traditional teacher” whose role is limited to merely listing grades during parent-teacher meetings and making statements such as, “Your son got 25 in assignments and 13 in the test, tell him to try harder among others,” columnist **Mohammad Nasser Al-Atawan** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

“A professional teacher is an expert in diagnosis and solutions. They offer a comprehensive analysis of the student’s personality and abilities, identify their strengths and suggest ways to enhance them, highlight challenges, and provide practical solutions for overcoming them. They recommend suitable learning strategies for struggling students, involve the parent in creating a clear improvement plan, track the student’s progress, suggest enrichment activities tailored to the student’s interests if they excel, and listen attentively to the parent’s feedback and take it into consideration.

“On the other hand, a traditional teacher simply presents the grades, without offering any analysis of why a student’s performance is high or low. They overlook the psychological and social aspects of the student, and fail to suggest solutions or improvement plans. Their role is reduced to merely transmitting information without any meaningful interaction. They do not take into consideration the student’s personal circumstances or challenges, lack follow-up, and do not use the meeting as an opportunity to build a partnership with the parent.

“Since the teaching profession requires a wide range of skills both inside and outside the classroom, particularly in interacting with students and their parents, it is important for a teacher to possess diagnostic abilities, tact in their approach, and a focus on practical solutions.

“Just as there are traditional and professional teachers, there are also traditional and professional parents. The traditional parent focuses solely on their child’s grades, and wants the latter to secure the highest possible marks. During meetings with the teacher, they often plead, “Please, teacher, don’t be too hard on him”. Such parents often take the professional teacher’s feedback personally. In contrast, the professional parent focuses on improving their child’s overall performance, asks the teacher to collaborate on an action plan, and informs the school of any changes that could affect the student (such as moving to a new home or the birth of a sibling).

“Therefore, dear reader, a society filled with traditional parents will inevitably produce traditional teachers.

“To improve communication within schools, I suggest that social workers organize workshops for teachers on “effective communication skills” such as how to begin conversations with positives and how to turn a “problem” into a “goal”.

“I also recommend that the department responsible for social workers train them to “build developmental partnerships” with parents, perhaps through joint workshops or interactive communication platforms.

“In addition, I encourage educational zone directors to support “train-the-trainer” courses to ensure the ongoing transfer of skills. I also urge educational leaders to allocate part of their budgets for “educational dialogue leadership” courses, as it is senior management that defines the institution’s culture.

“Lastly, I pray that this article is not taken personally, and I wish you all the best.”

— Compiled by **Mahmoud Attiyeh /Simi K.Kutty**



The Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior, Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah during his visit to the supply depot.

Minister conducts tour of army supply depot

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): The Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior, Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah, conducted an inspection visit to the Supply and Catering Authority in Subhan on Monday. He was accompanied by Major General (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army.

In a press statement released by the Ministry of Defense, Sheikh Abdullah commended the Authority for its crucial role in supporting the armed forces and enhancing their readiness. He praised the professionalism and dedication of its personnel, emphasizing their commitment to performing their duties with high standards of excellence.

Sheikh Abdullah encouraged the continued efforts of the team, urging them to maintain a strong sense of cooperation and dedication to serving the nation and fulfilling the aspirations of the country’s leadership, particularly His Highness

the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The statement noted that the visit began with Sheikh Abdullah viewing a detailed presentation on the Authority’s primary responsibilities and its essential role in supporting the military system. The presentation also highlighted ongoing development projects and initiatives aimed at improving performance efficiency and enhancing technical and logistical readiness.

During his tour, the Minister visited several key facilities within the Authority. He was briefed on the progress of operations in the Maintenance Command, the Weapons and Ammunition Camp, and specialized technical workshops. Additionally, he was informed about the procedures for handling sensitive materials and the security and safety measures implemented in the storage warehouses.

Death ruling upheld ... mom-in-law killed while man firing at his wife

Action premeditated: Prosecution

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud/Munif Naif**
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Court of Cassation upheld the verdict issued by the Court of Appeals which sentenced a 40-year-old Kuwaiti citizen to death for murdering his mother-in-law using a Kalashnikov rifle in Wafra. He had also planned to kill his wife after she refused to continue their marriage.

The court’s decision was based on a psychiatric report that confirmed that he was

fully aware of his actions.

The Public Prosecution had charged the perpetrator with premeditated murder, accusing him of preparing a Kalashnikov for the attack, ambushing his wife, and attempting to stop her while she was with her daughter. She and her daughter tried to escape when he fired multiple times at them with the intention of killing them. However, the bullets struck his mother-in-law, which led to her death.

During the investigation, the wife confirmed that they had ongoing disagreements and that he had repeatedly threatened to harm her. The perpetrator was arrested while hiding in the desert, where he had planned to attack other relatives.

31 caught with drugs: Over the past six days, police patrols referred 31 individuals to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) in the Interior Ministry for possession of substances suspected to be narcotics.

The department explained to the police patrols that the continuous security campaigns throughout the country aim to ensure public order and arrest all those wanted by law.

The recent campaigns resulted in the arrest of 252 wanted persons and those who violated the Residency Law, as well as the seizure of 96 vehicles wanted by the judiciary.

Arab expat worker perishes in fall from building

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: An Arab expat, born in 1975, died when he fell from a building under construction in Mutlaa, reports Al-Anba daily.

The colleagues of the deceased informed the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry about the incident. The unit immediately dispatched patrol officers and an ambulance at the scene, where it was confirmed that the Arab expat had passed away.

Forensic personnel referred the body to the Criminal Evidence General Department at the ministry.

A case was registered and investigations are ongoing to establish the circumstances leading to the fatal fall.

In another incident, an expat, born in 1984, was

rushed to Jahra Hospital after sustaining multiple injuries. He was admitted to the intensive care unit as he is in critical condition.

Investigations are underway to determine the cause of the injuries.

Drugs seized: Officers from the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry arrested an expatriate for the possession of seven kilograms of narcotics and some Lyrica capsules, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source disclosed that the arrest was based on a tip-off regarding an unemployed indi-

vidual residing illegally in the country and trafficking in drugs. After conducting a thorough investigation and taking legal action, the suspect was apprehended at a hotel.

During the search, the officers seized two kilograms of hashish from the suspect. Further investigation led to the discovery of an additional five kilograms of hashish and Lyrica capsules at his residence.

When interrogated, the suspect confessed to distributing narcotics and psychotropic substances to young people and teenagers, and that he was smuggling drugs from abroad. The suspect and the confiscated items were handed over to the concerned authorities for legal action.



Damage caused by the fire.

Two people injured in Jleeb apartment fire

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Fire broke out in an apartment in a residential building in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh on Tuesday morning resulting in two cases of suffocation.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Sumoud and Ardiya fire stations rushed to the location and immediately extinguished the fire. The two individuals who suffered from suffocation were given necessary treatment by paramedics at the scene. Once the situation was handled, the relevant authorities took over the site for investigation.

26 kg of drugs seized

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Customs inspectors of the Air Cargo Customs Department intercepted an attempt to smuggle over 26 kilograms of illegal drugs hidden inside a parcel from a European country, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Suspicious of an incoming shipment, the inspectors decided to examine the package more closely, and they uncovered a stash of drugs, including 12 kilograms of marijuana, 11.25 kilograms of hashish, and 3 kilograms of cocaine, all cleverly concealed inside the parcel.

The authorities immediately took action, documenting the incident and initiating the necessary legal procedures. The seized drugs have since been handed over to the relevant authorities for further investigation, as the case continues to unfold.

Market opens for ‘prisoners’

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Police Cooperative Society, in collaboration with the General Department of Correctional Institutions, announced the opening of an integrated central market at the Ministry of Interior camp in Subhan, which will be dedicated to providing safe food items and groceries to inmates of correctional institutions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that this initiative is in line with the directives of the acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior or Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef and Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf. It reflects a commitment to promoting human rights.

The goal of this project is to make it easier for inmates to access their daily needs by allowing their families to visit the market where they can purchase required food items and groceries. These items will then be delivered to the inmates inside the correctional institutions in an organized and secure manner, with receipts documented.

The ministry indicated that an electronic service will soon be launched, which will allow inmates’ families to submit requests and purchase supplies directly online.

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Minister Al-Tabtabaei’s patronage highlights national commitment to youth values

Al-Baghli Foundation honors 87 outstanding students in annual awards

By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli Foundation for the Pious Son has announced the winners in the four categories of the Al-Baghli Prize for the Pious Son. The total number of winners reached 87 out of 4,020 public school students who participated in the competitions for the 13th consecutive academic year under the patronage of Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei. The winners were revealed during a press conference held recently at the Ibrahim Al-Baghli Events Hall in Rumaithiya in the presence of Chairman of the Board of Directors of the foundation Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development and Activities at the ministry Maryam

Al-Enezi, the Kuwait Boy Scouts Association president, the Kuwait Girl Guides Association president, and a number of individuals who are active in the educational and volunteer fields. Al-Baghli expressed his happiness over meeting the students for the 13th consecutive academic year through his sponsorship of the competitions. This stems from his belief in the importance of translating the directives and aspirations of the minister to activate the role of the ministry in promoting the virtue of piety within the student community. Al-Baghli emphasized that the foundation’s approach to implement the project for public school students is in line with the philosophy of the ministry regarding consolidating the values, goals and fun-



Photo taken during the press conference.

damental directions adopted by the student community through its faith and heritage, as well as the formula it has adopted for its social and political systems, as expressed in its basic charters.

He pointed out it is useful to cite what relates to education in the Constitution, which stipulates the care of the young is the responsibility of the State. “Education is a fundamental pillar of progress for all,

and it is entrusted and sponsored by the State. Education is a right and a duty for Kuwaitis in its early stages,” he added. Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the award Ali Hassan extended his sincere thanks and appreciation to Al-Baghli for his tremendous efforts in encouraging charitable and volunteer work in Kuwaiti society in general, and among members of the student community in particular. Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development and Activities Maryam Al-Enezi pointed out “it is wonderful to see charitable societies and foundations cooperating with the ministry and playing a role in encouraging students about the very important topic of honoring parents.” She affirmed that the ministry is

always keen on establishing community partnerships, including the Ibrahim Al-Baghli Foundation for the Pious Son. “This foundation is known for its competitions, as well as its participation and support for the activities; while the ministry is committed to participate in the project to promote the value of honoring parents among children. The ministry participates in this competition in three categories -- short stories, artistic drawings and volunteer work related to community service,” Al-Enezi revealed. Al-Enezi added the General Directorate of Arabic Language, General Directorate of Art Education, and Artistic Directorate of Girl Guides and Scouts supervise these competitions; indicating the ministry is keen on generalizing the competitions to all levels.

Director General post added to MoE

Move ends decades of informal status for key role

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Since the educational district director general position has remained outside the organizational structure of the Education Ministry for several decades -- without an official title and included only in the correspondence and libraries of the ministry, Secretary of the Civil Service Council and President of the Civil Service Commission Essam Al-Rubaian informed

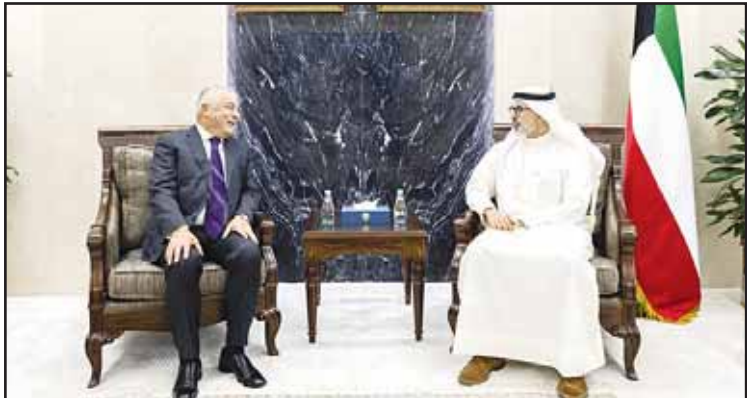
the ministry about the approval to create a new supervisory position called, ‘Director General’, in the organizational structure of ministries, government departments and public institutions subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Law and Regulations. According to the council’s deci-



Al-Rubaian

sion, the following requirements apply to this position: 1. A suitable university degree with at least 14 years of post-graduation experience, 2. Pass a personal interview conducted by the Personnel Affairs Committee of the relevant entity, 3. The term of the position shall be four years, renewable only once with the approval of the relevant minister, 4. In the event that employees from outside the government entity are nominated, the nomination shall be presented to the Civil Service Council on a case-by-case basis. The resolution defined the duties and responsibilities of the Director General. Directors General will be responsible for supervising and coordinating be-

tween departments with similar mandates, ensuring the efficient implementation of policies and operational plans, following up on the implementation of sector strategies, monitoring administrative and technical performance, and submitting periodic reports to the relevant sector agent. In addition, the job’s responsibilities include analyzing achievements and challenges, recommending performance improvements, supervising employee evaluations and training and development needs, ensuring compliance with administrative regulations and laws, contributing to streamlining procedures and enhancing operational efficiency, and overseeing the implementation of sector-specific projects and initiatives according to established timelines.



KUNA photo

Kuwait Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Tajikistan Ambassador to the country Zubaidallah Zabidov, where they touched on the bilateral ties as well as the latest regional and global developments.

Pension disbursements on schedule

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Public Institution for Social Security affirmed that pension disbursements will continue on the scheduled dates without any changes, reports Al-Seyassah daily. It highlighted its commitment to

continue serving beneficiaries and providing the highest levels of support and care. The institution clarified that any changes to the pension disbursement date would be officially announced through the appropriate channels.

Can acquired rights be altered?

Pension reform sparks legal alarm

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The proposal to amend exceptional pensions granted under Article 80 of Social Security Law No. 61/1976 has sparked controversy and raised questions about its legitimacy, reports Al-Jarida daily. The proposal challenges the notion that pensions are an ‘acquired right’ for their beneficiaries. Attorney Bassam Al-Asousi conducted a legal study, scrutinizing the implications of the proposed amendment and its legal groundwork. Article 80 of the aforementioned law grants the Council of Ministers the discretionary authority to award exceptional pensions to individuals whose service is terminated through retirement, resignation or non-renewal of their contracts. The article states: By a decision of the Council of Ministers, exceptional pensions or benefits may be granted to insured persons, pensioners, their beneficiaries or other Kuwaitis, even if they are not subject to the provisions of this law. It also clarified that, unless specified otherwise, the provisions of the Social Insurance Law will apply to these exceptional pensions and benefits. Over time, the Council of Ministers has established criteria for granting these pensions, particularly for those in leadership positions, in accordance with Article 80. For many years, recipients of exceptional pensions have continued to receive their benefits on a regular basis. However, a recent proposal to amend the way these pensions are granted has led to significant debate about the legitimacy of such an amendment. Critics question whether such a change will infringe upon the established legal status of exceptional pension recipients, given that these pensions have come to be viewed as acquired rights. This led to confusion over the concept of acquired rights -- what they are, and whether the pensions granted under Article 80 fall within their scope. In his legal analysis, Al-Asousi pointed out a fundamental principle of law -- non-retroactivity. This principle, which underpins legal stability and individual freedoms, prohibits the application of new laws to situations that were legally established under previous laws. He explained that the non-



Al-Asousi

retroactivity principle serves to ensure trust in the law and maintain social stability. He disclosed that “our aim in this study is to address the confusion surrounding the issue of acquired rights, to clarify their meaning, and to understand their relationship to exceptional pensions under Article 80.” While he acknowledged that the concept of acquired rights is well-established in legal theory, he said the interpretation continues to evolve with changing circumstances. “The issue arises when a new law aims to modify the legal status of individuals who have benefited from a law in force at the time of their entitlement. The legal concept of acquired rights emerged as a direct result of the principle of non-retroactivity. This principle protects individuals from retroactive changes to their legal status, which could undermine their previously established rights. In this context, applying a new law to a situation governed by an older law is a violation of an acquired right, as it could alter or revoke benefits that were once guaranteed,” he elaborated. To clarify the confusion, Al-Asousi delved into the definition of ‘acquired rights’ and distinguished them from mere expectations or hopes. He argues that an acquired right is a legal status that ensures protection for a benefit, safeguarding it from cancellation or modification. He presented this definition ‘an acquired right is a legal status whereby a benefit, obtained through a legal document, is protected from cancellation or modification.’ He went on to clarify the distinction between legal status and immunization. He said legal status refers to a set of rights and obligations that a person enjoys, while immunization refers to the legal protection that shields these rights from being altered or revoked. “It is important to note that benefits in question can include both material (financial) and moral (non-financial), which are equally protected under the principle of acquired rights,” he added. The proposed amendments to exceptional pensions granted under Article 80 raised important legal questions about the nature of acquired rights and their protection. Al-Asousi’s legal analysis stressed the importance of maintaining legal stability and the non-retroactivity of laws to safeguard individuals’ established rights. As the debate continues, it is crucial to recognize the legal implications of altering the status of exceptional pension recipients and to ensure that any changes to the law do not infringe upon their acquired rights.

News in Brief

Co-ops donate KD 254K to aid debtors: The Ministry of Social Affairs announced that it has received nearly a quarter of a million dinars from three co-operative societies to contribute to the national campaign “Your Support, Their Joy 3” aimed at repaying loans of imprisoned debtors, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The ministry explained that Zahraa Cooperative Society donated KD 199,058, Farwaniya Cooperative Society donated KD 27,387, and Ahmadi Cooperative Society donated KD 27,512. **1,788 plots connected to drinking water:** The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy announced the delivery of drinking water to a total of 1,788 plots in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak City, Blocks 2, 4, and 6, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The ministry called on the residents of these blocks to submit fresh water connection requests via the ministry’s website or the Sahel app. **MPW received 3,241 reports in March:** The Ministry of Public Works received 3,241 reports through hotline number 150 in March, reports Al-Jarida daily. The ministry confirmed that the specialized emergency teams in various governorates and sectors immediately dealt with these reports.

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Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi talks space achievements and scientific impact

UAE astronaut inspires Kuwaiti students at KFAS lecture

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Minister of State for Youth Affairs in the United Arab Emirates and astronaut Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi gave a lecture on Monday during his visit to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), in which he shared his pioneering experiences in space and his accomplishments in the field.

According to a press release issued by KFAS, the lecture was attended by the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi, fellow astronauts Mohammed Al-Mulla and Noura Al-Matrooshi, and several KFAS officials and space research enthusiasts.

Dr. Al-Neyadi reflected on his participation in the longest Arab space mission, which lasted six months aboard the International Space Station, and his achievement as the first Arab astronaut to walk in space.

He also delved into topics related to space exploration and scientific advancements, as well as shared his contributions to over 200 scientific experiments in microgravity, covering areas such as plant cultivation and sleep physiology.

Meanwhile, astronaut Mohammed Al-Mulla also shared his journey, which began as the youngest pilot in the Dubai Police at age 19. He went on to join the UAE Astronaut Program in 2021 and graduated from NASA in March 2024 after completing extensive training, including spacewalks and space station systems.

Furthermore, astronaut Noura Al-Matrooshi spoke about her passion for science, mathematics, and engineering, and highlighted her selection as the first Emirati and Arab woman in the UAE Astronaut Program. She described this as a pivotal moment in her career.

Al-Matrooshi said she applied in 2021 to be accepted into the second batch of the program and was chosen from over 4,000 applicants. Her rigorous training in spacewalking and robotics prepared her for future space missions, culminating in her 2024 graduation.



KFAS photo Minister of State for Youth Affairs in the United Arab Emirates and astronaut Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi with fellow astronauts Mohammed Al-Mulla and Noura Al-Matrooshi, during their visit to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences.

The symposium was also attended by several members of the Kuwait-Sat-1 team, and students from Kuwait University, and KFAS' Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity.

During Dr. Al-Neyadi's visit, discussion sessions were held on the future of space research, coinciding with KFAS's recent announcement of the launch of the "Kuwait Space Research Center." These discussions explored the center's aspirations to advance scientific research and strengthen national capabilities in the space exploration field.

KFAS expressed its pride in hosting the event, which combined inspiration and ambition. It stressed that Dr. Al-Neyadi's visit offered a unique opportunity for attendees, especially Kuwaiti youth, to gain firsthand experience.

KFAS also commended the fruitful cooperation with the United Arab Emirates, highlighting both countries' commitment to promoting innovation and leadership in science and technology.

It affirmed its commitment to nurturing interest in space and scientific research by hosting a number of experts and pioneers in the field, with the aim of inspiring future generations and enhancing Kuwait's role in space research and technology.

In his lecture, Dr. Al-Neyadi highlighted the significance of such visits in strengthening the fraternal relations between the two countries.

