

441 hrs of fasting this Ramadan

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Ramadan this year will last for a period of 30 days or 720 hours, during which Bahrainis will observe 432 to 441 hours of fasting, said a top astronomer.

Astronomer researcher Ali Al-Hajri said the first day of Ramadan is most likely to fall on 13 April 2021 as per the astronomical calendar. "Based on moon sighting, the first day, most likely, will be on 14 April 2021."

He added: "Bahrainis will have the shortest fasting period at the beginning of the month and the longest towards the end." Ramadan, one of the five pillars of Islam, requires Muslims to abstain from eating and drinking from dawn to dusk.

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ASTRONOMER RESEARCHER ALI AL-HAJRI

432 hours and 56 minutes of fasting and 287 hours and 4 minutes for Iftar, while for Shia community this will be 441 hours and 12 minutes, and 278 hours and 48 minutes, respectively," explained Al Hajri.

For the most part, Sunnis and Shias observe Ramadan the same way, but there are some differ-

ences. For one, Sunnis break their fast at sunset, once the sun is no longer visible, but there is still light in the sky. However, for Shias, they wait to break after it gets completely dark.

"So, the Sunni community, at the beginning of the month, will have 14 hours and 3 minutes of fasting and 9 hours and 57 minutes for Iftar. These calculations change by the end of the holy month, where the fasting period will be 14 hours and 47 minutes, and Iftar will be 9 hours and 13 minutes."

For the Shia community, the fasting period, at the beginning of the holy month, will be 14 hours and 20 minutes. Iftar will be 9 hours and 40 minutes. Towards the end of the month, the fasting period increases to 15 hours and 4 minutes, and Iftar to 8 hours and 56 minutes.

No Friday prayers at mosques

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Mosques in the Kingdom will remain closed to worshippers at noon, except for the Ahmed Al-Fateh Islamic Centre mosque.

A circular by the Sunni and Jafari endowments administrations called on not to open mosques at noon on Fridays during the current period.

The Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs decided to resume opening mosques for Fajr, Zuhr and Asr prayers, except Friday prayers.

Full compliance with COVID-19 measures crucial: SMC Chief

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The chances of a faster exit from the pandemic depend on ensuring proper compliance to coronavirus safety measures, said a top SMC doctor.

The best chance of faster recovery rests on people showing full commitment to COVID-19 measures issued by the National Medical Taskforce, Dr Nabeel Ahmed Al Asheeri, the Chief of Medical Services of Salmaniya Medical Complex, said.

Negligence or failure will compound the situation and lead to a spike in the number of cases, he warned.



The doctor also urged all members of the society to respect social distancing and avoid large family gatherings. "They pose an ominous risk in transmitting and spreading



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DR NABEEL AHMED AL ASHEERI

the mutated coronavirus, especially since most of the cases are related to family gatherings," he said.

Wearing the facemask, washing the hands regularly, sanitising surfaces, leaving home only when necessary, and getting vaccinated are highly recommended in confronting the virus.

Dr Al Asheeri called on to exercise caution in dealing with the elderly and those with underlying diseases.

"All of us have a crucial role in protecting themselves, their families and their community from infection."

Bahraini health workers top choice for recruitment



Bahraini volunteer health workers will get priority in health sector hiring

HEALTH UNDERSECRETARY DR WALEED KHALIFA AL MANEA.

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Bahrain will not renew temporary contracts awarded to foreign health workers, said a top health official who also affirmed that those jobs would go to Bahrainis.

"Bahraini volunteer health workers will get priority in health sector hiring," said Health Undersecretary Dr Waleed Khalifa Al Manea.

Appointments depend on vacancies available, qualification, experience and civil service laws and regulations.

He said the foreign health workers were hired on temporary contracts in limited numbers during the pandemic to meet exceptional circumstances.

"Those hired had specialisations which Bahrainis don't have. The circumstance also didn't allow the government to wait for Bahrainis to complete their training and qualification."

Al Manea confirmed that there would be no more renewals for foreign workers in the health sector.

Delay pre-dawn meal to avoid dropping sugar level during fasting: Dr Al Saad

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Dr Areej Al-Saad, a Clinical Dietitian at King Hamad University Hospital, called on diabetic patients to delay their pre-dawn meal as much as possible to avoid a drop in their sugar level during the fasting period.

Al-Saad also called on diabetic patients to end fasting immediately upon detecting a sharp drop or sharp rise in blood sugar.

Al-Saad was talking during a lecture organised by the Department of Integrated Sciences at the College of Health and Sports Sciences at the University of Bahrain in cooperation with King Hamad University Hospital.

"Check sugar level regularly, and do not eat large quantities of food during breakfast so that the sugar level does not rise sharply," the doctor said.

"The body needs energy and carbohydrates over three meals. So, do not eat the suhoor early and delay it as much as possible to avoid a drop in sugar level during the fasting period."

"Avoid high-fat meals and



Dr Areej Al-Saad

salty foods to avoid thirst, as well as foods rich in sugar during the pre-dawn meal.

"Eat more fresh vegetables and a snack between breakfast and the pre-dawn meal to reach a nutritional balance between the two meals.

"Drink more water, not juices, and exercise or do physical activity at least two hours after breakfast."

Several members of the academic and student bodies at the university were present. Dr Rabab Asghar Abdel Wahab, the Head of the Integrated Sciences Department, conducted the lecture.

Gulf Air to trial IATA travel pass

Travel pass app helps passengers securely manage their travel as per government requirements for COVID-19 testing or vaccine information

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The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is partnering with Gulf Air, the national carrier of Bahrain, to trial the IATA Travel Pass mobile app.

The app helps passengers securely manage their travel as per government requirements for COVID-19 testing or vaccine information.

Gulf Air said the initiative help pave the way for the re-establishment of global connectivity while managing the risks of COVID-19.

'Digital passport'

The deal allows Gulf Air passengers to create a 'digital passport' to match their travel itineraries with the COVID-19 health requirements of their destination country and validate compliance.

During the trial, the ser-



IATA Travel Pass acts as a 'digital passport' enabling travellers to securely and effortlessly navigate their travel plans, knowing that their verified travel credential is based on the latest COVID-19 information, strict data privacy regulations and entry rules for their destination

CAPTAIN WALEED ABDULHAMEED ALALAWI, GULF AIR'S ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



vice will be available to Gulf Air's customers travelling on select routes to and from z Bahrain.

Gulf Air said it is proud to partner with IATA to trial IATA Travel Pass to simplify and enhance compliance with COVID-19 health requirements and ensure passengers can fly with confidence.

"IATA Travel Pass acts as a 'digital passport' enabling travellers to securely and effortlessly navigate their travel plans, knowing that their verified travel credential is based on the latest COVID-19 information, strict data privacy regulations

and entry rules for their destination," said Captain Waleed Abdulhameed Alalawi, Gulf Air's Acting Chief Executive Officer.

"This is an important step in enabling international travel during the pandemic, giving people the confidence that they are meeting all COVID-19 entry requirements. IATA Travel Pass holds the key to the safe restart of the travel and tourism industry, which is an important contributor to the Kingdom of Bahrain's economy," said Nick Careen, IATA Senior Vice President for Airport, Passenger, Cargo and Security.