

Thousands gather for Friday prayers all over the Kingdom

Citizens and residents perform Friday prayers in mosques, thank HM King, HRH Prince Salman



In pictures, worshippers performing Friday prayers at various mosques in the Kingdom

- **Worshippers entered after showing proof for COVID-19 vaccination**

- **Mosques opened 45 minutes before the prayer and closed 25 minutes**

- **Prayers were performed wearing masks and ensuring social distancing**

- **Toilets and ablution places remained closed**

- **Sermons were restricted to 10 minutes**

TDT | Manama

Mosques and shrines in the Kingdom reverberated with prayers yesterday as citizens and residents returned for Friday prayers following a royal order allowing mosques to open during Ramadan.

People flocked to places of worship all over the Kingdom for Ramadan prayers adhering to social distancing measures and COVID-19 protocols, as directed by the National Medical Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Mosques were opened 45 minutes before the prayer and closed 25 minutes after the prayers.

They, however, denied entry to women and children under the age of 15.

A directive issued by His

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OFFICIALS

Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa had earlier authorised opening mosques from the first day of Ramadan for Friday prayers, Isha and Tarawih, under the supervision of the Sunni and Jafari endowment administrations.

The entry is only after showing proof for COVID-19 vaccination or recovery through the 'BeAware Bahrain' app. Proof of vaccination will only appear 14 days after the second dose.

"All of the citizens and resi-

dents showed full commitment to instruction and directives given by the authorities," said officials.

Arrangements were in place at the mosques to accommodate people for prayers adhering to the COVID-19 protocols.

Prayers, officials said, were performed wearing masks and ensuring social distancing.

People listened to sermons at mosques and thanked His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al

pandemic.

Authorities had earlier made clear that worshippers should cooperate fully with volunteers, and sermons should not exceed 10 minutes.

Directives also required performing Isha and Taraweeh prayers within 40 minutes. Taraweeh prayers commenced immediately following the Isha prayer.

Toilets and ablution places remained closed. A ban was also in place against setting up tents outside mosques.

Sunni and Jafari endowment decided which mosques are okay to welcome worshippers.

Officials said the endowments informed mosques to ensure precautionary measures ahead of the Friday prayers.

Directives also required to shorten the recitation as much as possible.

Khalifa for keeping the mosques open during the holy month of Ramadan.

"The noble act has filled the hearts of the believers with joy and happiness," preachers said.

They also thanked His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for successfully leading the Kingdom's battle against the deadly

French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle arrives in Bahrain

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The aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, the flagship of the French Navy and part of the carrier battle group known as Groupe aéronaval (GAN), arrived in Bahrain yesterday.

The battle group, usually composed of a carrier air wing, a complement of 60 aircraft, is currently engaged in the "CLEM-



ENCEAU 21 mission".

Welcoming the group, French ambassador, Jérôme Cauchard, said, "The arrival of



part of the naval air group in Bahrain fully illustrates the strategic place that France gives to the fight against terrorism, to the security and stability of the Gulf and the freedom of navigation in this 'very important' maritime axis."

"By coming to Manama, the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, France's main military tool in the field of naval aviation, reminds Bahrain's strategic location in the region and underlines the solidity of relations between

France

and the Kingdom," he added.

The CLEMENCEAU 21 mission is symbolic of the relations of trust that unite the countries involved in the fight against terrorism, particularly between France and the United States.

"GAN took command, on 31 March and for the second time in its history of the American Task Force 50, a naval force is turned towards the Iraqi-Syrian theatre to fight against Daech," the embassy statement said.

It said several French ships have passed through Bahrain in recent weeks, including multi-mission frigates such as "La Provence" at the end of March and minehunters such as "L'Aigle" or "Céphée" in April.

The French Navy is also involved in the Combined Mari-

time Forces (CMF), a multinational coalition of 33 nations.

France Navy is active in direct support of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), one of the three Task Forces of the CMF, which fights against illicit trafficking to finance terrorism and organised crime.

More than eight tonnes of narcotics were seized in March 2021 by several French vessels operating in the northern Indian Ocean as part of CTF 150.

France is also involved with several European partners in the European-led maritime surveillance mission in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASoH/Agenor), launched on its initiative more than a year ago, and is helping to de-escalate tensions in the Gulf.