He commended the establishment of the Kuwait Space Research Center, which he believes will support scientific progress and inspire a new generation in the region to be interested in space science.

Dr. Al-Neyadi also praised Kuwait's visionary approach to making meaningful scientific contributions that serve humanity.

Continued from Page 1

Crown Prince

His Highness Crown Prince's Office Director Lieutenant General Jamal Al-Thayab and Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at His Highness Crown Prince's Diwan Mazen Al-Issa attended the meeting.

4th Ring

She pointed out that investment in infrastructure enhances economic growth, improves the quality of life, and supports sustainable development.

She explained that road maintenance works play an effective role in achieving economic and social development goals and improving the quality of life, as part of the strategic transformation vision for the New Kuwait 2035. She asserted that infrastructure is the backbone of any country.

Meanwhile, Eng. Abdullah Al-Naqi -- supervisor of Project No. 11, First Ring Road, Intersection of Third, Fourth and Fifth Ring Roads, and King Faisal Road -- stated that the concerned ministry teams have been assigned at the Fourth Ring Road intersection of King Fahad Road to monitor the latest developments in the implementation of radical maintenance contracts.

He disclosed that work is underway to spread the adhesive layer and the 'Type 3' layer across the road and replace expansion joints.

He urged the citizens and expatriates to follow up with the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry to find out if there is any road closure in order to avoid traffic jams.

Kuwait launches

- Communicating with civil society organizations and productive economic sectors to raise awareness about the need to conserve electricity and water, particularly during the summer and peak hours from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. The committee will also conduct periodic field visits to customers who record the highest consumption of electricity and water.
 - Raising community awareness on the need to adopt energy efficient systems and water conservation technologies in private, investment, and commercial residential buildings, factories, agricultural holdings, and public institutions.
 - Organizing workshops and lectures in public benefit associations, universities, and schools to raise awareness about the importance of rationalizing electricity and water consumption.
 - Collaborating with the private sector and scientific and research institutions in the country, such as Kuwait University, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, to implement joint projects, including the use of renewable energy technologies on building roofs and improving cooling (air conditioning) systems.
- In addition, the ministry announced that the committee will hold its first meeting in the coming days to set priorities. It affirmed the importance of coordinated efforts to achieve the set goals.
- Meanwhile, Al-Rai daily reported that the Ministry of Electricity and Water has strengthened its production capacity by adding three new units. The return of a production unit at the Al-Zour South Power Plant to service helped prevent scheduled power outages in three residential areas. As a result, the ministry only had to cut power to four industrial areas and three agricultural areas yesterday, while residential areas remained unaffected.
- According to informed sources, the ministry's successful restart of a production unit at Al-Zour South Power Plant ensured that power outages in three residential areas were avoided. This was in line with the ministry's earlier announcement that power cuts might be necessary in Hawally, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, and Sabah Al-Ahmad due to increased electrical loads. However, the ministry managed to limit outages to just seven industrial and agricultural areas.
- The sources said, "The quick return of the Al-Zour South Power Plant to service played a major role in increasing production capacity. As a result, the ministry was able to avoid cutting power to the residential areas previously mentioned in its statement. The addition of three new units to the grid on Tuesday, following the completion of maintenance work, will enhance the ministry's production capacity compared to consumption rates. This move also supports the Gulf network, which receives 740 megawatts of power."

In a statement, the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy said the scheduled power outages in certain areas were necessary due to ongoing maintenance of some power generation units, in preparation for full operation during the summer.

It stated, "The scheduled power outages in seven industrial and agricultural areas are necessary to maintain the stability of the country's electricity system. Power will be restored to these areas once the electricity grid stabilizes."

It is worth mentioning that the ministry resorted to cutting power to industrial areas - Shuwaikh Industrial, Al-Rai, Subhan, and Mina Abdullah - as well as agricultural areas - Wafra, Abdali, and Rawdatain - on Monday after the electrical load indicator reached the 11,000-megawatt mark.

In another development, the ministry announced Monday that it has started receiving water connection requests for plots 2, 4 and 6 in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak City; which consists of 1,788 plots. The residents in these plots can submit a request for water connection through the website of the ministry and Sahel application.

Minister of

In addition, Al-Sumait revealed that there are strong directives from the political leadership to provide full support to women, which will be reflected in the upcoming amendments.

Kuwait warns

Al-Jarallah expressed Kuwait's condemnation in the strongest terms of the continued systematic violations by the occupying power against the defenseless Palestinian people and the targeting of the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

He also expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation of the recent Israeli aggression, which resulted in the killing of a number of civilians gathered at Dar Al-Arqam School shelter and the destruction of a warehouse containing medical and relief supplies belonging to the Saudi Center for Culture and Heritage in Gaza Strip.

Al-Jarallah reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to supporting UNESCO's efforts in promoting education and ensuring the implementation of the organization's agreed-upon resolutions to protecting educational and cultural institutions in Palestine.

in the same vein, he said that Kuwait allocates a budget of no less than 12 percent of the total national spending to improve the quality of education and update curricula to keep pace with global developments and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

He explained that the country seeks to enhance investment in educational infrastructure and develop human capital, as education represents one of the fundamental pillars of Kuwait 2035 vision.

Kuwait is making great efforts to promote inclusive education and social integration for children with disabilities by formulating educational and social policies that guarantee equal opportunities for people with disabilities and enable them to effectively integrate into society, Al-Jarallah noted.

He pointed out that these efforts included the launch of the "Partners for Employment" initiative, which succeeded in achieving the integration of people with disabilities into society through a partnership model between the government, the private sector, and civil society.

Cabinet lauds

In a similar presentation, the Commerce and Industry Minister outlined his ministry's commitment towards a Cabinet decision that shifted the inspection of currency exchange outlets to Kuwait's Central Bank, which in turn, would regulate the works of the local currency exchange market.

On the healthcare front, the Cabinet said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled A-Hamad Al-Sabah in attendance, will be sponsoring the opening of a new maternity hospital in Al-Sabah medical zone early on Wednesday.

The Cabinet was also informed that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah will be representing His Highness the Amir in a gala set to take place in Germany to mark the 50th anniversary since the start of Kuwait's partnership with German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz Group AG.

The Cabinet went on to look into a number of letters addressed to His Highness the Amir from leaders of friendly nations, all of which focus on efforts to strengthen Kuwait's ties with these countries across various fields.

The Cabinet also approved a decision to strip Kuwaiti citizenship off a number of individuals, based on the works and findings of a national committee formed to investigate the matter.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's government has postponed a visual presentation on its work plan that was initially slated for April 10, its communication center said on Tuesday.

The delay comes as part of efforts to ensure that the presentation would take into account recent developments and current happenings, subsequently allowing for a more complete and inclusive work plan, it added, citing that a new date for the visual display would be announced after technical matters are sorted out.

UAE, Kuwait strengthen scientific and space ties

Emirati ambassador calls for deeper collaboration

By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi has affirmed the strong fraternal relations between the UAE and Kuwait; citing cooperation and mutual respect in various fields; particularly Science, space and youth empowerment.

In a press statement on the occasion of the UAE Embassy in Kuwait hosting Emirati astronauts as part of joint cooperation programs, Al-Neyadi expressed his pride in these relations and his aspiration for broader cooperation in Science and space, as well as youth development, to achieve common goals and reflect the unique relationship between the two countries. He stated "I am happy to welcome you to the embassy. Thank you for accepting the invitation. I am proud of the deep fraternal relations that bind our countries at various levels. We aspire for stronger cooperation in scientific fields, especially space, as well as the youth sector; in order to expand horizons and achieve common goals."

Al-Neyadi stressed that the UAE Space Program is a promising model for sustainable investment in Science, as it opens new horizons for youths and enhances the role of Science in development.



KUNA photo UAE astronaut Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi during his visit to the Kuwait's space museum.

He pointed out the significant impact of Emirati astronauts, including Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi, Mohammed Al-Mulla and Noura Al-Matrooshi, in inspiring a spirit of competition and a passion for acquiring knowledge among students in Kuwait. He stated that "cooperation on the KuwaitSat satellite project is a successful example of scientific cooperation between the two countries. We look forward to more joint projects in the fields of Science and future professions."

He also commended the efforts of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and its scientific programs; while appreciating its hosting of young people from the Emirati Rubu' Qarn Foundation in 2023 and 2024, as part of a scientific program rich in knowledge and experience.

"Investing in and empowering the youth are priorities for our wise leadership, as they are considered the foundation of development and its sustainability. We are certain that exchanging visits and continuing these initiatives will open new horizons for joint work and improve the team spirit among the youths of both countries," Al-Neyadi concluded.

Meanwhile, Head of the Physics Department at Kuwait University and Director of the National Satellite Project 'KuwaitSat 1' Dr. Hala Khaled Al-Jassar praised the UAE's successful and ambitious space experience; thereby, serving as an inspiration for Gulf and Arab youths in general.

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Texas governor calls Nov election for vacant US House seat as Democrats criticize timing

HOUSTON, April 8, (AP): Texas Republican Gov. Greg Abbott announced Monday that a special election to fill the late Democratic US Rep Sylvester Turner's seat won't be held until November and defended the timing by renewing criticism of past Houston-area elections.

Abbott's announcement that the special election will be on Nov. 4 came as Democrats have accused the governor of delaying the election after Turner's March 5 death to help Republicans maintain their razor-thin margin in the US House. Abbott has the sole

authority to call for a special election. The governor said the wait "will give Harris County sufficient time to prepare for such an important election."

Harris County, where Houston is located, has faced scrutiny in recent years because of problems that have included long lines, poll worker and ballot shortages and ballots that were not counted the day of the election.

"Safe and secure elections are critical to the foundation of our state," Abbott said in a news release. "Forcing Harris County to rush this special election on weeks' notice would harm the interests of voters."

With 5 million residents, most of whom are Latino or Black, the county is the most populous in Texas and the third-most populous in the US.

Harris County Attorney Christian Menefee, one of the candidates vying for Turner's old seat, criticized the wait. Menefee had called for an election in June.

"It is unconscionable to leave nearly 800,000 people in this district without representation in Congress for most of the year," Menefee said in a statement. "We'll go through hurricane season, budget battles, and attacks on Social Security and Medicaid with no one at the table fighting for us."



Texas Gov Greg Abbott sits before US President Donald Trump arrives to speak at an education event and executive order signing in the East Room of the White House in Washington on March 20. (AP)

Trump administration fires senior Navy female officer at NATO, say US officials

WASHINGTON, April 8, (AP): US Navy Vice Adm Shoshana Chatfield, the only woman on NATO's military committee, was fired over the weekend by the Trump administration, U.S. officials said Monday.

Although no reason was given, officials said it was apparently tied to comments she has made that supported diversity in the force.

According to the officials, Chatfield got a call from Adm. Christopher Grady, the acting chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was told the administration wanted to go in a different direction with the job.

The officials said they believe the decision was made last week by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, but it was unclear whether he received any direction from President Donald Trump. Three U.S. officials spoke about the firing on condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters.

Chatfield is the third top female officer to be fired since Trump took office. Hegseth announced in February that he was firing the chief of naval operations, Adm. Lisa Franchetti. And Trump fired Coast



This undated file image released by the U.S. Navy shows Vice Adm. Shoshana Chatfield. (AP)

Guard Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan just a day after he was sworn in.

Trump and Hegseth have been vocal in their insistence that so-called woke policies are dead. There has been a vigorous campaign to remove leaders who promoted diversity, equity and inclusion, and

to erase DEI programs and online content.

Chatfield was on a list of senior military officers targeted as "woke" by the conservative American Accountability Foundation, which sent a letter to Hegseth saying that "purging the woke from the military is imperative."

Chatfield, a Navy helicopter pilot who also commanded a joint reconstruction team in Afghanistan, had been serving as one of the 32 representatives on NATO's military committee. The panel is the primary source of military advice to the North Atlantic Council and NATO's Nuclear Planning Group, according to NATO. It serves as the link between the political decision-makers and NATO's military structure.

Sen. Mark Warner, a Democrat from Virginia, said he was "deeply disturbed" by the firing.

"Trump's relentless attacks on our alliances and his careless dismissal of decorated military officials make us less safe and weaken our position across the world," Warner said in a post on X.

‘New level of government scrutiny’

Colleges around US say some international students' visas being revoked

WASHINGTON, April 8, (AP): Colleges around the country are reporting some of their international students' visas are being revoked unexpectedly, expressing alarm over what appears to be a new level of government scrutiny.

Visas can be canceled for a number of reasons, but college leaders say the government has been quietly terminating students' legal residency status with little notice to students or schools. That marks a shift from past practice and leaves students vulnerable to detention and deportation.

The list of colleges that have discovered students have had their legal status terminated includes Harvard, Stanford, Michigan, UCLA and Ohio State University.

The Trump administration has targeted students who had been involved with pro-Palestinian activism or speech, with a few high-profile detentions of students including Mahmoud Khalil, a green card holder who was a leader of protests at Columbia University.

But more schools are seeing visas stripped from students with no known connection to protests. In some cases, past infractions such as traffic violations have been cited. Some colleges say the reasons remain unclear to them — and they are seeking answers.

"What you're seeing happening with international students is really a piece of the much greater scrutiny that the Trump administration is bringing to bear on immigrants of all different categories," said Michelle Mittelstadt, director of public affairs at the Migration Policy Institute.

Many college officials and students have only found out about the changes when they have checked a federal database and seen changes to an individual's immigration status.

Students in other countries must meet a series of requirements to obtain a student visa, usually an F-1. After gaining admission to a school in the US, students go through an application and interview process at a US embassy or consulate abroad.



A student walks by the Rush Rhees Library at the University of Rochester on Feb 22, 2023. (AP)

Students on an F-1 visa must show they have enough financial support for their course of study in the US. They have to remain in good standing with

their academic program and are generally limited in their ability to work off-campus during their academic program.

Entry visas are managed by the State Department. Once they're in the US, international students' legal status is overseen by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program under the Department of Homeland Security.

Leaders at many colleges learned the legal status of some of their international students had been terminated when they checked a database managed by Homeland Security. In the past, college officials say, visas typically were revoked after schools updated the government when students fell out of status.

Historically, students who had their visas revoked were allowed to keep their legal residency status and complete their studies.

The lack of a valid visa only limited their ability to leave the US and return, something they could reapply for with the State Department. But if a student has lost residency status, they must leave immediately or risk detention by immigration authorities.

Higher education leaders worry the

arrests and revocations could have a chilling effect on international education in the United States.

The lack of clarity of what is leading to revocations can create a sense of fear among students, said Sarah Spreitzer, vice president of government relations at the American Council on Education.

"The very public actions that are being taken by ICE and the Department of Homeland Security around some of these students, where they are removing these students from their homes or from their streets, that's not usually done unless there is a security issue when a student visa is revoked," she said. "The threat of this very quick removal is something that's new."

In messages to their campuses, colleges have said they are asking the federal government for answers on what led to the terminations. Others have re-emphasized travel precautions to students, recommending they carry their passport and other immigration documents with them.



King Charles III, right, meets Italy's President Sergio Mattarella at the Quirinale Presidential Palace, in Rome, Tuesday, April 8, 2025. (AP)

UK royals meet Italy's president, enjoy special tour of Colosseum

King Charles III and Queen Camilla met Italian President Sergio Mattarella on Tuesday, the second day of a state visit to Italy that marks the British monarch's first overseas trip since he was briefly hospitalized for side effects from his cancer treatment.

The royal couple then visited some of Rome's most iconic monu-

ments, including the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, located in Piazza Venezia, where they laid a wreath. They enjoyed a special tour of the Colosseum, where they met a group of schoolchildren and were greeted by a cheering crowd of locals and tourists.

Charles and Camilla were escorted to the Quirinale Palace by

a group of over 30 mounted presidential guards and were greeted by Mattarella and his daughter in the palace's courtyard.

The royal visit was also celebrated with a joint flyover of the presidential palace by the Italian air force's aerobatic team, known as Freccia Tricolore, and the RAF's Red Arrows. (AP)

Kryvyi Rih mourns kids killed by Russian missile

2 Chinese caught fighting for Russia: Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, April 8, (AP): The Ukrainian military has captured two Chinese men fighting with the Russian army in the eastern Donetsk region, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced Tuesday.

Ukraine has information that there are "significantly more" Chinese fighting alongside the Russians in the more than three-year war, Zelenskyy said, adding that he has asked his top diplomat "to immediately contact Beijing and find out how China is going to react to this."

China has provided strong diplomatic support for Russia since it launched its full-scale invasion of its neighbor, which was widely criticized in the West. Beijing has also contributed an economic lifeline through the trade in energy and consumer goods.

However, China is not known to have provided Russia with weapons or military expertise, unlike Iran and North Korea, with the latter even providing troops, according to American and South Korean officials.

Russia allows foreigners to enlist in its military, as does Ukraine. The pay offered by Moscow makes serving for Russia attractive.

Also:

KRYVYI RIH, Ukraine: Anger and



Teachers with their children participate in a farewell ceremony for three schoolchildren from 41st school killed by a Russian rocket strike in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine on April 7. (AP)

outrage gripped the hometown of Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskyy** on Monday as it held funerals for some of the 20 people, including nine children, killed by a Russian missile that tore through apartment buildings and blasted a playground.

More than 70 were wounded in the attack last Friday evening on Kryvyi

Rih. The children were playing on swings and in a sandbox in a tree-lined park at the time. Bodies were strewn across the grass.

"We are not asking for pity," **Oleksandr Vilkul**, the head of the city administration, wrote on Telegram as Kryvyi Rih mourned. "We demand the world's outrage."

Garbage piles up on Birmingham's streets as sanitation strike in city enters 5th week

LONDON, April 8, (AP): There is a stink rising over the United Kingdom's second-largest city.

Garbage has piled up for a month in Birmingham during a dispute between the city and its trash collectors. It is a sore sight for eyes and offensive to the nose. Mountains of garbage are said to be visible from space and people have complained of seeing rats as big as cats in the refuse.

"You can see the juice flowing out of the bags onto the road. It stinks," Naeem Yousef said. "It's bringing down the areas. People are saying, 'Look at these areas, how dirty these people are.'"

Talks failed to reach an agreement Monday but were scheduled to resume Tuesday as the strike enters its fifth week.

Members of Unite, the union representing garbage truck workers, walked off the job March 11 over the elimination of a job position and painful pay cuts. The council said it's made a reasonable offer, that cuts would only affect a small number of jobs and the jobs being eliminated are unnecessary.

The Labour-run Birmingham City Council is effectively bankrupt because of a settlement over historic pay discrimination. As a result, it's had to make significant budget cuts of 300 million pounds (\$383 million) over



Local residents deliver rubbish to mobile collection vehicles in Erdington, Birmingham, England on April 7. (AP)

two years and is only providing services required by law, including waste collection.

As heaps of black bags littered sidewalks with their contents spilling out of holes chewed by critters, the city council declared a major incident to bring in additional cleanup crews and vehicles.

Photos on news sites and social media show furniture, mattresses and car

bumpers illegally dumped alongside bulging trash bags. In one neighborhood, garbage sacks were set ablaze.

The U.K.'s Labour government has come under fire from opposition parties because of the problem, but Angela Rayner, deputy prime minister, told members of the House of Commons that it's a local issue and the government was pressing the two sides to reach an agreement.

EU's Kallas warns Albania of difficult reforms in bloc's membership path

TIRANA, Albania, April 8, (AP): The European Union's foreign policy chief on Tuesday hailed Albania's "ambitious" agenda to close full membership negotiations in two years and also urged the country's political parties to support difficult reforms ahead.

Kaja Kallas, who is on a regional tour, was in the Albanian capital, Tirana, to meet with the country's leaders and assure them that the country's future is in the bloc.

"Albania has an ambitious agenda to close EU negotiations in the next two years," Kallas said at a joint news conference with Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama. "It's vital to sustain the high pace of reforms. And I also understand that the reforms are always quite difficult."

Still, "Albania's future is in the European Union," she said.

The EU decided in 2020 it would start full membership negotiations with Albania, and talks began last October on how the country aligns with the EU's stance on issues such as the rule of law, the functioning of democratic institutions and tackling corruption.

The Western Balkans countries - Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro,



European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas speaks during a G5+ Foreign Ministers meeting in Madrid, Spain on March 31. (AP)

North Macedonia and Serbia - are at different stages in their applications for EU membership. They have been frustrated by the slow pace of progress, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 encouraged Europe's leaders

to push for the six to join the bloc.

"Your decision to fully implement EU sanctions against Russia alongside your political, military and humanitarian support to Ukraine demonstrates your commitment to our shared values," said Kallas.

Rama has said he hopes to complete the negotiating process with the EU by 2027 and for Albania to become a bloc member by 2030.

"We will not rest until we step into the door of the European Union, and sit around the same table that the European Union does," Rama said.

Albania is part of the EU's growth plan and it is expected to receive more than 920 million euros (\$1 billion) over the next decade.

On Tuesday, Albania also signed with the European Investment Bank a 90 million-euro (\$98 million) agreement to reconstruct the railway between the port of Durres and Rrogozhine, which Kallas said would "serve as a critical route ... between member states in NATO, for military mobility in Southeast Europe."

"This is extremely important in the current security environment," she said.

Military fires warning shots after N.Korean soldiers crossed border

South Korea to hold presidential election June 3 to choose Yoon’s successor

SEOUL, South Korea, April 8, (AP): South Korea will hold a snap presidential election June 3 to choose Yoon Suk Yeol’s successor after the conservative was ousted over his imposition of martial law late last year.

The announcement from acting President Han Duck-soo came four days after the Constitutional Court unanimously removed Yoon from office, which by law, must be followed by an election within 60 days. The next president will serve a full 5-year term.

Deep political polarization will likely shape the election into a two-way showdown between Yoon’s People Power Party and its chief liberal rival, the Democratic Party, which holds a majority in the National Assembly.

It will be an uphill battle for the People Power Party as it struggles to restore public confidence and heal severe internal divisions left by Yoon’s brief enactment of martial law.

The focus of attention is on whether conservatives can regroup and field a strong candidate to compete against likely Democratic Party candidate Lee Jae-myung, who observers say is the clear front-runner.

South Korea’s political parties are expected to launch primaries to select their presidential candidates in the coming weeks.

The Democratic Party candidate is expected to be Lee, a powerful party leader who faces no major challengers inside the party. Lee, who narrowly lost the 2022 election to Yoon, led the party through a crisis during which many of its members faced off against troops sent by Yoon to encircle the National Assembly building, voted down martial law and later impeached Yoon. About 10 politicians from the People Power Party are expected to seek the nomination.

Yoon’s baffling decision to enact martial law, which brought armed troops into Seoul’s streets and evoked the country’s traumatic memories of past military rule, was a blow to his party’s reputation even though the party wasn’t directly involved.

Some reformist party members openly criticized Yoon’s actions and cast ballots to impeach him, triggering a feud with the party’s old guard who supported the president.

Yoon has diehard supporters who regularly staged massive rallies. Many share an unfounded perception that Yoon is a victim of a leftist, North Korea-sympathizing opposition that has rigged elections to gain a legislative majority and plotted to remove a patriotic leader.

“South Korea’s conservative party faces significant disadvantages heading into



Ahn Cheol-soo, a lawmaker of the People Power Party, leaves a press conference after announcing his candidacy in the presidential election in Seoul, South Korea on April 8. (AP)

the upcoming election. Two months is a short time to unify the base, moderates and a conspiracy-driven fringe around a single candidate,” said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

The party’s current leadership is filled with Yoon loyalists, and that will likely let the internal divide continue and undermine its electoral prospects, said Choi Jin, director of the Seoul-based Institute of Presidential Leadership.

Among the leading People Power Party presidential hopefuls, Labor Minister Kim Moon Soo is considered to be the most pro-Yoon. He and Daegu Mayor Hong Joon-pyo opposed impeaching Yoon, while former party leader Han Dong-hoon and senior party lawmaker Ahn Cheol-soo supported removing him from office. The last major candidate is Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon, who has maintained

an ambiguous position.

Choi said Yoon will likely exert his influence to boost pro-Yoon figures who are seeking the nomination and party leadership posts so they can defend him as he faces a criminal trial. Yoon was charged with rebellion in January, and he could face other charges like abuse of power now that he has lost presidential immunity, which protected him from most criminal prosecutions.

The People Power Party “will need to nominate someone who can win over the public, particularly the moderates, rather than someone who can win the party’s primaries,” said Duyeon Kim, a senior analyst at the Center for a New American Security in Washington. “Korean moderates and the young generation in their 20s and 30s will likely be the swing voters.”

Opposition leader Lee, who has served as a provincial governor and a city mayor, is considered by his supporters as a populist reformer. But critics regard him as a demagogue who relies on stoking divisions and demonizing his rivals.

Also:

SEOUL: South Korea’s military fired warning shots after North Korean soldiers crossed the rivals’ tense border on Tuesday, South Korean officials said.

South Korea’s military said in a statement that about 10 North Korean soldiers returned to the North after South Korea made warning broadcasts and fired warning shots. It said the North Korean soldiers violated the military demarcation line at the eastern section of the border at 5 pm.

South Korea’s military said it is closely monitoring North Korean activities. Bloodshed and violent confrontations have occasionally occurred at the Koreans’ heavily fortified border, called the Demilitarized Zone. But when North Korean troops briefly violated the border in June last year and prompted South Korea to fire warning shots, it didn’t escalate into a major source of tensions. South Korean officials assessed that the soldiers didn’t deliberately commit the border intrusion and the site was a wooded area and military demarcation line signs there weren’t clearly visible. South Korea said the North Koreans were carrying construction tools.

The motive for Tuesday’s border crossing by North Korean soldiers wasn’t immediately clear. The 248-kilometer (155-mile)-long, 4-kilometer (2.5-mile)-wide DMZ is the world’s most heavily armed border. An estimated 2 million mines are peppered inside and near the border, which is also guarded by barbed wire fences, tank traps and combat troops on both sides. It’s a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

‘We really have to work together’

NATO Chief Rutte raises concern over China’s arms buildup

YOKOSUKA, Japan, April 8, (Agencies): The NATO chief on Tuesday raised concern about China’s arms buildup and military drills near Taiwan and called on the organization’s members and friendly nations to work together to keep free and open sea lanes in the region.

“China is supporting Russia’s efforts. China is building up its armed forces, including its navy, at a rapid pace,” NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte told reporters as he wrapped up his visit to the Japanese navy port of Yokosuka. “We cannot be naive, and we really have to work together, assess what is happening.”

Rutte said NATO is worried about China’s military exercises near Taiwan and “we follow them very closely.”

Japan considers China as a threat in the region and has in recent years accelerated military buildup, including preparing to acquire strikeback capability with long-range cruise missiles.

Japan, in addition to the United States, has expanded its defense ties with other friendly nations in the Indo-Pacific and Europe, as well as NATO, saying Russia’s war on Ukraine underscores that security risks in Europe and Asia are inseparable.

The United States wants NATO members to be more involved in the Indo-Pacific region, Rutte said. He



NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte inspects an unmanned underwater vehicle used for mine detection during his visit to Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force base in Yokosuka, south of Tokyo on April 8. (AP)

welcomed U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth’s recent trip to Japan to ensure Washington’s commitment to strengthen its alliance with Japan and presence in the region. He stressed its importance, noting that Japan is the only member of the Group of Seven that is not in NATO.

NATO has also stepped up its ties with Japan, South Korea, Australia

and New Zealand, known as the IP4, in recent years, with their officials attending NATO ministerial and summit meetings.

Rutte, visiting Japan for the first time since becoming head of the Belgium-based military alliance in October, was set to hold talks with Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani later Tuesday and Prime Minister Shigeru

Ishiba on Wednesday.

Ishiba has advocated a NATO-like security framework in Asia, though he has not given details.

Countries with shared security concerns are strengthening ties as competition escalates between the United States and China. Beijing has criticized NATO’s growing ties with the Indo-Pacific partners, worried that Washington may move to form a NATO-like alliance in the region.

G7 expressed deep concern about China’s provocative actions, particularly the recent large-scale military drills around Taiwan.

In a press statement, the foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, and the US alongside the High Representation of the European Union said they are greatly concerned with China’s provocative actions against Taiwan.

“These increasingly frequent and destabilizing activities are raising cross-strait tension and put at risk global security and prosperity,” they argued.

The G7 members and the international community have interests in preserving stability in the Taiwan Strait and are opposed to any “unilateral actions to threaten such peace and stability, including force and coercion.”

Philippine volcano spews ash plume into sky; schools closed

MANILA, Philippines, April 8, (AP): A restive Philippine volcano briefly erupted Tuesday on a central island, sending a 4-kilometer (2.4-mile) plume of ash and debris into the sky and forcing authorities to suspend school classes in four villages due to ashfall, officials said.

There were no reports of injuries or damage from Mount Kanlaon’s latest eruption after dawn that lasted more than an hour and scattered ash in at least four farming villages southwest of the volcano on Negros island, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

Kanlaon last erupted in December, prompting the evacuation of thousands of villagers, many of whom remained in emergency shelters on Tuesday as the volcano continued showing signs of restiveness, the Office of Civil Defense said.

Philippine chief volcanologist Teresito Bacolcol told The Associated Press there were no other key signs of restiveness, like a spike in volcanic earthquakes, that would prompt the alert on Kanlaon to be raised from the current level 3, which means a “high level



An explosive eruption occurs at the summit vent of Mount Kanlaon, as seen from Bago City, Negros Occidental province, Philippines on April 8. (AP)

of volcanic unrest.” The highest alert, level 5, means a “hazardous eruption is in progress.”

“The possibility of a bigger eruption is always there,” Bacolcol said, urging people to remain vigilant and stay away from a 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) danger zone around Kanlaon.

18 dead, more than 120 hurt in roof collapse at Dominican Republic club

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic, April 8, (AP): At least 18 people died and more than 120 were injured after a roof fell at a nightclub in the capital of the Dominican Republic early Tuesday, authorities said.

Crews were searching for potential survivors in the rubble at Jet Set in Santo Domingo, said Juan Manuel Méndez, director of the Center of Emergency Operations.

“We presume that many of them are still alive, and that is why the authorities here will not give up until not a single person remains under that rubble,” he said.

Nelsy Cruz, the governor of Monte Cristi, was among the victims. Meanwhile, the injured include merengue singer Rubby Pérez, who was performing when the roof collapsed, officials said.

His manager, Enrique Paulino, whose shirt was spattered with blood, told reporters at the scene that the concert began shortly before midnight, with the roof collapsing almost an hour later, killing the group’s saxophonist.

“It happened so quickly. I managed to throw myself into a corner,” he said, adding that he initially thought it was an earthquake.

President Luis Abinader wrote on X that all rescue agencies are “working tirelessly” to help those affected. “We deeply regret the tragedy that occurred at the Jet Set nightclub. We have been following the incident minute by minute since it occurred,” he wrote.

Abinader arrived at the scene and hugged those looking for friends and family, some with tears streaming down their faces. He did not speak to reporters.

An official with a megaphone stood outside the club imploring the large crowd that had gathered to search for friends and relatives to give ambulances space.

“You have to cooperate with authorities, please,” he said. “We are removing people.”

At one hospital where the injured were taken, an official stood outside reading aloud the names of survivors as a crowd gathered around her and yelled out the names of their loved ones.



People walk through the flooded streets of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo on April 6. (AP)

Death toll from flooding in Congo’s capital reaches 33

The death toll from flooding that cut access to over half of the Congolese capital of Kinshasa reached 33 as authorities raced Monday to evacuate and support hundreds of families trapped in their homes.

Ten more people were confirmed dead as of Sunday evening, in addition to the 23 people killed the day before, Congolese Interior Minister Jacquemin Shabani said on state television late Sunday.

Heavy rains began last week, causing the key Ndjili River to overflow on Friday and submerge hundreds of

buildings.

While the situation had improved by Monday morning, some access roads remained blocked and vehicular traffic was limited.

Many residents blamed the government for not responding quickly enough to the disaster.

“We lost everything and left everything behind,” said Marie Nzola, one of those whose properties were destroyed. “The rain caught us by surprise late at night.” (AP)

‘Based on case of mistaken nationality’

Revocation of US visas unfair: S.Sudan

JUBA, South Sudan, April 8, (AP): South Sudan has criticized the revocation of US visas for all its nationals as unfair and said it was based on an incident that didn’t involve one of its citizens but another African national.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Saturday that the decision to revoke all visas for South Sudanese came because the country’s government failed to accept the return of its citizens being removed from the United States “in a timely manner.”

South Sudan’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement Monday that the deportee who was denied US entry on Friday was found to be a Congolese national and he was returned to the US and all supporting evidence shared with American officials.

“The government deeply regrets that despite this history of collaboration and partnership, South Sudan now faces a broad revocation of visas based on an isolated incident involving misrepresentation by an individual who



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio leaves after statements to the reporters at NATO Headquarters in Brussels on April 4. (AP)

is not a South Sudanese national,” the statement said.

South Sudan’s Information Minister

Michael Makuei Lueth told The Associated Press on Monday that the US was “attempting to find faults with the tense situation” in the country because no sovereign nation would accept foreign deportees.

The UN in March warned that South Sudan was teetering on the edge of renewed civil war. The country’s vice president and main opposition leader Riek Machar remains under house on charges of incitement after an armed group allied to him overran an army camp and attacked a UN helicopter.

It was not immediately clear how many South Sudanese hold US visas. US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau said on social media the dispute centers on one person, certified by South Sudan’s Embassy in Washington, that Juba has refused to accept. That person was not named.

No new visas will be issued, the US said, and “we will be prepared to review these actions when South Sudan is in full cooperation.”

Brazil govt to require visas for US, Canadian and Australian citizens

SAO PAULO, April 8, (AP): Brazil will reintroduce visa requirements Thursday for US, Canadian and Australian citizens, a move that ends the country’s open entry for people of those nationalities after six years.

The United States Embassy in Brasilia said Monday that Americans will still be able to request visas electronically if they visit from April 10 onward.

Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, an ally of US President Donald Trump, scrapped the visa requirements in a 2019 decree as he sought to boost the country’s tourism industry.

That went against the South American country’s tradition of requiring visas from travelers based on the principle of reciprocity and equal treatment.

Brazil’s President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva suspended the free entry of Americans, Canadians and Australians in March of 2023, shortly after he defeated Bolsonaro. The leftist leader said then it was based on the principle of reciprocity as Brazilians still need visas for those countries.

Lula’s decision was postponed from coming into force three times as the government negotiated to get reciprocity for Brazilians, but no change was made.



Brazil’s President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva greets supporters during a presentation of the federal government’s achievements of the past two years, in Brasilia, Brazil on April 3. (AP)

Kuwait oil price drops to \$67.01 pb

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil made a huge drop by USD 5.95 to USD 67.01 per barrel on Monday as opposed to Friday's USD 72.96 pb, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

The prices of the Brent Crude and the West Texas Intermediate at the global markets

came down each by USD 1.37 and USD 1.29 to settle respectively at USD 64.21 per barrel and USD 60.70 pb.

The fall in prices could be attributed to a number of geopolitical reasons and economic policies including the new US tariffs that rocked global markets and caused undeniable shifts.

Station adds 160 mln SCF/day

KOC achieves record low gas flaring rate of 0.69 pct in 2024

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: An informed source from Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) affirmed the company's strong commitment to protecting the environment and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which was reflected in the achievement of KOC in reducing gas flaring to 0.69 percent last year, which turned out to be much lower than the target of 0.98 percent set for the year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This achievement is attributed to KOC's ongoing efforts to improve operational efficiency despite the challenges it faces. This achievement helps provide additional gas for domestic consumption and further strengthens Kuwait's position as a leader in oil and gas production, all while upholding the highest standards of environmental sustainability.

It affirms KOC's commitment to environmental protection by reducing gas flaring emissions, in line with global efforts to deal with climate change.

In addition, the source revealed that the company set a new record for non-associated gas production last year, reaching 618 million standard cubic feet per day, as a result of a strategic approach and the company's extensive efforts in this area.

He highlighted that the company continues to meet its strategic objectives, with the successful operation of two Jurassic gas production stations Nos. 4 and 5, adding that each station contributes an additional 160 million cubic feet of free gas production capacity and increases crude oil production capacity by 50,000 barrels per day.

Refinery surpasses design capacity

Duqm Refinery passes lender reliability test, secures over \$4 bln in guarantees

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) announced on Tuesday that Duqm Refinery, its joint venture with Oman's OQ Group, has successfully passed the Lender Reliability Test, enabling it to secure shareholder guarantees exceeding USD 4 billion.

The CEO of Kuwait Petroleum International, Shafi Al-Ajmi stated to KUNA that this achievement is a testament to the company's fulfillment of all lender requirements, describing it as a pivotal moment in the refinery's operational journey.

Al-Ajmi added that this accomplishment reflects the refinery's readiness and high operational efficiency,



Duqm Refinery project facilities.

tion from 230,000 to 255,000 barrels per day and exporting over 4.1 million tons of refined products to global markets.

Passing the lender reliability test reflects Duqm Refinery's operational excellence and its ability to meet the highest international standards, demonstrating the company's commitment to developing advanced energy projects and strengthening its global position.

Al-Ajmi praised the support provided by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), which was fundamental to Duqm Refinery's success in achieving this important milestone.

Executive Vice President of Manufacturing at Kuwait Petroleum International, Imad Al-Hadlaq expressed the company's pride in this significant achievement, noting that it required exceptional cooperation among all partners, financiers, and suppliers.

Al-Hadlaq added that the project faced various challenges and intense scrutiny from financiers, making this accomplishment even more remarkable.

Kuwait Petroleum International,

founded in 1983, is a global marketing company and subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, and it operates an extensive network of retail fuel stations and dedicated transport service stations in Europe, with more than 4,700 stations, including over 2,800 in Italy.

The company also supplies aviation fuel to global airlines in over 70 airports worldwide and manufactures and markets some of the best-quality lubricants in the world, and it also holds stakes in three global refineries in Italy, Vietnam, and Oman through partnerships with international oil companies.

Duqm Refinery represents the first partnership with Oman and is designed to refine crude oil with a refining capacity of 230,000 barrels per day, it is located in the Special Economic Zone of Duqm in Oman, the refinery's strategic location allows it to supply both regional and global markets with high-quality refined products.

The refinery project aligns with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's strategy to expand refining capacity outside Kuwait, ensuring secure outlets for Kuwaiti crude oil.

Business

Secure passwords and OTPs vital to prevent fraud

ABK supports 'Let's Be Aware' financial literacy campaign



ABK logo

ABK urges customers to immediately contact ABK if they notice any suspicious payment transactions or unusual activities in their accounts. At times, customers may receive unexpected authentication notifications via the Kuwait Mobile ID app without having initiated any corresponding transaction. Approving such notifications could lead to unauthorized access to their accounts.

To safeguard their accounts, customers are advised to use secure passwords and One-Time Password (OTP) verification codes sent by the Bank when conducting transactions.



Diraya logo

It's vital to change passwords regularly and to select complex passwords that are difficult to guess. Sharing personal and confidential information with others should be strictly avoided.

In addition, customers should remain vigilant against interacting with suspicious emails that may contain harmful links aimed at hacking bank accounts. When making online purchases, they should also ensure that the websites are secure. Additionally, activating transaction notifications is encouraged for customers to track and respond to any unusual activities promptly.

ABK reiterates that it will never request personal information from customers via email, text messages,

phone calls, or direct messages on social media and messaging platforms. Such requests are deceitful attempts to acquire sensitive banking information to commit theft or fraud.

To support the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association's efforts, the bank is leveraging all electronic communication channels with its vast audience to champion customer protection and financial inclusion. This initiative aims to enhance public understanding of the diverse banking services available in the Kuwaiti market.

Demonstrating its commitment to fostering banking awareness across all societal segments, ABK actively participates in various campaigns and initiatives. The Bank is also committed to organizing educational events and conducting comprehensive training programs for its employees, enhancing their expertise in combating fraud and financial crimes.

Boursa Kuwait sees significant gains, general index up 2.74%

Premier market index leads with 3.08% surge

KUWAIT CITY, April 8, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's session with significant gains, as the general index surged 206.27 points, or 2.74 percent, to reach 7,741.13 points. Trading activity was robust with 352.12 million shares exchanged through 23,699 cash transactions, totaling KD 106.3 million (approximately \$326.3 million).

The Premier Market Index led the gains, climbing 248.05 points, or 3.08 percent, to 8,302.45 points. It

saw the highest trading volume with 208.5 million shares traded in 15,015 deals valued at KD 83.4 million (around \$256 million).

Meanwhile, the Main Market Index rose 79.81 points, or 1.15 percent, closing at 7,024.11 points, with 143.6 million shares traded through 8,684 transactions worth KD 22.9 million (\$70.3 million).

The Major 50 Index also recorded an increase, gaining 160.74 points, or 2.43 percent, to settle at 6,765.64 points. A total of 128.5 million shares were traded via 7,485 transactions valued at KD 21.3 million (approximately \$65.3 million).

Service available 24/7

KFH launches instant credit & prepaid card printing service

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers instant credit and prepaid card printing service through KFH Express self-banking stations located in different branches across Kuwait. This service enables customers to print their cards 24/7 in a fast and secure manner.

KFH customers can print all types of banking cards directly through its devices, showcasing KFH's technological strength and commitment to enhancing customer experience with advanced solutions.

KFH services are now more accessible to all customers. Following the successful launch of this service at Khiran Mall and Airport branches, KFH has expanded this service to all KFH Express self-banking stations throughout Kuwait.

Furthermore, printing and activating the card entails two simple options. The first one is by sending a QR code through KFH online application. A second option is to enter your civil ID into the device, follow the necessary steps, and receive an OTP via SMS with the highest security standards.

This service is part of KFH's pioneering banking services offered through ATMs to credit and prepaid cardholders. The aim is to provide them with the best banking experience through its digital channels, including the KFH Online app, KFH Express, or ATMs.



KFH Express

Recognized for its strong performance and diverse solutions

Kamco Invest wins 'Kuwait's Best for Alternative Investments' at Euromoney Awards

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced that it has been named "Kuwait's Best for Alternative Investments" at the Euromoney Private Banking Awards 2025.

Hassan Farran, Chief Executive Officer of Kamco Invest – London, and Layla Diab, CFA, Vice President – Alternative Investments, received the award on behalf of Kamco Invest at the Euromoney Private Banking Awards 2025 ceremony held on March 27th at The Savoy Hotel in London. The prestigious recognition is the result of a competitive evaluation process that included a comprehensive submission detailing the Company's achievements, followed by an in-depth interview with Euromoney's judging panel.

The "Kuwait's Best for Alternative Investments" award highlights Kamco Invest's strong momentum and growth in the alternative investment space. The recognition comes at a pivotal time following the consolidation of Kamco Invest's extensive experience in real estate, private equity and structured products, bringing them together under the unified umbrella of Alternative Investments. This strategic move aimed to streamline operations, enhance synergies, and create a more cohesive platform for delivering value to clients.

Over the past year, each of these areas has demonstrated a strong performance, supported by targeted initiatives, new investment opportunities, and a sharpened focus on expanding the Company's footprint across key regional and international markets.

In 2024, the Alternative Investments continued to broaden its real estate under management which included 22 Grade A commercial properties across the USA, UK, and Europe with a total value of USD2.0bn as of 31 December 2024. These properties were carefully selected based on their location, tenant profile, and long-term yield potential for investors. Additionally, Kamco Invest distributed USD58.1mn to clients from real estate investments, while actively sourcing new opportunities. The Company also took a strategic step forward by entering the private debt space for real estate projects, further diversifying its offerings and tapping into new revenue streams for clients seeking exposure beyond traditional equity investments.

On the private equity front, Kamco Invest invested over USD1.9bn across 28 sectors, resulting in 123 investments and 108 successful exits from the inception of the department till 31 December 2024. This includes both controlling



Mohammad Al Othman

and minority stakes in high-potential businesses across the MENA region and emerging markets. Over the years, the team has distributed USD1.05bn to its clients, demonstrating a clear focus on value creation and capital efficiency.

Furthermore, Kamco Invest implements two distinctive strategies that target diverse investment objectives. The first strategy is focused on investing in venture capital in the international markets, whereas the second is designed to support late-stage tech companies as they prepare for IPOs, primarily in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Kamco Invest, through its Saudi and DIFC offices, has forged strategic alliances with leading international asset managers to expand its offerings in leasing, private debt, and other specialized asset classes.

Commenting on the recognition, Mohammed Al Othman, Senior Executive Director of Alternative Investments, said, "We are proud to be recognized by Euromoney for our efforts in alternative investments, a space where we have not only expanded our capabilities but also delivered real, measurable value to our clients. This award reflects the team's collective efforts in implementing our strategic vision of offering tailored alternative investment solutions that align with the diverse goals of our clients across real estate, private equity and structured products."

He added, "In today's volatile market landscape, alternative asset classes such as private equity, private credit, and



Hassan and Layla receiving the award.

real estate have proven to be powerful diversification tools due to their low correlation with public markets. We believe the current environment offers a timely and compelling opportunity for investors to consider increasing their exposure to alternatives to enhance portfolio resilience and unlock long-term value."

The Euromoney Private Banking Awards 2025 recognizes the leaders and pioneers among private banks and financial institutions worldwide, with a particular focus on their ability to deliver tailored investment solutions and generate long-term value for clients. The Alternative Investments category acknowledges companies that have demonstrated outstand-

ing performance, innovation, and client engagement across non-traditional asset classes that continue to play a progressive role in diversified investment strategies.

Al Othman added, "We would like to thank Euromoney for this recognition, which reflects the strength and depth of our Alternative Investments platform. I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to our team, whose dedication, expertise, and hard work have been central to achieving this milestone. Looking ahead, we remain focused on leveraging our global network to unlock new opportunities and deliver innovative investment solutions that continue to support our clients' long-term success."

Empowering students financially through digital solutions

Weyay Bank sponsors the fourth edition of ‘Derasti’ Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Under the patronage and presence of the Minister of Education, Sayyid Jalal Al-Tabtabei, and with the attendance of Mohammed Al-Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Personal and Digital Banking at National Bank of Kuwait, and Head of Weyay Bank, Amal Al-Duwaisan, Weyay Bank, Kuwait’s leading digital bank, announces its active and distinguished participation in the fourth edition of the “Derasti” Exhibition. The event, which commenced on Monday and continues until April 10th, is taking place at the Mishref International Fairground, Hall 8, with the participation of over 120 local and international universities, as well as various entities from the public and private sectors.

The exhibition is considered the most prominent educational event in Kuwait, with its activities holding paramount importance for high school students. It serves as a central meeting point that allows them to explore a wide range of educational opportunities available after completing their secondary education. During his opening address, the Minister Sayyid Jalal Al-Tabtabai emphasized the significance of community partnership and continuous collaboration between the public and private sectors through this exhibition, which contributes to enhancing students’ awareness and assisting them in choosing specializations that align with their future aspirations, in line with the “New Kuwait 2035” vision.

The exhibition provides students with a unique platform for direct interaction with representatives from local and international higher education institutions. This allows them to learn about diverse academic programs, admission requirements, available scholarships, and all matters related to their academic and professional future. Weyay Bank’s participation in this important event stems from its firm belief in the vital role it plays in supporting and empowering Kuwaiti youth in their educational journey towards building a bright future.



Minister of Education Sayyid Jalal Al-Tabtabei, Mohammed Al-Othman, Hisham Al-Nusf, and Amal Al-Duwaisan on the sidelines of the ‘Derasti’ Exhibition.

Weyay Bank’s active participation in the “Derasti” Exhibition underscores its deep commitment to supporting the education sector and empowering students in the State of Kuwait. Weyay Bank believes that investing in the education of youth is an investment in the nation’s future. It strives to be an active partner in

providing them with the necessary tools, knowledge, and opportunities to realize their full potential and contribute effectively to building a more prosperous and advanced future for Kuwaiti society. The bank views young people as the leaders of tomorrow and agents of change, and it takes pride in its role in supporting their

educational journey and enabling them to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

Regarding banking products and services, Weyay Bank is highlighting the digital banking experience it offers, which helps students seamlessly open their bank accounts within minutes without the need to visit a bank branch. In addition to the ease of account opening, Weyay Bank places great importance on simplifying the money transfer process, as the application allows students to make instant and secure financial transfers to any other account inside or outside Kuwait in just a few steps. Most importantly, student allowances can be transferred digitally to their Weyay accounts, and they can obtain the digital prepaid SELECT card, which specifically targets allowance customers and features a range of exclusive benefits tailored to the lifestyle and daily needs of university students. These benefits include cashback offers on their purchases and special discounts at a wide network of stores, restaurants, cafes, and services favored by young people.

Through its interactive booth at the exhibition, Weyay Bank is keen to provide a rich and beneficial experience for visiting students. The booth features a number of activities that cater to their passion for their fields of study and encourage them to keep pace with digital transformation and pursue specializations that are currently in demand in the market. Weyay Bank aims through these activities to create an interactive environment that combines benefit and entertainment, transforming the process of exploring the future of education into an enjoyable and unforgettable experience.

Full information about Weyay Bank and its range of digital banking services and solutions is available on the Bank’s website www.weyaybank.com or through the Weyay application, available on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

Trump threatens 50% tariffs on China

China vows to ‘fight to the end’ against US tariffs

BEIJING, April 8, (AP): China said Tuesday it would “fight to the end” and take countermeasures against the United States to safeguard its own interests after President Donald Trump threatened an additional 50% tariff on Chinese imports.

The Commerce Ministry said the U.S.’s imposition of “so-called ‘reciprocal tariffs’” on China is “completely groundless and is a typical unilateral bullying practice.”

China, the world’s second-largest economy, has announced retaliatory tariffs and the ministry hinted in its latest statement that more may be coming.

“The countermeasures China has taken are aimed at safeguarding its sovereignty, security and development interests, and maintaining the normal international trade order. They are completely legitimate,” the ministry said.

“The U.S. threat to escalate tariffs on China is a mistake on top of a mistake and once again exposes the blackmailing nature of the U.S. China will never accept this. If the U.S. insists on its own way, China will fight to the end,” it added.

Trump’s threat Monday of additional tariffs on China raised fresh concerns that his drive to rebalance the global economy could intensify a financially destructive trade war. Stock markets from Tokyo to New York have become more unstable as the tariff war worsens.

Trump’s threat came after China said it would retaliate against U.S. tariffs he announced last week.

“If China does not withdraw its 34% increase above their already long term trading abuses by tomorrow, April 8th, 2025, the United States will impose ADDITIONAL Tariffs on China of 50%, effective April 9th,” Trump wrote on Truth Social. “Additionally, all talks with China concerning their requested meetings with us will be terminated!”

If Trump implements his new tariffs on Chinese products, U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods would reach a combined 104%. The new taxes would be on top of the 20% tariffs announced as punishment for fentanyl trafficking and his separate 34% tariffs announced last week. Not only could that



A woman walks out from an Apple Store at an outdoor shopping mall in Beijing, Tuesday, April 8, 2025. (AP)

increase prices for American consumers, it could also give China an incentive to flood other countries with cheaper goods and seek deeper relationships with other trading partners, particularly the European Union.

On the streets of Beijing, people said they found it hard to keep track of all the announcements, but expressed belief in their country’s ability to weather the storm.

“Trump says one thing today and another tomorrow. Anyway, he just wants benefits, so he can say whatever he wants,” said Wu Qi, 37, who works in construction.

Others were less sanguine. Paul Wang, 30, who sells stainless accessories, including necklaces, bracelets, and tongue studs to Europe, said the European market was now more important after the extra U.S. 50% tariffs and he would be watching to see which other firms in his field would be competing in that space.

Jessi Huang and Yang Aijia, whose companies import chemicals from the U.S., said the tariffs, including potential Chinese retribution, could force them to close up shop.

“It would be very hard and very likely to have a layoff, maybe even closing,” Huang said, “I might not be able to find another job if I get laid off.”

China still has a range of options to strike back at the Washington, experts said, including

suspending cooperation on combating fentanyl, placing higher quotas on agricultural products and going after the U.S. trade in services in China such as finance and law firms.

U.S. total goods trade with China was an estimated \$582 billion in 2024, making it the top trader in goods with the U.S. The 2024 deficit with China in goods and services trade was between \$263 billion and \$295 billion.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian appeared to give short shrift to talk of dialogue with the Trump administration.

“I don’t think what the U.S. has done reflects a willingness for sincere dialogue. If the U.S. really wants to engage in dialogue, it should adopt an attitude of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit,” Lin said.

In Hong Kong, where stocks were slightly higher Tuesday, Chief Executive John Lee blasted the latest U.S. tariffs as “bullying,” saying the “ruthless behavior” has damaged global and multilateral trade and brought great risks and uncertainties to the world.

Lee said the city would link its economy closer to China’s development, sign more free trade agreements, attract more foreign companies and capital to Hong Kong, and support local enterprises in coping with the impact of the tariffs.

Warba Bank acquires Alghanim Trading in KD 498.2 million deal

Bank announces capital increase to fuel future expansion

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Following final approvals from regulatory and supervisory authorities, including the Capital Markets Authority and the Central Bank of Kuwait, Warba Bank today announced it has signed the agreement to fully acquire Alghanim Trading Company W.L.L. The strategic transaction supports the Bank’s expansion into vital sectors and further diversifies its investment portfolio in line with its long-term vision for sustainable growth, while protecting the interests of shareholders, customers and the wider community.

The transaction, valued at KD 498.2 million, results in Warba Bank indirectly owning 32.75% of Gulf Bank’s capital.

Chairman of Warba Bank, Hamad Musaed AlSayer, said: “The completion of Warba Bank’s full acquisition of Alghanim Trading marks an exceptional milestone that reflects the strength of our strategic direction and future-focused growth plan. This step is not only an expansion of the bank’s assets in size and value, but also a reaffirmation of our commitment to delivering added value to our shareholders and customers, and to reinforcing our leadership position in the Islamic banking sector both locally and regionally. It empowers us to provide advanced, innovative services that meet customer aspirations and the evolving needs of the market, today and tomorrow.”

He further emphasized that the full acquisition represents a decisive strategic step toward realizing the bank’s vision of becoming a key player in supporting Kuwait’s national economy by diversifying



Hamad Musaed AlSayer, Chairman of Warba Bank

its business activities and strengthening its presence in value-generating sectors.

“We are proud of this milestone transaction, which aligns with our long-term strategy and confirms our commitment to building a multi-sector, resilient and high-growth Islamic financial institution capable of generating sustainable returns for shareholders,” he added.

The bank noted that the financial impact of the transaction will be reflected in the upcoming quarterly financial results, in accordance with applicable accounting standards and upon completion of the relevant operational and regulatory procedures.

AlSayer also highlighted that the conclusion of this acquisition coincides with the start of the bank’s capital increase subscription period, for which the necessary approvals were previously secured. This offers institutional and individual shareholders an exceptional opportunity to invest in Kuwait’s dynamic banking sector, specifically in an Islamic bank that has cemented its presence locally and regionally, while continuously evolving its services and offerings to meet shifting economic demands.

He added that Warba Bank was originally established by Amiri Decree to serve as a key pillar in

- A strategic step that reinforces leadership and sustainable growth in Islamic banking
- An exceptional milestone marking the beginning of a new growth phase

supporting Kuwait’s economic development.

“Today, we are proud to be a bank that puts Kuwait at the center of its strategy, where all our profits benefit the nation and its people. Warba’s success is the success of Kuwait. We remain deeply committed to playing an active role in shaping a sustainable economic future for generations to come,” he said.

AlSayer continued by stating that Warba Bank has now entered a new phase of growth and expansion, in line with its vision to be the leading Islamic bank in Kuwait. He emphasized the bank’s ongoing investment in technology and innovation to achieve financial sustainability and contribute to national development in line with Kuwait Vision 2035.

He concluded by noting that the Bank’s investment strategy prioritizes local investment in both fixed assets and human capital, and that Warba Bank currently holds the highest Kuwaitization rate among all local banks. As the newest and most advanced Islamic bank in the country, Warba also maintains a strong track record in digital banking innovation.

Capital Increase for Continued Growth

The capital increase will strengthen Warba Bank’s regulatory capital base and provide the necessary liquidity to support the next phase of expansion and the achievement of its strategic objectives. This move will also enable the Bank to continue investing in digital banking solutions and further develop its portfolio of Sharia-compliant financial products and services.

Japan steps up efforts to mitigate impact of US tariffs

Global markets calm as Asian leaders work to limit tariff impact

BANGKOK, April 8, (AP): U.S. President Donald Trump and China sparred over tariff hikes and other retaliatory moves on Tuesday, as governments elsewhere were brainstorming strategies to cope with the trade war between the global economic giants.

China said it will “fight to the end” and take countermeasures against the United States to safeguard its own interests after President Donald Trump threatened an additional 50% tariff on Chinese imports in retaliation for Beijing’s backlash against the 34% tariffs he ordered on his April 2 “Liberation Day.”

“The U.S. threat to escalate tariffs on China is a mistake on top of a mistake and once again exposes the blackmailing nature of the US. China will never accept this,” the Commerce Ministry said in a statement read on state-run broadcaster CCTV.

When asked about the possibility of talks between Washington and Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said “I think what the US has done doesn’t reflect a willingness for sincere dialogue. If the US really wants to engage in dialogue, it should adopt an attitude of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit.”

Meanwhile, Chinese state-run companies were told to help support the country’s financial markets after they were hit by massive saves of selling on Monday.

While world markets calmed somewhat after frenzied selling over two trading sessions that wiped out trillions of dollars worth of wealth, leaders in Asia shifted into damage control mode.

Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba spoke with Trump late Monday and then convened a task force Tuesday to mitigate damage from the 24% U.S. tariffs imposed on Washington’s biggest ally in Asia.

Economic Revitalization Minister Ryosei Akazawa was appointed lead trade negotiator and senior officials were dispatched to Washington to follow up on the Ishiba’s talk with Trump.

Ishiba told his ministers to do their utmost to get Trump to reconsider and also to mitigate the impact from the U.S. “reciprocal” tariffs, which he said would be a blow to all industries. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters.

India’s Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar spoke with his U.S. counterpart Marco Rubio late Monday, pitching for an early conclusion of negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement.

India, which faces a 26% tariff on its exports to the U.S., is hoping for concessions as part of the trade deal. A first tranche of the agreement is expected by this fall. Washington wants India to allow more open market access for U.S. dairy and other farm products, but New Delhi has balked at that since farming employs the bulk of India’s workforce.

India’s Trade Minister Piyush Goyal planned to meet with exporters Wednesday to gauge the potential impact and cushion the economy from the tariffs.

A State Department statement said Rubio and Jaishankar discussed ways to deepen collaboration, the tariffs and “how to make progress toward a fair and balanced trade relationship.”

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said his government and other Southeast Asian countries would send officials to Washington to discuss the tariffs and it was working to build a consensus on a unified response among the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as they convened an investment conference in Kuala Lumpur.

“We do not believe in megaphone diplomacy,” Anwar said, “As part of our soft diplomacy of quiet engagement, we will be dispatching together with our colleagues in ASEAN our officials in Washington to begin the process of dialogue.”

Still, he chided the U.S., saying Malaysia’s trade with the U.S. had long been a model of mutual gain, with its exports supporting Malaysia’s growth as well as high-quality jobs for Americans. The 24% tariff recently imposed on Malaysian imports was “harming all” and might have negative impact on both economies, he said.

Anwar said Malaysia would stick to a policy of diversifying its trade at a time of uncertainty over globalization and changing supply chains.

In Hong Kong, which has a free-trade policy and operates as a free port with few trade barriers, Chief Executive John Lee echoed Beijing in blasting Trump’s tariffs as “bullying” and “ruthless behavior” he said had damaged trade and raised global uncertainty.

Lee said the former British colony, which came under Beijing’s control in 1997 but has limited autonomy, would draw closer to the Chinese mainland, sign more free trade agreements and strive to attract more foreign investment to help blunt the impact of the higher U.S. duties.

What's On



Photos during the farewell dinner.

Pak Donors Team hosted farewell dinner in honor of In-Charge Coordinator Noman Ghuman

Pak Donors Team hosted Farewell Dinner in honor of In-Charge Coordinator Noman Ghuman which was attended by a large number of members of the Pakistani community in Kuwait. The participants paid tribute to the noble services of In-Charge Coordinator Noman Ghuman in form of Blood Donation Camps towards community and expressed their best wishes to the new In-Charge Coordinator Abdul Waheed Jaber Ali.

The participants mentioned that Noman Ghuman and his entire team, who are passionate about serving humanity through blood donations camps, are not only serving the Pakistani community living in Kuwait, but people of other nationalities are also benefiting from it. At the end, Commemorative shields were presented to the in-charge coordinator, Noman Ghuman, by the Pak Donors team and Pakistan Women Forum Kuwait.

IMA Kuwait hosts successful Interfaith Eid Get-Together at Kuwait Teachers' Society

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait successfully hosted its Interfaith Eid Get-Together Event, themed 'Celebrate Eid, A Day with Togetherness'. The Event brought together esteemed Presidents of Prestigious Indian Associations, Dignitaries, Prominent Personalities in Kuwait, along with Special Guests & Invitees of IMA Community. Held on Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at Kuwait Teachers' Society Auditorium, Dasma, the Event witnessed a gathering of hundreds of attendees and their families, who cherished a memorable evening filled with togetherness and community spirit. Eid Get-Together holds deep cultural & spiritual importance for the Muslim community, marking culmination of the holy month of Ramadan. The Event served as a meaningful opportunity to foster unity, promote mutual understanding and celebrate the values of compassion & togetherness.

Key Highlights

The evening featured thought-provoking and immersive discourses, with a captivating keynote speech delivered by Mr Nisar Ahmad on the topic 'Establishing a Just Society'. His address deeply resonated with the audience, engaging them throughout the Session. Addressing the audience, Mr Ahmad emphasized that justice is the foundation of a balanced and ethical society, built on principles such as fairness, equality, human dignity, and accountability. He explained that justice in Islam is deeply rooted in the teachings of the Quran and the exemplary life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), advocating for fundamental rights such as life, religious freedom, education, and economic welfare. He also highlighted the role of social and economic justice, underscoring the importance of charity, fair governance, and an impartial legal system. He asserted that while striving for justice in this world is essential, ultimate justice will be served in the hereafter where every action of human being will be judged with absolute fairness by the Creator.

The Event featured Model Exhibition on 'Quran and Science,' covering essential Islamic themes such as Social Justice, Economy in Islam, Oneness of God, Prophethood, and the Hereafter. The Exhibition, coordinated by the IMA Children's Circle and IMA Ladies Wing, showcased interactive and educational models presented by Young Participants, offering a valuable learning experience. IMA President Mr. Mohammed Umar Falahi honored distinguished guests with floral bouquets as a token of appreciation. These dignitaries were recognized for their outstanding contributions to human welfare, art, culture, and sports in both Kuwait and India. They expressed their gratitude and highlighted the significance of such gatherings in promoting mutual cooperation, religious understanding, and tolerance.

Prominent Dignitaries and Association Presidents who graced the Event included:
Mr Ahmed Mutlaq Al-Azmi, Head – Dept of Islam Propagation, Ministry of Awqaf
Mr Suresh K P, Hon Sec - Indian Business & Professional Council, Kuwait
Fr. James Tuscano, Principal - Indian English Academy (Don Bosco)
Mr Shankar Shetty, President - Tulu Koota Kuwait (TKK)
Mr Prasanth Warriar, President - Progressive Professional Forum (PPF) Kuwait
Mr Nitin Prabhakar, President - Maurya Kala Parisar (MKP) Kuwait
Mr Pradhan Lushkari Ram, Founder President - Satguru Ravidas Welfare Society
Mr Raja G, President - Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF) Kuwait
Mr Ramesh Kediyoor, Founder President - Mogaveera Association Kuwait
Mr Mathew Joseph, President - Kerala Art Lovers Association (KALA) Kuwait

Interactive Quiz and Community Engagement

Following the speeches, an engaging Interactive Quiz Session was conducted by Mr Osaib Ahmed. The audience enthusiastically participated, making it a fun and informative experience. Winners received attractive gifts. Additionally, an Open Q&A Session was held, where Mr Nisar Ahmad, Mr Umar Falahi and Mr Waleed Umri answered audience questions, fostering meaningful discussions on Islamic and societal topics.



Photos during the event.

The Event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Mr-Munawar Hussain and was convened by Mr Faiyaz Ahmed. The Event concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks by Mr Mirza Tanvir Beg, followed by a sumptuous Dinner where attendees enjoyed a meal together, strengthening bonds within the community. As a gesture of generosity and goodwill, a Book Stall featuring Islamic books and Quran Translations in various languages was set up for free distribution. Guests eagerly collected these valuable resources, symbolizing commitment to knowledge sharing and community engagement.

IMA Kuwait extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, for its unwavering support, KTV2 for its coverage, and all attendees, guests, speakers, and association representatives and dignitaries for their invaluable support in making this event a resounding success. IMA Kuwait, a prominent Indian socio-religious organization operating under the patronage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, continues to serve expatriates by organizing events that enhance their spiritual and social well-being. It looks forward to hosting more impactful programs in the future, catering to the needs of the Indian expatriate community in Kuwait.



Photos during the ICC Asia Conference.

Sajid Ashraf highlights Kuwait's cricketing success

Kuwait cricket delegation shines at ICC Asia Conference in Hong Kong

HONG KONG, April 8: KCC Board General Secretary Mr. Emad Al Jassam and Director General Mr. Sajid Ashraf made a significant impact at the recently concluded ICC Asia Conference held in Hong Kong, China. The power-packed conference saw participation from 50 delegates representing the ICC Asia family, including Test nations such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. The event was hosted by Hong Kong Cricket Chairman Mr. Burji Shroff at the prestigious Hong Kong Cricket Club and was led by Mr. Aminul Islam, ICC Development Manager - Asia, alongside Mr. William Glenwright, ICC Global Development Manager. The conference was also graced by Mr. Mubashir Usmani, ICC Associates Chairperson, and Mr. Mahinda Vallipuram, ICC Director.

A highlight of the event was Mr. Sajid Ashraf's participation in a high-profile panel discussion alongside Test nations and top Associate countries, where he shed

light on the key factors behind Kuwait's remarkable rise to 24th in the ICC T20I rankings—a testament to the nation's growing cricketing prowess. Kuwait also played an active role in the Women's Cricket Panel, engaging in deep discussions around the vision, strategic plans, and challenges in developing women's cricket across Asia. The panel aimed to exchange best practices and help member nations unlock the full potential of female cricketers in the region. Kuwait Cricket extends heartfelt thanks to Hong Kong Cricket for their outstanding hospitality and congratulates them on hosting a highly successful and engaging conference. With growing recognition on the global stage, Kuwait stands tall as one of the top-performing Associate nations—and with the T20 World Cup 2026 on the horizon in India & Sri Lanka, the dream is alive, and the best is yet to come!

Tamil community ties strengthened at event

8th annual iftar program draws over 2,000 attendees in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: On March 28, 2025, the 8th Annual Iftar program, co-hosted by the Kuwait Tamil Makkal Sevai Maiyam and M.A. Hythar Group, concluded on a high note, attracting over 2,000 attendees. The event took place at the M.A. Hythar Group office in Mirqab and marked a significant milestone in strengthening Tamil community ties within Kuwait.

Distinguished guests, including Dr. S.M. Hyder Ali, Chairman of M.A. Hythar Group, and Eng. G. Raja, President of the Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF), Kuwait, graced the occasion. Officials from the Indian Embassy also participated, further elevating the importance of the event.

A special speech was delivered by Imam Maulavi Theni Yasar Arafat AalimIndadi, Principal of Aljanna Women's Arabic College in Chidambaram, shared an insightful address with the attendees.

The event saw broad representation, with various Indian associations, social activists, media representatives, and members of Indian political parties and Tamil communities coming together, making the occasion even more significant.

The event was organized by M.A. Hythar group staff and Ku-



Photos during the iftar event.

wait Tamil MakkalSevaiMaiyam under the leadership of Executive Chairman Rahman, Secretary Sahul, and key members Rasik, Abudhakir, Balu, Rashid, Yunus

and social worker Alibai. Their dedicated efforts played a crucial role in making this year's Iftar program a memorable and impactful experience for all.

Harvard scholar discovers hidden family history on PBS show

Gates Jr. goes from host to guest on ‘Finding Your Roots’

NEW YORK, April 8, (AP): For 11 seasons, Henry Louis Gates Jr. has sat across from his guests on the popular PBS series “Finding Your Roots” and led them through secrets in their family tree. On Tuesday, it’s his turn.

The Harvard scholar learns a long-buried puzzle about his great-great grandmother, Jane Gates, information which scrambles his ancestry and opens up a new branch that goes back to Ireland.

“I was moved to tears,” Gates tells The Associated Press ahead of the airing. “I used to pass her grave at the Gates’ plot in Rose Hill Cemetery and I would say, ‘Grandma, I’m going to out you. I’m going to tell the world your secret.’”

“Finding Your Roots” is PBS’s most-watched program on linear TV and the most-streamed non-drama program. Season 10 reached nearly 18 million people across linear and digital platforms and also received its first Emmy nomination.

“The two subliminal messages of ‘Finding Your Roots,’ which are needed more urgently today than ever, is that what has made America great is that we’re a nation of immigrants,” says Gates. “And secondly, at the level of the genome, despite our apparent physical differences, we’re 99.99% the same.”

Season 11 has featured Dax Shepard and Kristen Bell, Melanie Lynskey, chef Jose Andres, Sharon Stone and Amanda Seyfried, who learned why her paternal third-great-grandfather was murdered.

Gates shares the last episode with Laurence Fishburne, who learns the identity of his biological father. It turns out both men adored jazz, which delighted Dyllan McGee, who

helped create and produce “Finding Your Roots.”

“It underscored how family connections can shape us, even unknowingly, and made me wonder if reconnecting with our past somehow affirms the significance of our own stories by showing us how much each individual on our tree shapes us even when we don’t know it,” she says.

The series started in 2006 under the title “African American Lives,” conceived by Gates in the middle of the night in his bathroom. He invited prominent Black celebrities and traced their family trees into slavery. When the paper trail ran out, they would use DNA to see which ethnic group they were from in Africa.

Challenged by a viewer to open the show to non-Black celebrities, Gates agreed and the series was renamed “Faces of America,” which had to be changed again after the name was taken. Along the way, Gates had a crash course in DNA. “For a guy with a PhD in English literature, I think I can do pretty well on the AP genetics exam,” he says, before proving it with a thorough explanation of autosomal DNA.

Over the years, the show has delivered fascinating results, like when Natalie Morales discovered she’s related to one of the legendary pirates of the Caribbean and when former “Saturday Night Live” star Andy Samberg found his biological grandmother and grandfather. It revealed that RuPaul and US Sen. Cory Booker are cousins, as are Meryl Streep and Eva Longoria.

Guests have included former US House Speaker Paul Ryan, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, designer Diane von Furstenberg and “Game of Thrones” author George R. R. Martin.



This image released by PBS shows actor Laurence Fishburne, (left), with Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr., host of the series ‘Finding Your Roots.’ (AP)

“I always tell my guests that you’re not responsible for the crazy things your ancestors did. I don’t care what they did. Guilt is not inheritable,” Gates says. “You have to understand how the people functioned in the past without judging them.”

He and his team - particularly genetic genealogist CeCe Moore - have found that traditional family stories passed

down through the generations are often filled with a few lies, often to cover up bad behavior.

“I call it where there’s smoke, there’s fire. The stories are never accurate, but they’re often close,” says Gates. “There is a kernel of truth there.”

It took researchers four years to resolve the mystery of who was Gates’ great-great grandfather, the man who impregnated Jane Gates. The story she told about her children’s father turned out to be not correct.

The researchers show him an 1888 obituary for her and a 1839 ad for her sale. Gates comments that he’s seen a thousand bill of sales like it, but this hit differently. At the end, he looks again at a photo of Jane Gates. “I see a lot of pain in those eyes and now I know why.”

“Something changed for him that day,” says McGee. “I remember him calling me after the reveal saying, ‘That was the best day of my life!’ It was such a treat for the entire team to be able to give him the gift of a missing link in his family history that he has given hundreds of our guests.”

Gates is a huge advocate that everyone should have their family tree traced and pushes back against the idea that digging up the past is divisive.

“I believe that knowing about our ancestors is fundamental to knowing about ourselves,” he says. “The only way to deal with the past is to know about the past.”

“In terms of people who would pretend that the past is irrelevant and we need to look forward, William Faulkner wrote, ‘The past is never dead. It’s not even past,’” Gates adds. “It’s still with us, shaping both who we are and the society and our norms under which we function.”

‘Unfair treatment’

Prince Harry appeals UK security removal

LONDON, April 8, (AP): **Prince Harry** was treated unfairly when he was stripped of his British security detail, his attorney told appeals court judges on Tuesday. Harry, who made a rare appearance in court for the hearing, lost his government-funded protection in February 2020 after he stepped down from his role as a working member of the royal family and moved to the US.

A High Court judge ruled last year that a government panel’s decision to provide “bespoke” security for Harry on an as-needed basis was not unlawful, irrational or unjustified.

But attorney Shaheed Fatima argued that a group that evaluated the Duke of Sussex’s security needs failed to follow its own process and perform a risk management assessment.

“The appellant does not accept that bespoke means better,” Fatima said. “In fact, in his submission, it means that he has been singled out for different, unjustified and inferior treatment.”

Harry, whose titles include the Duke of Sussex, was wearing a navy blue suit and light blue tie as he sat behind his lawyer. His surprise appearance was an indication of the case’s importance to him. Harry, 40, the younger son of King Charles III, has bucked royal family convention by taking the government and tabloid press to court, where he has a mixed record.

But Harry rarely shows up to court, making only a few appearances in the past two years. That included the trial of one of his phone hacking cases against the British tabloids when he was the first senior member of the royal family to enter the witness box in more than a century.

Harry had claimed he and his family are endangered when visiting his homeland because of hostility aimed at him and his wife Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, on social media and through relentless hounding by news media.

He lost a related court case in which he sought permission to privately pay for a police detail when in the UK but a judge denied that offer after a government lawyer argued officers shouldn’t be used as “private bodyguards for the wealthy.” He also dropped a libel case against the publisher of the Daily Mail for an article that said he had tried to hide his efforts to continue receiving government-funded security.

But he won a significant victory at trial in 2023 against the publisher of the Daily Mirror when a judge found that phone hacking at the tabloid was “widespread and habitual.” He claimed a “monumental” victory in January when Rupert Murdoch’s U.K. tabloids made an unprecedented apology for intruding in his life for years, and agreed to pay substantial damages to settle his privacy invasion lawsuit.

Post-birth issue

Rachvelishvili sues Met over dismissal

NEW YORK, April 8, (AP): Mezzo-soprano **Anita Rachvelishvili** sued the Metropolitan Opera and her union, alleging the company unlawfully terminated her contracts because of a vocal issue that developed after she gave birth. She also accused the union of failing to pursue a grievance against the company.

In a complaint filed March 27 in US District Court in Manhattan, the 40-year-old singer from the European nation of Georgia said the Met owed her more than \$400,000 from canceled agreements to appear in Verdi’s “Aida” and “Don Carlo,” Bizet’s “Carmen” and Ponchielli’s “La Gioconda” from 2022 through January 2025. She made her Met debut in 2011 and has sung about 60 performances with the company.

Rachvelishvili said in the lawsuit that she “was temporarily limited in her very highest vocal range as a result of giving birth,” but has since recovered. She said the Met told her agent on Jan. 28, 2023, that it was canceling “future engagements due to an alleged deterioration of vocal quality.”

Rachvelishvili’s lawsuit also said the American Guild of Musical Artists told her lawyer it would not pursue a grievance or seek arbitration over an alleged breach of contract.

In the lawsuit, first reported by the website Slipped Disc, the singer said the Met violated the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and restrictions involving pregnancy discrimination under the New York Human Rights Law.



Rachvelishvili

Television



This image released by Disney shows Elisabeth Moss in a scene from ‘The Handmaid’s Tale.’ (AP)

Final season to bring lightness amid dark moments

‘Handmaid’s Tale’ promises satisfying end

LOS ANGELES, April 8, (AP): Not long ago Yvonne Strahovski, who plays beautiful, ruthless, deeply complicated Serena on “The Handmaid’s Tale,” was forced to watch early scenes of her character’s cruelty.

Of course, Serena was being cruel to long-suffering heroine June (Elisabeth Moss). It wasn’t a nice experience to relive.

“I was dying. I wanted to vomit! It was horrible,” Strahovski said in an interview, of footage played at a panel event. “To go back and look at that was insanely jarring.”

To which longtime “Handmaid’s” fans would likely reply: Tell us about it, Serena! We’ve gone through hell and back ourselves, for 56 episodes.

Rapes. Mass hangings. Shootings. Torture. Kids torn from mothers, tongues from mouths. And more. The searing Hulu drama about a totalitarian state that treats women as property, based on the Margaret Atwood novel, may have been brilliant. But the brilliance came from abject darkness.

So praise be, loyal fans: Creators of the show felt your pain. They want you to know that this, the sixth and final season, will be different.

It will still be Gilead, to be sure. As Bradley Whitford’s ever-quotable Commander Lawrence would say: “Gilead’s gonna Gilead.” But it will be faster-paced, and more satisfying. There will be catharsis and redemption - rewards for all that fan loyalty.

Yes. Don’t take it from us (though we’ve previewed the first eight episodes). Take it from June herself.

Moss, who not only stars but directs four episodes this season, says it was around season 4 or 5 when creators realized they wanted to move away “from too much in-your-face darkness.”

Of course, the show’s hardly turned into a sitcom.

“We wouldn’t be ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’ if we didn’t have those dark moments,” she says. “It would be dishonest.” But,

she says, “We did want to bring in more lightness and levity.”

Helpful in that regard: Whitford’s whipsmart characterization of Commander Lawrence, who tosses off memorable one-liners like “Serena, are you suffering from an irony deficiency?”

Whitford confirms a reporter’s suspicions that he’d come up with that one himself. “I’ve been telling that joke for years,” he says. “I pitched it ... and I’m very proud of it.”

Eric Tuchman, showrunner with Yahlin Chang, recognizes people had started to find the show “a hard watch ... and that was honestly a way we as writers were beginning to feel.”

So, along with shunning the most extreme cruelty, the show has abandoned what he calls the “more languid pacing” of the past.

Propulsive

“We had a lot of stories we wanted to tell in 10 episodes,” Tuchman says. “We wanted the season to have a feeling of momentum and to be propulsive.”

Adds Chang: “It was a now-or-never thing - this is the last chance we get to tell these stories with these characters.”

We can likely expect fewer endless gazes into June’s tearful eyes. There’s stuff to get done.

A number of characters have flirted with the other side, morally, in the show - good people doing terrible things, terrible people occasionally doing good. Well, it’s time for everyone to take a stand.

“People don’t stay the same,” Moss says. “Someone’s gonna go to the dark side, someone’s gonna go to the light. But ... you can’t just plod along, avoiding choosing a side. At a certain point, you have to choose.”

Of course we’ve always known where June stood, as the show’s moral compass - even if many viewers were stunned/perplexed/annoyed each time she returned to Gilead of her

own accord.

But June’s gonna June, as Lawrence might say.

When we left her in season 5, June had just escaped Toronto, where the tide was turning against refugees from Gilead. She boarded a train headed westward, along with baby Nichole. Then she heard another baby’s cry, and it turned out Serena, her former tormentor from Gilead, was there too, with her own baby. “Got a diaper?” Serena asked.

While the upshot of this train ride is one of many forbidden spoilers, it’s safe to say June and Serena’s relationship remains ... thorny.

Strahovski herself isn’t sure Serena is redeemable.

“She has softened. She’s made redeemable choices. And if there’s ever going to be a bigger redeemable moment, it may occur this season,” Strahovski teases. But she adds: “I don’t know if any of it is entirely forgivable.”

Then there’s Aunt Lydia. The very name strikes terror for those who remember the horrid things she did to those handmaids.

But Lydia is already showing signs of change. (She’s also going to be central in an upcoming sequel, “The Testaments,” based on a later Atwood novel.)

Ann Dowd says it’s all about love - for Janine, her favorite handmaid.

“Love changes everything,” Dowd says. “It’s the most powerful thing in the world.” “This role has really pushed me to corners I never imagined,” Strahovski says. “It’s made me a better actress for it, 100%.”

As for Moss, she says her “whole professional life has changed on this show.” Not only as actor, but as director and producer.

“For me, that’s been massive,” she says. “I love acting so much, but I did need something more to sink my teeth into ... I wanted to be more involved in all sides of what we do, and I have learned so much.

Variety

NEW YORK: **Robert Caro**, Salman Rushdie and Sandra Cisneros were honored Monday night at an Authors Guild dinner gala that celebrated the written word and its vital role in the preservation of democracy.

“The world we live in is a house on fire and people we love are burning,” said Cisneros, the fiction writer, poet and pacifist who was presented the Baldacci Award for Literary Activism. Caro, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, is this year’s winner of the Preston Award for Distinguished Service to the Literary Community and Rushdie, the novelist and determined critic of censorship,

received the Champion of Writers Award for his “steadfast commitment to free expression.”

The Authors Guild represents more than

15,000 published authors and advocates for a variety of causes, whether opposing book bans or calling for restrictions on the use AI. The gala, held in Gotham Hall in midtown Manhattan, was hosted by “Saturday Night Live” star Ego Nwodim.

Caro, who accepted



Caro

his award through a pre-recorded video, served as Guild president from 1979-81. He noted that many of the issues that concerned writers decades ago still concern them, including, he joked, “waiting for their editors to get back to them.” He otherwise called the Guild’s work as “urgent” as ever and warned that authors can’t fight for their causes alone. (AP)



ROME: Italy’s competition authority on Tuesday levied fines totaling 20 million euros (\$22 million) against half a dozen ticketing agencies for practices that have made it “difficult for regular visitors to buy basic tickets online to visit the landmark Roman

Colosseum.

The Cooperative Culture Society, which managed ticket sales for the Colosseum from 1997 to 2024, received the largest portion of the overall fine with 7 million euros. The fine was for a series of practices that forced tourists to buy tickets at significantly higher prices from platforms that added services such as tour guides or line skipping, the authority also known as AGCM said in a statement.

Six tour operators based in Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and Ireland were additionally fined for using bots and other automated systems to buy up large quantities of tickets, making them unavailable for individual tourists. (AP)

First woman to be honored with sports Walk of Fame star

Billie Jean King immortalized with Hollywood star

LOS ANGELES, April 8, (AP): Billie Jean King became the first woman to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in the new sports entertainment category on Monday and she was joined by friends Magic Johnson and Oscar-winning actor Jamie Lee Curtis.

“The important things is, I don’t want to be the last one,” the Hall of Fame tennis player told the crowd.

King received the 2,807th star, located near the famed intersection of Hollywood and Vine across from the historic Pantages Theater. Its electronic marquee read, “A star for a star. Congratulations Billie Jean King.” Fans gathered on the sidewalk outside a dumpling shop while horns honked and celebrity tour buses cruised past on busy Hollywood Boulevard. King’s wife, Ilana Kloss, joined the clutch of photographers to shoot her own pictures.

“You always fight for what’s right,” Johnson told King above the din. “You lend your platform and your voice and your time and your money to bring about change.”

Johnson, like King, is a part owner of the Los An-

geles Dodgers, who were honored at the White House earlier Monday for winning the 2024 World Series.

“We’re just alike,” he said. “We’re super competitive as hell, we’re control freaks because we know that if you put it in our hands we’re going to win. You’ve been a winner your whole life, you love to help people and last but not least, you always will stand for what’s right.”

The ceremony reunited King with players Rosie Casals and Julie Anthony from the earliest days of the WTA Tour, as well as the tour’s retired athletic trainer Connie Spooner. Also attending were five-time major champion Maria Sharapova and Stacey Allaster, former WTA CEO and current U.S. Open tournament director.

“Billie Jean King’s contribution is power,” Curtis said. “She’s power on the courts, she’s power in the courts, she’s power in the press, power in her public advocacy, power in her fight for freedom, power to be who she is now.”

King grew up in Long Beach, 34 miles south of Hollywood. She played at the Los Angeles and Bev-

erly Hills tennis clubs, where she’d spot stars like Lucille Ball and Doris Day.

“My family loved music and movies,” she said. “A trip to Hollywood, a movie at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre, was a special treat for our family. My mother would have loved this.”

King attended Oscar-winning actor Holly Hunter’s star ceremony in 2008.

“I remember thinking back then, ‘Oh man, this is really cool. This is unbelievable,’” she said. “‘Oh, I’m never going to get this.’ Here I am.”

King was the first to step on her bronze star after it was uncovered several blocks east of where her longtime friend Elton John’s is located.

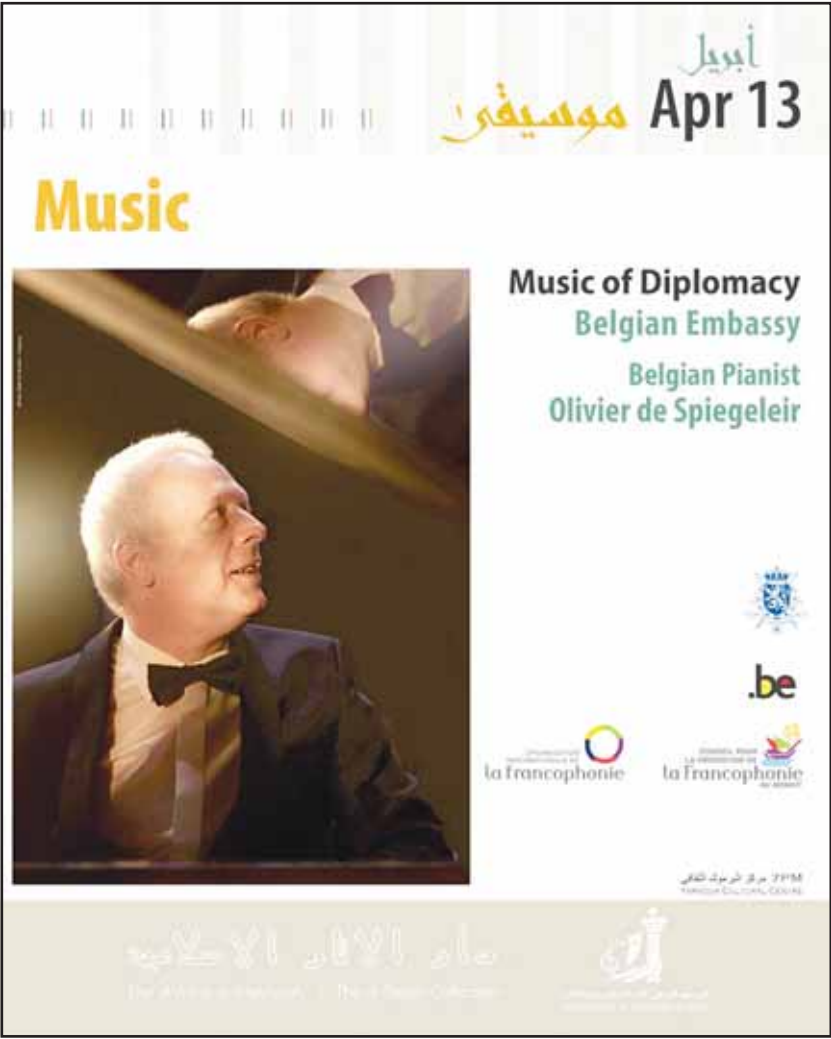
“Remember,” she said, “my star is your star.”

Also on hand was Los Angeles Lakers owner Jeanie Buss, her husband Jay Mohr, rapper Flavor Flav, race-car driver Katherine Legge and Emmy-winning screenwriter Jane Anderson.

In January, King served as grand marshal of the 136th Rose Parade and last year she received the Congressional Gold Medal.



Billie Jean King poses with her new star at a ceremony on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Monday, April 7, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP)



A flyer of the event.

Music

Vernon sings about his fear of change

Bon Iver’s ‘SABLE, fABLE’ delivers chilly, robotic R&B

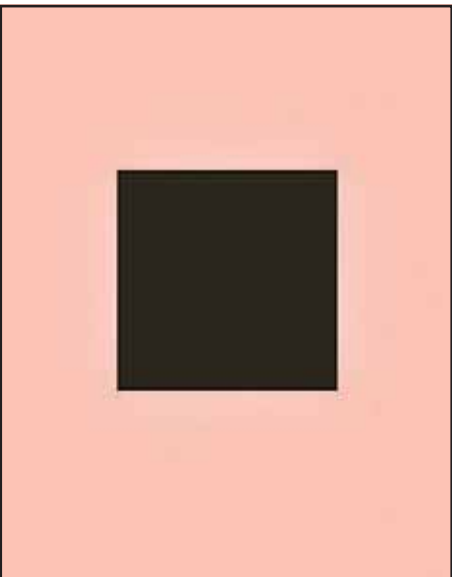
LOS ANGELES, April 8, (AP): On Bon Iver’s “SABLE, fABLE,” Justin Vernon sings about his fear of change. And then he strives to embrace it.

The album is the first in six years from Vernon’s project, an epilogue to the reluctant pop star’s three-song EP “SABLE,” released last fall. Those minimalist, dark tunes open the album, with Vernon lamenting impermanence while also seeking something new.

On the “fABLE” songs that follow, he finds what he’s looking for: love. The album traces the arc of a courtship as Vernon plugs a hole in his heart.

“I don’t know who I am without you,” goes a lyric on “Day One,” the album’s most impassioned vocal performance thanks to contributions from Wye Oak’s Jenn Wasner and alt-R&B musician Dijon. Much of the music is less convincing, alas, and fails to convey the heat of the moment.

Bon Iver’s sonics have toggled between his early, recorded-in-a-cabin ballads and the dense layers of more recent releases. Vernon and rising talent Jim-E Stack co-produced the new music, and while much of it comes from Vernon’s woody Wisconsin studio, it’s the opposite of organic.



This album cover image released by Jagjaguwar shows ‘Sable, Fable’ by Bon Iver. (AP)

Multi-instrumentalist Greg Leisz contributes lovely pedal steel, and an occasional saxophone peaks through, but the

primary instrument seems to be a computer. Synthesizers serve up digital dissonance, samples are part of a robotic patchwork, and vocals often sound chilly and disembodied.

The album’s techno-folk sound evolves as Vernon sings about growth, and his gauzy romanticism settles on an R&B aura built around his formidable falsetto. At times it seems he’s about to launch into “Betcha By Golly, Wow,” or some other ’70s soul hit. Nothing here is that catchy, but his rising vocal line does distinguish the lead single “Everything Is Peaceful Love,” and he borrows a Jackson 5 title on the soulful “I’ll Be There.”

Long keen to collaborate, Vernon duets with Danielle Haim of the band HAIM on “If Only I Could Wait,” a persuasive lament about the ebb of love that served as the album’s genesis. Less successful is “Walk Home,” an ode to lust undercut by mystifyingly altered, decidedly unromantic kazoo-like singing. A fetching retro dance groove makes “From” appealing, and a shimmering keyboard provides a big hook on the final song, “There’s A Rhythmn.” The spelling, like the album, falls shy of Bon Iver’s best efforts.

Books

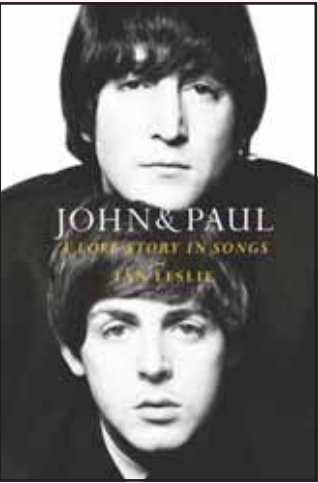
‘Love Story in Songs’

Book explores complex Lennon-McCartney ties

NEW YORK, April 8, (AP): Ian Leslie’s “John & Paul: A Love Story in Songs,” takes a detailed look - 426 pages - at how John Lennon and Paul McCartney worked together from their meeting as teenagers until John’s death.

Had McCartney not decided at age 15 to go hear Lennon’s band playing in a London suburb, the world would have been denied the multitude of Beatle songs that brightened a generation and brought escalating musical innovation to rock music.

As Leslie affirms in the book, Lennon and McCartney early on developed a personal and creative chemistry that allowed them to elevate each other’s work to the timeless song classics still heard around the world.



This book cover image released by Celadon shows ‘John & Paul A Love Story in Songs’ by Ian Leslie. (AP)

Relationship

And into that relationship dives Leslie, analyzing the mountain of articles and books written about the Beatles and interpreting messages the two men were sending to each other in their solo songs, particularly after the band’s break-up when both were writing and performing as solo acts.

Leslie focuses on exploring the often-tortured relationship between the introverted, sometimes jealous and frequently depressed Lennon and the more outgoing, driven and business-like McCartney.

Leslie’s comprehensive assembly of lyrics, memos and actions of the two men strays into gossip sometimes in his effort to define their relationship. The book labors to find where the Lennon-McCartney relationship fell in the spectrum of best buds to bromance. Leslie includes a quote from Lennon, when asked if he ever had sex with a man, answers “not yet.” But no other evidence follows that Lennon and McCartney were more than good friends who loved each other as brothers.

Leslie doesn’t pursue what might have blossomed musically had McCartney connected with a Lennon-like collaborator after the Beatle founder’s passing. What songs might McCarthy and Brian Wilson might have written, for example? Leslie so thoroughly dissects the relationship between Lennon and McCartney, though, that it is difficult to imagine another crea-

tive equivalent partner for either man.

We don’t hear from McCartney in this book; Leslie says he thought that would have “unbalanced” the story, given the inability to get an assessment from Lennon. That’s a dubious conclusion but what we can take away from this book is this: Lennon and McCartney were living proof that strikingly different personalities can come together for astonishing results. Might there be someone in the world who has not felt a mood lift from a Beatle song? Good luck finding anyone.

Also:

NEW YORK: The next novel by **Ian McEwan** will be a post-apocalyptic story, set in part in the 22nd century and centered on a scholar’s immersion into a poem written during happier times.

McEwan, the Booker Prize-winning British author, is calling “What We Can Know” a work of science fiction “without the science.”

“I’ve written a novel about a quest, a crime, revenge, fame, a tangled love affair, mental illness, love of nature and poetry, and how, through all natural and self-inflicted catastrophes, we have the knack of surviving,” McEwan said in a statement released through Alfred A. Knopf, which announced the book will be published Sept. 16.

Obituaries

‘His passion for music was unmatched’

Blondie drummer Burke dies at 70

LOS ANGELES, April 8, (AP): Clem Burke, whose versatile drumming propelled the iconic rock group Blondie during its decades performing everything from new-wave punk to disco-infused tunes, has died. He was 70.

The band said in a statement on its website Monday that he died from cancer but no additional details were provided.

“Clem was not just a drummer; he was the heartbeat of Blondie,” the band said in a statement. “His talent, energy, and passion for music were unmatched, and his contributions to our sound and success are immeasurable.”

The self-proclaimed “rock & roll survivalist” started playing the drums when he was 14 in his school orchestra but was kicked out for playing too loud, according to Blondie’s website.

In the 1970’s, he answered a band’s ad in the Village Voice seeking a “freak energy” rock drummer, kicking off his decades-long career with lead singer Debbie Harry and the rest of his Blondie bandmates.

The band recorded its first album in 1976 and by the following year was touring with such icons as Iggy Pop and David Bowie. It became



Clem Burke, (from left), Debbie Harry and Rob Roth attend a screening of ‘Blondie: Vivir En La Habana’ during the 20th Tribeca Festival in New York on June 16, 2021. (AP)

known as the most commercially successful band to emerge from a fertile New York rock scene that also produced Talking Heads and the Ramones.

In 2006 Burke and the other original members of Blondie were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame after selling more than 42 million records, according to Blondie’s website.

During the late 1970s and early ’80s, the band had eight Top 40

hits, including four No. 1s: “Heart of Glass,” “Call Me,” “The Tide Is High” and “Rapture,” which is regarded as the first No. 1 hit to feature rap.

There’s also a five-track 1975 album demo that includes “Platinum Blonde,” a sort of band mission statement.

But Burke’s mark was especially solidified with his rapid, powerful drumming at the start of “Dreaming” in 1979.

Veteran actor of David E. Kelley TV shows

‘Heisenberg’ star Arndt passes away at 86

NEW YORK, April 8, (AP): Denis Arndt, a character actor and favorite of TV writer and producer David E. Kelley, getting cast in “L.A. Law,” “Picket Fences” and “Chicago Hope,” and later earning a Tony nomination for his Broadway debut at age 77 in a play about mismatched lovers, has died. He was 86.

Arndt died “peacefully in his bed” at his cabin home in Ashland, Oregon, his family announced in an obituary published March 26. It noted that he was born in 1939, the same year “The Wizard of Oz” came out. “That was like Dad’s life,” it said. “It started out in black and white and blossomed into a life of color, brilliance, daring adventure and passion. And it was also a little bit trippy, like Oz.”

Arndt was a Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot who twice was award-



Denis Arndt arrives at the 71st annual Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall on Sunday, June 11, 2017, in New York. (AP)

ed the Purple Heart and later flew helicopters in Alaska. He turned to acting after moving to Seattle, spending multiple seasons at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and

performing as an early member of the Intiman Theatre in Seattle.

His career began in the mid-1980s with roles on the TV shows “Crime Story” and “Wiseguy” and he would spend the 1990s in TV and film, with a highlight being one of the cops interrogating Sharon Stone’s character in Paul Verhoeven’s “Basic Instinct.”

Making his first and only Broadway appearance at age 77 opposite Mary-Louise Parker, Arndt received acclaim for his performance in “Heisenberg,” which debuted off-Broadway in 2015 before hitting Broadway a year later.

In the play by Simon Stephens, babbled-mouthed 42-year-old George from New Jersey randomly meets a bored 75-year-old Irish butcher, Alex, in a London train station and the two begin a strange courtship.

Variety

NEW YORK: Comic **Amber Ruffin** has a new spring gig.

PEN America told The Associated Press on Monday that Ruffin will host the free expression organization’s gala fundraiser on May 15. The comic had been scheduled as a featured speaker April 26 at the White House Correspondents Association’s annual dinner. But the WHCA rescinded the offer to Ruffin, a blunt critic of President Donald Trump, saying it wanted to focus on journalistic achievement.

In a statement Monday, PEN co-interim CEO Clarisse Rosaz Shariyf praised Ruffin for her “brilliant social commentary, her satire and exceptional talent.”

“She is truly emblematic of the talented creators who we need on stages and in writers’ rooms during a time of unprecedented censorship in this country. We’re both delighted and honored to have her with us,” Shariyf added. (AP)

□ □ □



Ruffin

NEW YORK: Garth Greenwell’s “Small Rain,” in which a poet falls ill and confronts mortality, the meaning of art and the failures of health care, won the PEN/Faulkner Award for fiction on Monday.

“Garth Greenwell has wrought a narrative of illness and identity in visceral detail, conveyed with a precision of language that steals the breath,” the judges’ citation reads in part.

Greenwell’s award includes a \$15,000 cash prize. Finalists, each of whom receive \$5,000, include “Pemi Aguda for “Ghostroots,” Susan Muaddi Darraj for “Behind You Is the Sea,” Percival Everett for “James” and Danzy Senna for “Colored Television.” (AP)

□ □ □

NEW YORK: Greg Millen, a longtime NHL goaltender and hockey analyst, died on Monday. He was 67.

The NHL Alumni Association didn’t provide a cause in announcing his death on social media.

Millen suited up in 14 NHL seasons with six different teams - the Pittsburgh Penguins, Hartford Whalers, St. Louis Blues, Quebec Nordiques, Chicago Blackhawks and Detroit Red Wings. He finished his career 215-284-89 with a 3.88 goals-against average. He also had 17 shutouts.

After his playing career, Millen immediately slid over into broadcasting. He was with the Ottawa Senators during their inaugural season in 1992-93. (AP)

Experts warn many children are deficient in vital vitamin

Vitamin D deficiency impacts kids’ gut health: study

By **Jacqueline Hernandez, and Cristina Palacios**
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The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

You’ve likely heard about vitamin D’s important role in maintaining strong bones and teeth. But it also plays several other important roles to keep your body healthy - including the function of your gut.

As part of our research on how a dietary fiber supplement affects bone mass in children and adolescents, the MetA-Bone Trial, we are also studying gut health.

For this study, we recruited 213 children and adolescents from South Florida, primarily Hispanics, though some were Black. Before having them start taking the fiber supplement, we measured their vitamin D levels to ensure they had adequate amounts. Surprisingly, we found that 68% of these children had suboptimal vitamin D levels.

Considering South Florida is an area with plenty of sunshine year-round, this was both startling and concerning. While vitamin D can be obtained from foods, most people in the US get this vitamin primarily from skin exposure to sunlight. For youth approaching or experiencing puberty - a period of profound physiological changes, including rapid changes in bone mass - vitamin D deficiency could lead to several health issues.

Vitamin D is involved in so many bodily functions because there are vitamin D receptors in different organs. These receptors act like docking stations for vitamin D to bind to and trigger different effects in the skin, intestine, bone, parathyroid gland, immune system and pancreas, among others.

Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the body, which is key for not only building and maintaining bone mass but also the basic functioning of the nervous system.

Vitamin D also stimulates cell differentiation, a process in which cells become specialized to carry out specific functions. It is also essential to insulin secretion to control blood sugar levels, blood pressure regulation, muscle repair and regeneration, immune function and nutrient absorption, among many other functions.

The vitamin D receptors in your gut improve calcium absorption and strengthen your intestinal barrier.

The intestinal barrier is a layered wall that allows your gut to absorb nutrients and keep out harmful bacteria. This wall is composed of intestinal cells and proteins called tight junctions that act like bricks sealing these cells together. Tight junctions play an important role in maintaining the structure of your intestinal barrier.

Vitamin D receptors help your gut produce tight junctions to maintain your intestinal barrier. Research suggests that vitamin D deficiency reduces production of the receptors the nutrient binds to, subsequently reducing the seal of the intestinal wall. This weakening of the gut barrier may allow substances from the intestine to pass into the blood, causing inflammation. Disruption of the intestinal barrier is linked to many diseases, including liver disease, Type 1 diabetes, obesity and gastrointestinal conditions such as celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease and colon cancer.

After discovering that so many of the participants in our MetA-Bone Trial had suboptimal vitamin D levels, we became interested in understanding how this nutrient might be affecting their gut health. For this, we also measured the strength of their intestinal barrier and associated this to their vitamin D levels in blood.

We found that children with suboptimal vitamin D levels had a higher risk of damaging their intestinal barrier compared with children with optimal vitamin D levels. This finding suggests that even in healthy children, suboptimal levels of

vitamin D may compromise the gut and potentially increase the risk of developing chronic diseases at an early age.

Vitamin D deficiency is highly prevalent in the US and around the world. Roughly 15.4% of children and adolescents in the US were vitamin D deficient in 2017. While vitamin D deficiency has slightly decreased over time in the general US population, it remains high among teens, especially children with darker skin.

How can you ensure you are getting enough of this important nutrient?

Only a few foods naturally contain vitamin D. For example, vitamin D is naturally found in fatty fish - such as trout, salmon, cod and tuna - egg yolks and mushrooms. Vitamin D can also be found in many fortified foods, such as dairy products like milk and cheese, plant-based milks, breakfast cereals, some orange juice brands and infant formulas. Dietary supplements are also good sources of vitamin D.

For most people in the US, sun exposure is their main source of vitamin D. However, how much sun exposure you need depends on several factors, such as the melanin content of your skin. Melanin is a pigment that protects your skin from ultraviolet radiation. People with more melanin - and therefore darker skin - produce less vitamin D from sun exposure than those with less melanin and may thus require longer sun exposure to meet minimum requirements.

Since excessive ultraviolet radiation is associated with skin cancer, clinicians typically recommend you meet your vitamin D requirements through foods and beverages. For healthy children and adults, the recommended dietary allowance of vitamin D is 600 IU, with an age-based upper limit of no more than 1,000 to 4,000 IU. You can usually meet this through a healthy diet that includes a variety of whole and unprocessed foods.

Researchers continue to uncover the extensive benefits of vitamin D in the body, supporting its indispensable role in nutrition and health. For growing children and adolescents, enough vitamin D is important for healthy development. (AP)

Over 1,500 people screened during Ramadan health drive

By **Marwa Al-Bahrawi**
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Kuwait Heart Foundation (KHF) launched a campaign to screen blood sugar and cholesterol and measure blood pressure under the slogan, “Your Health in Ramadan,” on the 17th day of the holy month of Ramadan and it continued for 10 days at Kuwait Market.

Secretary General of KHF Rashed Al-Owaish stated that the activities of the foundation during Ramadan included organizing a campaign to screen blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure for the visitors of Kuwait Market.

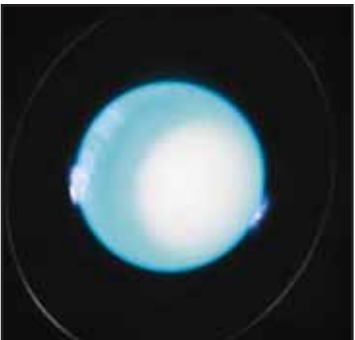
The campaign also included raising awareness among citizens and expatriates who frequent the market about the dangers of three diseases: diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Al-Owaish confirmed that around

1,500 people -- an average of 150 people per day -- were screened during the campaign period. He said the campaign succeeded in raising awareness among a large number of market visitors by engaging with them, answering their questions, and providing them with awareness publications on heart disease.

He emphasized that this campaign signals the beginning of other campaigns, as it is the first season of Ramadan campaigns. He added foundation intends organize other campaigns in various markets in Kuwait during the holy month.

“Since its inception, the foundation has been raising awareness and educating the public about diseases that affect heart. Through these campaigns, it also encourages regular checkups and early detection of diseases that threaten heart health. The Ramadan campaign was a huge success and those in charge exerted tremendous efforts to better serve the public,” he concluded.



This image provided by ESA/Hubble shows Uranus’ aurorae taken by the NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope on Oct. 10, 2022. (AP)

Uranus’ day is 28 secs longer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 8, (Agencies): A day at Uranus just got a little longer.

Scientists reported Monday that observations by the Hubble Space Telescope have confirmed it takes Uranus 17 hours, 14 minutes and 52 seconds to complete a full rotation. That’s 28 seconds longer than estimates by NASA’s Voyager 2 spacecraft in the 1980s.

A French-led team studied a decade’s worth of aurora observations at the ice giant to track its magnetic poles. That long-term tracking provided a more precise rotation period for Uranus, the seventh planet from the sun. From that distance, it takes about 84 Earth years for Uranus to orbit the sun.

“The continuous observations from Hubble were crucial,” lead author Laurent Lamy of the Paris Observatory said in a statement.

Lamy and his international team said this new approach can help pinpoint the rotation of any world with auroras and a magnetosphere.

Published in the journal Nature Astronomy, the findings come a few weeks before the 35th anniversary of Hubble’s launch. NASA’s space shuttle Discovery delivered the space telescope to orbit on April 24, 1990.

Space: NASA astronaut Jonny Kim and two Russian crewmates arrived at the International Space Station on Tuesday on board a Russian spacecraft.

A Soyuz booster rocket lifted off as scheduled from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan to put the Soyuz MS-27 carrying the trio in orbit. They docked at the station just over three hours later.

Kim and Russia’s Sergey Ryzhikov and Alexey Zubritsky are scheduled to spend about eight months at the space outpost. Satellite.

EPA to review health risks of fluoride

US health secretary plans to end CDC’s fluoride recommendations nationwide

SALT LAKE CITY, April 8, (AP): US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Monday said he plans to tell the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to stop recommending fluoridation in communities nationwide. Kennedy said he’s assembling a task force of health experts to study the issue and make new recommendations.

Also on Monday, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced it is reviewing “new scientific information” on potential health risks of fluoride in drinking water. The EPA sets the maximum level allowed in public water systems.

Kennedy told The Associated Press of his plans after a news conference with EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin in Salt Lake City.

Kennedy cannot order communities to stop fluoridation, but he can direct the CDC to stop recommending it and work with the EPA to change the allowed amount.

Utah last month became the first state to ban fluoride in public drinking water, pushing past opposition from dentists and national health organizations who warned the move would disproportionately hurt low-income residents who can’t afford regular dentist visits.

Republican Gov. Spencer Cox signed legislation barring cities and communities from deciding whether to add the cavity-preventing mineral to their drinking water. Water systems across the state must stop fluoridation by May 7.

Kennedy praised Utah for emerging as “the leader in making America healthy again.” He was flanked by Utah legislative leaders and the sponsor of the state’s fluoride law.

“I’m very, very proud of this state for being the first state to ban it, and I



US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. reads the nutrition label on the back of a jar of food while touring the Osher Center for Integrative Health at the University of Utah, Monday, April 7, in Salt Lake City. (AP)

hope many more will,” he said.

Kennedy oversees the CDC, whose recommendations are widely followed but not mandatory. State and local governments decide whether to add fluoride to water and, if so, how much - as long as it doesn’t exceed a maximum set by the EPA, which is currently 4 milligrams per liter.

Zeldin said his agency was launching a renewed examination of scientific studies on the potential health risks of fluoride in drinking water to help inform any changes to the national standards.

“When this evaluation is completed, we will have an updated foundational scientific evaluation that will inform the agency’s future steps,” Zeldin said. “Secretary Kennedy has long been at the forefront of this issue. His advocacy was instrumental in our decision to review fluoride exposure risks, and we

are committed to working alongside him, utilizing sound science as we advance our mission of protecting human health and the environment.”

Fluoride strengthens teeth and reduces cavities by replacing minerals lost during normal wear and tear, according to the CDC. In 1950, federal officials endorsed water fluoridation to prevent tooth decay, and in 1962 they set guidelines for how much should be added to water.

Kennedy, a former environmental lawyer, has called fluoride a “dangerous neurotoxin” and said it has been associated with arthritis, bone breaks and thyroid disease. Some studies have suggested such links might exist, usually at higher-than-recommended fluoride levels, though some reviewers have questioned the quality of available evidence and said no definitive conclusions can be drawn.

UK records first baby born from ‘donated’ womb

LONDON, April 8, (KUNA): The United Kingdom has record the first child to be born to a mother using a donated womb in the country.

The baby’s mum, Grace Davidson, 36, was born without a functioning uterus, and received her sister’s womb in 2023 - in what was then the UK’s only successful womb transplant, the BBC reported Monday.

Two years after that pioneering op-

eration, Grace gave birth to her first child in February.

The surgical team told the BBC they have carried out three further womb transplants using deceased donors since Grace’s transplant. They aim to carry out a total of 15 as part of a clinical trial.

Grace was born with a rare condition, Mayer-Rokitansky-Kuster-Hauser (MRKH) syndrome, where the

womb is missing or underdeveloped, but with functioning ovaries.

The first baby born as a result of a womb transplant was in Sweden in 2014.

Since then around 135 such transplants have been carried out in more than a dozen countries, including the US, China, France, Germany, India and Turkey. Around 65 babies have been born.

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SPORTS

Late penalty rescues point for Leganes at home to Osasuna

Napoli misses chance to close in on Inter, Bologna leapfrogs Juve

BOLOGNA, Italy, April 8, (AP): Napoli missed the chance to close the gap on Serie A leader Inter Milan to a single point when it gave up a first-half lead and drew at Bologna 1-1.

Bologna will be the happier side at moving a step closer to a second successive Champions League place by leapfrogging Juventus into the coveted fourth spot.

Bologna has one more point than Juventus and two more than Lazio.

Napoli was three points off the lead.

The night started well for Napoli with Frank Anguissa storming through a flimsy Bologna rearguard to score a fine solo goal after 18 minutes.

But Bologna equalized in the second half with a lovely finish from Dan Ndoye.

Miranda's defense-splitting pass was cut back by Jens Odgaard and Ndoye's sublimely cheeky finish with his backheel gave the goalkeeper no chance.

Santiago Castro missed a golden chance to grab the winner in the dying minutes for Bologna but he put his chance wide.



A first goal of the La Liga season for Osasuna defender Jorge Herrando was canceled by a late penalty for Leganes in an entertaining 1-1 draw.

Visiting Osasuna was on top for much of the match and had already had a goal ruled out for the most marginal of offsidess before Herrando put them ahead early in the second half.

Jon Moncayola's corner was flicked on across goal and the towering center half nodded in at the back post.

Osasuna should have had the three points wrapped up long before the end but the normally reliable Ante Budimir missed two glorious chances and Leganes got back into the game with a late penalty.

With five minutes left, Sergio González was hauled down in the box and Dani Raba made no mistake from the spot.

Osasuna moved up one place to 13th, while Leganes, although still third to last, closed the gap to Alaves above it to two points. The bottom three clubs are relegated.



Napoli's Stanislav Lobotka, left, fights for the ball with Bologna's Jens Odgaard during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Bologna F.C. and S.S.C. Napoli at Renato Dall'Ara Stadium, Bologna. (AP)

Players apologize after altercation

La Liga appeals ruling that allows Barca to keep players

MADRID, April 8, (AP): The Spanish league has appealed the ruling by Spain's sports authority that allowed Barcelona to retain playmaker Dani Olmo and forward Pau Víctor on its squad.

The sports authority ruled in favor of Barcelona last week after the league and the Spanish federation denied the club's request to register the players because it missed the end-of-year deadline to comply with financial rules.

The club was able to add them after the sports authority intervened with a provisional ruling.

There is no timetable for when Monday's appeal will be taken into consideration.

Valladolid players Luis Pérez and Juan Miguel Latasa apologized on Monday after their heated altercation on the bench during a La Liga match at the weekend.

The players issued a joined statement condemning their own attitude during the 4-0 home loss to Getafe on

Sunday.

"No sporting result or frustration can justify disrespect or the behavior that we showed yesterday on the bench," they said. "We want to apologize to our teammates, to the club and to the fans."

Pérez and Latasa said they personally apologized to the rest of the squad, and will accept any punishment issued by the club.

Valladolid strongly condemned their behavior in a statement on Monday, adding it was considering disciplinary action.

"We deeply regret the image presented by our players," the club said.

Television images showed Pérez trying to punch Latasa after they argued on the bench, not long after Latasa was substituted in the 60th minute.

The altercation did not escalate as another teammate who had also been substituted, Eray Comert, was sitting between them and kept Pérez away.

Valladolid staff quickly came to help control the situation. Pérez, who did not play, eventually walked away accompanied by a staff member.

Valladolid is in last place in the standings. It hasn't won its last 11 matches, 10 of them losses.



Olmo

'A lot of the symptoms didn't go away'

Concussion setbacks finally end Will's promising career

MELBOURNE, Australia, April 8, (AP): Repeated concussions have taken such a toll on Will Pucovski's promising cricket career that he's decided he'll never play the game again.

Pucovski was a precocious talent when he was first selected for an Australia squad in 2019 but he only played one test match - scoring a flourishing 62 on debut against India in 2021 - because of a string of concussion setbacks.

After taking medical advice to retire from first-class cricket last year following a concussion - reportedly his 13th - in a Sheffield Shield match, the 27-year-old batter confirmed in a radio interview Tuesday that he can't play again at any level because of the toll on his physical and mental health.

"The simple message is, I won't be playing at any level again," Pucovski told the SEN network. "In the couple of months post that (last concussion) I struggled to get anything done, walking around the house was a struggle ... I was sleeping a lot. The first few months were horrendous, but things didn't leave me."

"From there it's been a tough year, a lot of the symptoms didn't go away, which has led me to this decision."

Pucovski was one of the best batters in Australia but didn't make his test debut until he faced India at

Sydney in January 2021, posting a half-century in his first innings but then dislocating his right shoulder in a fielding mishap. He needed surgery and was ruled out for six months.

After returning to training in October, 2021, he sustained another concussion while batting and was ruled out of cricket for several months again. Just over a year since his last concussion, the lingering impacts have forced him out of the game.

"When you have symptoms for over a year - and I've had others for numerous years - it can be quite difficult to see how can I get out to play professional sport again when I'm struggling to live my life how I want to," he said. "The hard bit to come to terms with, to a degree as well, is I know what I was like before I suffered these concussions, and I know what I'm like now."

"My family have noticed a bit of a difference in me as well, and my friends, and that part is quite scary, and it's quite scary for them as well." He finished his career with a first-class average of 45.19, including seven centuries and a highest score of 255 not out, as well as the record for the highest opening partnership in Australia's domestic first-class competition, the Sheffield Shield.



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India. (AP)

MUMBAI, India, April 8, (AP): Krunal Pandya gave a full-throated roar to close out his former team, the Mumbai Indians, and his younger brother Hardik Pandya in an Indian Premier League thriller.

Krunal, who helped Mumbai win three of its five IPL titles, was entrusted with bowling the final over in a raucous atmosphere and took three wickets to give Royal Challengers Bengaluru their first win in Wankhede Stadium in a decade.

After Bengaluru put up 221-5, Mumbai fell shy at 209-9.

Bengaluru was on top for most of the game.

Virat Kohli's fastest Twenty20 half-century in seven years, off 29 balls, in a 42-ball 67, captain Rajat Patidar's 32-ball 64, and Jitesh Sharma's unbeaten 40 off 19 staked Bengaluru to an imposing total on a good batting pitch.

But Mumbai, backed by its impassioned fans, produced a dramatic comeback as Tilak Varma

and Hardik Pandya blasted apart the Bengaluru bowling.

Varma and Hardik slashed the run rate required by combining for 89 off 34 into the 18th over. But that's when the chase suddenly stalled after Varma was caught for 56 off 29, and in the 19th over after Hardik was caught for 42 off 15.

The last over came down to 19 runs needed by Mumbai. But Krunal got Mitchell Santner caught in the deep first ball, and Deepak Chahar caught the second ball on the boundary to an incredible double act between Phil Salt and Tim David.

Two sixes were needed off the last two balls to force a super over, but Naman Dhir's huge swipe was taken on the fence, prompting Krunal's huge roar of delight.

Captain Patidar received man of the match and praised his death bowlers, Bhuvneshwar Kumar in the 18th, Josh Hazlewood in the 19th, and Krunal.

Kohli became the fifth batsman to achieve 13,000 runs in T20s as the Indian batting maestro set the tone for a challenging total by hitting eight fours and two sixes.

Kohli joined Chris Gayle and Kieron Pollard of the West Indies, Alex Hales of England, and Shoaib



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Krunal Pandya celebrates the dismissal of Mumbai Indians' Will Jaks during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India. (AP)

Malik of Pakistan to the landmark in a brisk 91-run stand-off 52 balls with left-hander Devdutt Padikkal, who made a 22-ball 37.

Kohli welcomed Jasprit Bumrah, returning from a back injury in January, with a six on the on-side off the fast bowler's first ball. But Bumrah quickly found his lengths and conceded only 29 runs off his four overs, the only Mumbai bowler to average less than 10 an over.

After Kohli fell to Hardik at deep midwicket, Patidar and Sharma, who smashed four sixes and two boundaries, accelerated against Trent Boult, the left-arm fast bowler who ended up with his most expensive IPL figures, 2-57.

Boult was in the middle at the end with a bat in his hand, unable to prevent Bengaluru from celebrating its first IPL win at Wankhede since 2015 and its third win in four games this season. Bengaluru, seeking its maiden IPL title, also beat the Chennai Super Kings for the first time at Chepauk in 17 years.

Meanwhile, Mumbai lost its fourth game in five. "We fell short by two hits," captain Hardik said.

Stead steps down from limited-overs formats

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, April 8, (AP): Gary Stead confirmed on Tuesday he will no longer coach New Zealand in the Twenty20 and one-day international formats and is considering his future in test cricket.

Stead said he expects to take a month to reach a final decision. The 53-year-old Stead has coached New Zealand in all formats since taking over from Mike Hesson in 2018.

New Zealand Cricket said it would advertise from next week and is yet to decide whether it will appoint different coaches to different formats.

Stead guided New Zealand to the finals of the 2019 ICC World Cup, the 2022 T20 World Cup and this year's Champions Trophy. He also led New Zealand to victory in the inaugural World Test Championship.

"Gary's results have been very impressive over a long period and we're very comfortable giving him some time to collect his thoughts," NZC high performance officer Bryan Stronach said in a

statement.

"At the moment we haven't any strong preference for either a split-coaching role or a sole appointment who covers all three formats and we're unlikely to be clearer on that until we see who's putting their name forward."

New Zealand has just completed a 4-1 win over Pakistan in a home T20 series and a 3-0 win in the one-day international series. Those results were achieved with an under-strength side with many leading players unavailable because of the Indian Premier League.

"I'm looking forward to getting away from touring life for a while and having a think about my future," Stead said. "My focus has been on finishing the season strongly with a lesser experienced team."

"The past six to seven months has been particularly busy with relatively non-stop cricket action since September. I now want to evaluate my options but still feel I have coaching left in me, albeit not as head coach across all formats."

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Best of the Rest

Celebre D'Allen dies after collapsing: A horse that collapsed on the racecourse after running in the Grand National has died, the British Horseracing Authority confirmed on Tuesday.

Celebre D'Allen - a 125-l outsider in the storied British jumps race on Saturday - was pulled up in the latter stages before collapsing. After receiving treatment on the course, he walked into the horse ambulance and was taken to the racecourse stables for further assessment.

The 13-year-old horse was moved on Sunday to a nearby stud connected to his owner after showing an improvement in his condition, the BHA said in a statement, but died on Monday.

BHA chief executive Brant Dunshea said his organization was "saddened" to learn of the death of Celebre D'Allen and defended its health and safety processes, before and after the running of the Grand National. (AP)



Van Dijk reveals progress: Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk is getting closer to signing a new contract with the runaway Premier League leader.

"There is progress, yeah," Van Dijk said in comments reported. "Listen, these are internal discussions and we'll see."

Van Dijk, who turns 34 in July, is out of contract along with Anfield standouts Mohamed Salah and Trent Alexander-Arnold after what looks set to be a league title-winning season.

While Alexander-Arnold has been expected to join Real Madrid, Van Dijk and Salah have seemed more likely to extend their stays that started in the 2017-18 season. The trio together won a Champions League title in 2019 and the Premier League one year later.

"I love the club, I love the fans and they were there for us again," the Netherlands defender said after a 3-2 loss at Fulham on Sunday. (AP)

Al-Arabi & Kuwait Club to face off in Super Cup final



Players challenging for the ball.

KUNA photo

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Kuwait Club's first volleyball team secured a 3-1 victory over Kazma (25-19, 25-21, 16-25, 25-19) in the Super Cup semi-finals at the Union Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex. Meanwhile, Al-Arabi clinched a spot in the final after a thrilling 3-2 win over Al-Qadsiya (22-25, 25-19, 23-25, 25-18, and 15-10), setting up an exciting showdown with the "Whites" tomorrow.

The "Kaifan Boys" are aiming for their seventh Super Cup title; while the "Mansouriya Boys" are looking to capture their first ever win in the tournament.

The Super Volleyball Championship has a rich history, with the tournament held nine times prior to this season. Al-Qadsiya claimed the inaugural title in the 2014-2015 season, followed by Kazma's victory in 2015-2016 season. Kuwait Club dominated the competition with five consecutive titles from 2016-2017 to 2021-2022 (note that the championship was not held in 2018-2019).

Kazma took the trophy in the 2022-2023, while Kuwait Club returned to glory last season, claiming the 2023-2024 Super Cup.

Al-Qadsiya 'secures' spot in the Asian League Final Eight



Al-Qadsiya player dribbles the ball past an opponent.

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: The Al-Qadsiya secured a spot in the Asian League Finals for West and Central Asia, known as the "Final Eight," after defeating Bahrain's Manama Club at the Basketball Association Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex. This victory earned Al-Qadsiya the third and final ticket to the prestigious Asian League Finals.

As per the tournament's regulations,

which are organized by the International Basketball Federation in collaboration with the Asian Basketball Federation, three teams from the Gulf region will qualify for the "Final Eight." Alongside Al-Qadsiya, clubs such as Al-Riyadi and Al-Hikma from Lebanon, Amman United from Jordan, Tabiat from Iran, and Al-Difaa Al-Jawiya from Iraq will compete. Additionally, two teams from Central Asia will join the battle.

The Finals are scheduled to take place next May.

Kuwait delegation arrives in Erbil for West Asian Chess Championship



The Kuwaiti chess delegation.

KUNA photo

ERBIL, April 8, (KUNA): A delegation from the Kuwait Chess Federation arrived in Erbil, northern Iraq, on Monday to take part in the West Asian Chess Championship (Zone 3.1), a prestigious event that serves as a qualifier for the World Cup finals.

Adel Al-Amiri, Vice President of the Kuwait Mind Games Club (Kuwait Chess Federation), expressed the importance of the tournament for Kuwait and wished success to all participants. He highlighted the competitive nature of the championship, noting its

status as one of the most significant World Cup qualifiers, attracting top-level players from across the region.

The tournament commenced on Tuesday and will feature teams from Kuwait, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Oman, the UAE, Bahrain, Yemen, and the host nation, Iraq. The championship will run until April 16.

The Kuwaiti delegation, led by Iman Al-Kout, includes players Bader Al-Hajri, Abdulrahman Al-Ibrahim, Mishaal Al-Zaid, and administrator Faisal Al-Qallaf.

Newcastle demolishes Leicester to move into top 5

15-year-old Monga debuts

LEICESTER, England, April 8, (AP): Jacob Murphy scored twice in the first 11 minutes and set Newcastle on its way to a 3-0 win over a hapless Leicester in the Premier League. Newcastle moved into fifth, equal on points with the team above it, Chelsea.

Murphy's goals were the main talking point, along with the second-half appearance of Jeremy Monga, who at 15 years, 271 days, became the second youngest player to appear in the Premier League.

Monga replaced Bilal El Khannouss for Leicester 16 minutes from time wearing a different, logo-less shirt from his teammates because he is too young to advertise the betting firm that sponsors the home side.

Murphy scored the opener after two minutes when he stole in at the back post to convert a low cross from Tino Livramento. Leicester had six men inside the six-yard box, but the ball went past them all, and Murphy made no mistake.

The well-travelled winger scored a breathtaking second nine minutes later, thanks largely to the audacity of Fabian Schär.

Schär's attempt from inside his own half bounced back off the crossbar with goalkeeper Mads Hermansen well beaten, but Murphy followed up to slam home the rebound with the Leicester defence AWOL.

Former Leicester winger Harvey Barnes scored the third after 33 minutes when he poked home a Joelinton shot that the keeper parried.

It was a damage limitation exercise from then on for Leicester, which became the first league team to lose eight consecutive home matches without scoring. It remained second to last, three points behind Ipswich and five behind Wolves.

"It's hard to describe, to be honest, with how it's been and it makes us feel awful right at the moment," Leicester defender James Justin said. "You feel disconnection and disappointment when you step off the pitch. It's not been good enough for a couple of months now."

"I don't know how many games it's been since we last picked up a point. It's a horrible moment for the club with how we're playing on the pitch and trying to regain any confidence."

"There were bright spells from the lads who came off the bench, and that's the one positive to take."

"There is still a chance for us, and we have to fight and claw for it, but we aren't showing it on the pitch."



Leicester City's Wilfred Ndidi, left, and Newcastle United's Tino Livramento battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester City and Newcastle United at the King Power Stadium, Leicester, England. (AP)

Best of the Rest

Montpellier hires Camara: Rock-bottom Ligue 1 side Montpellier has hired inexperienced coach Zoumana Camara in a last-ditch bid to avoid relegation.

Camara, aged 46, has never been in charge of a men's professional squad. He replaces Jean-Louis Gasset.

The much-traveled former central defender played for Saint-Etienne, Inter Milan, Marseille, Leeds, Lens and Paris Saint-Germain. He has worked as an assistant coach at PSG and managed the club's under-19s.

In a season marking Montpellier's 50th anniversary, the team was last in the standings, eight points behind Saint-Etienne with just six matches left. The two bottom teams are relegated. (AP)

CL final price freeze for fans of competing teams

NYON, Switzerland, April 8, (AP): Ticket prices at the men's Champions League final are unchanged from last year for most fans of the two competing teams with big increases only for high-end seats, UEFA said.

Each finalist will get 18,000 tickets for the May 31 game at Bayern Munich's stadium with a special lowest-price rate of 70 euros (\$77). That's the same price as the lowest cost tickets at the 2024 final played at Wembley Stadium in London.

Substantial price hikes have been added to the

two highest-rated categories of seats. Top-price tickets go from 713 euros (\$781) last year to 950 euros (\$1,040) this time, and "category 2" tickets rise from 500 euros (\$548) last year to 650 euros (\$712), UEFA said.

Ticket revenue from UEFA club finals goes into the overall pot of billions of euros (dollars) in revenue from broadcasting and commercial deals that is mostly paid back to hundreds of clubs each season as prize money and solidarity payments. Real Madrid, the Champions League winner last year, got the high-

est payment of \$154 million from UEFA.

UEFA said 38,700 tickets of the 64,500 available for the showpiece game in Munich are sold "directly for fans and the general public to purchase."

In addition to quotas for the two finalists, a further 2,700 tickets can be bought by fans world-wide on UEFA's website. Buyers are limited to two tickets.

More than 25,000 tickets are reserved for sponsors, broadcasters, national soccer federations and UEFA guests.

Painful memories travel with Villa coach as he returns to PSG

Luis Enrique dismisses talk of PSG being the favorite

PARIS, April 8, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain coach Luis Enrique shrugged off talk of his side being the favorite against Aston Villa ahead of their Champions League quarterfinal on Wednesday.

While PSG has been a regular in the last eight since cash-rich Qatari investor QSI bought the club 14 years ago, and reached the semifinals last season, Villa has not been in this stage of the competition since 1983.

"People said we had no chance against Liverpool (in the round of 16), so in my mind there is no such thing as favorites," Luis Enrique said at a news conference on Tuesday. "It's a very open and difficult match for both sides. I know it will be intense."

PSG wrapped up a record-extending 13th Ligue 1 title on Saturday with six games to spare. Villa is pushing for a top-four finish in the Premier League and is on a seven-game winning run heading to Paris for the first leg.

Luis Enrique, who guided Barcelona to the treble in 2015, is bracing himself for a tactical headache against a Villa side coached by Spanish countryman Unai Emery.

"Their strong point is their versatility, so it's hard to figure out how they're going to play. They can play with a low block (and) they bring the ball out brilliantly," he said. "Their biggest strength is how they attack from the back and reach the second line of attack quickly. It then becomes very hard to contain when

teams are breaking from midfield."

Emery is a respected opponent from the days when both men were coaching in Spain. Emery won the Europa League a record four times - three with Sevilla and one with Villarreal - and guided unheralded Villarreal to the Champions League semifinals in 2022.

"He deserves more recognition because he's a great coach with limitless energy," Luis Enrique said. "He probably already knows everything I am planning to do."

Villa could line up with attacking midfielder Marco Asensio, who is

on loan from PSG. So Luis Enrique was asked if he has a problem with the fact Asensio is free to face PSG.

"On the contrary, I am delighted that Marco can play," he said. "I know him perfectly well, he's a player of the highest level, with great technical ability."

Although PSG is unbeaten in domestic soccer this season, the last three matches have all seen sloppy first-half performances. Luis Enrique looked stunned when his side fell 2-0 down inside the first 30 minutes against second-tier Dunkerque last week in a French Cup semifinal,

and he warned his players about lapses in concentration.

"The Champions League does not allow you to switch off for one second," he said. "You can't reach the quarterfinal without being completely focused."

PSG will be without captain Marquinhos due to suspension for the first leg, and the defense remains vulnerable to set-pieces and corners.

But Emery, who coached PSG from 2016-18, probably already knew that.

Painful memories travel with Villa coach Emery as he returns to PSG in Champions League.

When Aston Villa coach Unai Emery returns to Parc des Princes for the first leg of the Champions League quarterfinals against Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday, it may stir up some difficult memories for him.

In contrast, Villa's on-loan forward Marcus Rashford will doubtless recall one of his happiest soccer experiences.

For Villa defender Lucas Digne and attacking midfielder Marco Asensio, the trip could be a case of mixed feelings.

Emery was PSG's coach for one of the biggest humiliations in Champions League history.

That was eight years ago, when PSG faced Barcelona in the Round of 16 and became the first team in Champions League history to throw away a 4-0 lead from the first leg, losing 6-1 in the return.



Aston Villa's Marcus Rashford, left, and Ollie Watkins, second left, during a training session in Birmingham, England, Tuesday April 8, 2025, ahead of the Champions League quarter final first leg soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Aston Villa. (AP)

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Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Josh Hazlewood, center, bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India. Bengaluru won by 12 runs. (AP)

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Sports

Kuwait paragliding team earns bronze

Gold for Oman at GCC Beach Games

MUSCAT, April 8: The Kuwait paragliding team clinched the bronze medal in the team precision takeoff and landing category at the 3rd Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Beach Games, held in Muscat, Oman. The team earned a total of 3,925 points, following a competitive showing by the Omani team, which won gold, and the UAE team, which secured silver.

The bronze medal was secured by athletes Ahmed Al-Mas, Talal Al-Mutawa, Ibrahim Al-Rashoud, and Mohammed Al-Dosari, who competed fiercely over two days of challenges at North Hail Beach.

Ahmed Al-Shallahi, Chairman of the Kuwait Air Sports Club, praised the team's performance, emphasizing the importance of participating in regional and international events to enhance players' technical skills and sporting experience. He also highlighted how such Gulf tournaments help promote unity and cooperation among GCC nations while developing beach sports to meet global standards.

The paragliding team began its campaign last Saturday, competing in six total rounds—three on each day—before ultimately securing its place on the podium.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait sailing team continued its participation in the tournament for the fourth straight day at Al-Moj Marina in North Hail, taking part in various categories, including ILCA 6 (youth and girls), ILCA 7 (youth), and the Optimist competition, along with the "Ebtessmat" class for children.

Earlier in the tournament, the Kuwait sailing team also brought home a bronze medal in the Optimist team race. The quartet of Ali Enki, Hamad Al-Masoud, Bader Bu Hamad, and Abdulaziz Al-Mansour claimed third place, marking Kuwait's first medal in this year's competition.



The Kuwait paragliding team celebrates with the national flag on the podium.

KUNA photo

'Al-Arabi is not an easy team'

Green Falcons ready to soar against Arkadag



Al-Shatti and Abdul Ghafoor address the media.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 8: Al-Arabi will take on Turkmenistan's Arkadag at 7:00 pm today at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium in the first leg of the AFC Challenge League semi-finals.

The second semi-final match will take place tomorrow (Thursday), featuring Cambodia's Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng against Indonesia's Madura United.

This will be the second meeting between Al-Arabi and Arkadag. The Green Falcons previously edged Arkadag 3-2 during the group stage, which they hosted last October. That victory helped Al-Arabi qualify as the best second-placed team, before progressing past Oman's Al-Seeb in the quarter-finals with a 1-0 win in the first leg and a 2-2 draw in the return leg.

Al-Arabi has intensified its preparations for this key fixture with a focused training camp. The team aims to secure a strong result at home ahead of the second leg next Wednesday.

The match also comes amid a dip in domestic form. Recent 1-1 draws against Al-Salmiya and Al-Fahaheel saw the Green Falcons slip to second

place in the Zain Premier League standings—four points behind leaders Kuwait Club, with only four rounds left to play.

Head coach Nasser Al-Shatti underlined the importance of the continental tournament, saying, "The AFC Challenge League is one of our primary goals this season."

Speaking at the pre-match press conference, Al-Shatti stressed the need for his players to show resilience and recover from recent league results. He voiced full confidence in his squad, especially goalkeeper Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, stating, and "His performance remains a cornerstone of the team's strength."

On the other side, Arkadag's Coach Ahmed Alaa expressed ambitions for a strong away result, but acknowledged the quality of his opponent. "Al-Arabi is not an easy team. The semi-final is a different scenario than the group stage, and we've made adjustments to our squad accordingly."

The Asian Football Confederation has assigned a South Korean refereeing crew to officiate the match. Choi Hyun-jae will serve as the head referee, assisted by Chun Jin-hee and Bang Gi-wol, while Chae Sang-hyup will act as the fourth official.

Man U heading to Asia for tour

MANCHESTER, England, April 8, (AP): Manchester United's players will travel to Asia after their final Premier League match for the club's first ever postseason tour, with officials citing the need for "significant additional revenue" as one reason.

Following the home game against Aston Villa on May 25, United will fly to play games in Kuala Lumpur on May 28 and Hong Kong on May 30.

United's end to the season could yet include an appearance in the Europa League final, but that will take place on May 21.

United said the tour provides "a unique opportunity for the players and staff to connect directly with fans in Asia, and for the club to activate with

its valued commercial partners in the region."

"Importantly, tour fixtures drive significant additional revenue which help make the club stronger, allowing us to keep investing in success on the pitch," United CEO Omar Berrada said.

The announcement of United's postseason tour comes amid concerns about player workload in soccer's increasingly congested calendar.

United is already confirmed to play preseason friendlies in Scandinavia and the United States.

The club has recently implemented cost-saving initiatives, including hundreds of staff redundancies, and raised ticket prices, telling fans the club cannot sustain its current financial losses.

Houston denied first title in thriller

Clayton Jr. delivers game-saving stop as Florida wins NCAA Championship

SAN ANTONIO, April 8, (AP): Florida's Walter Clayton Jr. came up with the perfect going-away present for that spirit-crushing Houston defense that bullied, battered, and bedeviled him all night.

It was a defensive gem of his own. It happened right before the buzzer. For the win and the national title.

The Gators and Clayton somehow overcame Houston's lockdown intensity Monday night to will out a 65-63 victory in an NCAA title-game thriller decided when the Florida senior's own D stopped the Cougars from even taking a game-winning shot at the buzzer.

Clayton finished with 11 points, all in the second half, but what he'll be remembered for most was getting Houston's Emanuel Sharp to stop in the middle of his motion as he tried to go up for the game-winning 3 in the final seconds.

Clayton ran at him, Sharp dropped the ball and, unable to pick it up lest he get called for traveling, watched it bounce. Alex Condon dived on the ball, then flipped it to Clayton, who ran to the opposite free-throw line with the buzzer sounding and tugged his jersey out of his shorts. Next, the court was awash in Gator chomps and orange and blue confetti.

"Just go 100 percent," Clayton said when asked what he was trying to do at the finish. "We were just trying to get a stop, and we happened to get it. I'm happy we got it done."

This marked the fourth comeback in six March Madness games for the Gators (36-4), who trailed by 12 in the second half of this one. They led this game for a total of 64 seconds, including the last 46 ticks of a game that was in limbo until the final shot that never came.



Florida celebrates with the trophy after their win against the Houston in the national championship at the Final Four of the NCAA college basketball tournament in San Antonio. (AP)

Houston coach Kelvin Sampson called it "incomprehensible" that the Cougars couldn't get a shot off on either of their last two possessions.

About the last one, Sampson said: "Clayton made a great play. But that's why you've got to shot fake and get into the paint. Two's fine."

Will Richard had 18 points to keep the Gators in it, and they won their third overall title and first since Billy Donovan went back-to-back in 2006-07.

This time, it's Golden, in his third year, bringing the title back to Gainesville, where the Gator faithful can celebrate a win on one of college sports' grandest stages for the first time since Tim Tebow was playing quarterback for the football team in 2008.

The Cougars (35-5) and Sampson were denied their first championship and ended up in the same spot as the colorful Phi Slama Jama teams from

the 1980s - oh-so-close in second place.

This was a defensive brawl - the Gators failed to crack 70 for only the second time all season - and Clayton got the worst of it for most of the night.

He was 0 for 4 from the field without a point through the first half. Met at the top of the circle, then double-teamed and trapped when necessary, he didn't score until hitting two free throws with 14:57 left.

The player who scored at least 30 points in the last two games, who averaged 24.6 through the first five games of the tournament, who almost singlehandedly outscored UConn and Texas Tech down the stretch of those March Madness comebacks, finished with one 3-pointer. Before that, he had a pair of three-point plays off drives to the hoop that kept the Gators

in striking range.

Then, he became part of not one, but two stops that put these Gators in the history book, and possibly cemented himself as the best basketball player to wear the orange and blue.

After Alijah Martin made two free throws to put Florida ahead 64-63 - its first lead since 8-6 - the Gators lured Sharp into a triple-team in the corner, where Clayton pressured him, and then Richard got him to dribble the ball off his leg and out of bounds.

Florida made one free throw on the next possession, setting up the finale.

The ball first went to L.J. Cryer, who led the Cougars with 19 points. Blanketed by Richard, he threw to Sharp, who was moving to spot up for a 3 when Clayton ran at him. That left him with no choice but to let the ball go.

"It was a great defensive play by Walter," Condon said. "I just dived on it, and hearing the buzzer go was a crazy feeling."

Instead of the 69-year-old Sampson becoming the oldest coach to win the title, the 39-year-old Golden becomes the youngest since N.C. State's Jim Valvano in 1983 to win it all.

This gut-wrenching loss came two nights after the Cougars fashioned a wild comeback of their own, from 14 down against Duke.

All three Final Four games were decided down the stretch, none by more than Florida's six-point win over Auburn on Saturday. Any thought that the men's game had been overtaken by the increasingly popular women's game will probably go on hold at least for a year.

The three women's Final Four games, capped by UConn's blowout of South Carolina on Sunday, were decided by an average of 24.7 points.

Heat rally late to beat 76ers

LaVine, DeRozan combine for 80 points in Kings win



Sacramento Kings forward DeMar DeRozan, left, dribbles past Detroit Pistons forward Ausar Thompson, right, during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Detroit. (AP)

DETROIT, April 8, (AP): Zach LaVine scored 43 points, including 17 in the fourth quarter, and DeMar DeRozan added 37 as the Sacramento Kings rallied for a 127-117 victory over the Detroit Pistons to strengthen their bid for a first-round home game in the play-in tournament.

Domantas Sabonis had 19 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists for the Kings, who have won three straight and have a one-game lead over Dallas for ninth in the Western Conference.

Cade Cunningham scored 35 points and Tim Hardaway Jr. added 19 for Detroit, which has lost four of its last five games.

The Pistons started out the second quarter with a 29-10 run to take a 66-48 lead. DeRozan scored eight of the Kings next 14 points to close the deficit to 72-62 at halftime.

Sacramento took its first lead of the second half, 97-94, when LaVine

made a 3-pointer with less than a second left in the third quarter.

The Kings never relinquished the lead and the closest Detroit could get was 106-105 on Cunningham's three-point play with 9:16 left in the game.

Heat 117, 76ers 105

In Miami, Duncan Robinson scored 12 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, Tyler Herro scored 20 and Miami pulled away to beat Philadelphia.

Kel'el Ware had 19 points and 17 rebounds for the Heat, and Davion Mitchell had 12 points and nine assists.

Quentin Grimes and Lonnie Walker IV each scored 29 for Philadelphia, which lost its 12th straight. Adem Bona scored 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for the 76ers.

Miami (36-43) is now a half-game back of Chicago (36-42) in the race for No. 9 in the East; those two teams meet on Wednesday.