



**4** Picking up the pieces slowly to face pandemic: Bangladesh Ambassador



**12** Oldest American who 'made world a better place' dies at 116



**14** Verstappen wins at Imola as Hamilton rues rare mistake



Fajr 03:54  
Shurooq 05:17  
Dhuhr 11:47  
Asr 15:22  
Maghrib 18:17  
Isha 19:38

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# European football in crisis after Super League launch

## UEFA chief lashes out at breakaway project, FIFA expresses its 'disapproval'

### Cabinet extends curfew till the end of Ramadan

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The Council of Ministers yesterday decided to extend the partial curfew from 7 pm until 5 am until the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, government spokesman Tareq Al-Mazrem said. Mazrem said that the decision will be reviewed by the government just before the end of the holy month around May 12 with the possibility of a new decision based on the health situation.

The decision did not make any reference to the indefinite ban on the entry of expats in the country which means that the decision remains effective. Based on the previous decision taken before the start of Ramadan, people were allowed to walk until 10 pm and delivery services of food will continue until 3 am throughout Ramadan. The partial curfew regulations were re-imposed about two months ago after a steep rise in the number of coronavirus cases despite the ongoing vaccination drive.

**PARIS:** Plans for a breakaway Super League announced by twelve of European football's most powerful clubs plunged European football into an unprecedented crisis yesterday, with threats of legal action and possible bans for players, as UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin called it a "spit in the face" for supporters.

Six Premier League teams-Liverpool, Manchester United, Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur-joined forces with Spanish giants Real Madrid, Barcelona and Atletico Madrid and Italian trio Juventus, Inter Milan and AC Milan to launch the planned competition. Those clubs have 40 European Cups between them, including a record

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13 for Real Madrid and seven for Milan.

Yet they have decided to break away from the UEFA-sanctioned Champions League and start their new competition "as soon as possible", with plans for three more founding members to join and for five other clubs to be invited annually. The competition threatens to completely shake up the world's biggest sport and leaves the prestigious Champions League facing an uncertain future.

Yesterday's breakaway announcement came just hours before UEFA planned to announce a new format for the Champions League which had been con-



**LIVERPOOL:** Anti-European Super League posters hang outside Anfield stadium, home of English Premier League football club Liverpool, in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

ceived to placate the continent's biggest clubs and stave off the breakaway threat.

UEFA is pressing ahead with the new format from 2024 onwards, which will see the number of clubs

involved increase from 32 to 36, and Ceferin lashed out at the breakaway project, calling it a "disgraceful self-serving proposal from a select few clubs purely

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### Ramadan Kareem

### The three parts of Ramadan

By Dr Teresa Leshner

**R**amadan is said to be split into three thirds: the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has said, "It (Ramadan) is the month whose beginning is mercy, middle, forgiveness and its end emancipation from the fire" (Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol 93). Salman Al-Farisi (RA) reported that Prophet Muhammad said, "...The first third of the month of Ramadan is the time for mercy, the second third is for forgiveness, the third is for release from Hellfire..." (Ibn Khuzaymah.) We hope to make the most of each third so that we can receive the blessing related to each.

For the first third of mercy, the following hadith comes to mind: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgment. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing and your ears from sounds that should not be heard. Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness."

The second third of Ramadan is characterized as a time when Allah (SWT)'s forgives. The Quran says, "And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden the extensiveness of which is the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who guard against evil. Quran 3:132.

Will they not turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness, and Allah is oft-forgiving, Merciful? (Quran 5:74).

A prophetic tradition reported by Abu Huraira (RA) says, "Whoever observes fasts during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah's rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven." Bukhari 2: 37.

The third portion of Ramadan is considered to be a time for seeking release from the hellfire.

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### Manila ban on domestic helpers lifted

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** After the recent approval by the Philippine's Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Silvestre Bello III to resume sending Filipino domestic helpers to Kuwait, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Kuwait announced the embassy is resuming the processing of documents for the deployment of Filipino domestic helpers to Kuwait.

In a memo distributed to foreign recruitment agencies on April 18, 2020, acquired by Kuwait Times yesterday, Philippine Labor Attache to Kuwait Nasser Mustafa announced the commencement of the issuance of welfare clearance to foreign recruitment agencies, to be followed by the renewal of accreditation and validation of job orders starting Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the start of receiving and verification of individual employment contracts for newly-hired domestic helpers will commence on Sunday, April 25. Similarly, the lifting of the ban on deployment of workers under article 18 (skilled and semi-skilled workers), renewal of accreditation and revalidation of job orders

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**The Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Kuwait announced yesterday that the embassy is resuming the processing of documents for the deployment of Filipino domestic helpers to Kuwait. — AFP**

### Saudi, Iran hold talks in Baghdad

**BAGHDAD:** Saudi Arabia and Iran, major rivals in the Middle East, have held talks in Baghdad in recent weeks, an Iraqi government official and a Western diplomat said. The talks between senior officials, facilitated by Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhemi, aim to restore relations five years after the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic republic of Iran severed diplomatic ties.

The initiative also comes as US President Joe Biden is seeking to revive Iran's nuclear deal with world powers which was abandoned by Donald Trump, and to ease regional tensions. Riyadh has officially denied the talks in its state press while Tehran has also stayed mum, asserting only that it has "always welcomed" dialogue with Saudi Arabia.

The talks remained secret until Britain's Financial Times newspaper reported on Sunday that a first meeting had taken place on April 9. An Iraqi government official confirmed the meeting to AFP, while a Western diplomat said he was

"briefed in advance that talks would happen" with the "purpose to help broker a better relationship between Iran and Saudi and decrease tensions". The Saudi delegation is led by intelligence chief Khalid bin Ali al-Humaidan and the Iranian side headed by the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ali Shamkhani, said Adel Bakawan of the Iremmo institute.

Riyadh cut relations in 2016 after Iranian demonstrators attacked its diplomatic missions following the execution in Saudi Arabia of a revered cleric, Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr.

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### Mars copter succeeds in first flight

**WASHINGTON:** NASA successfully flew its tiny helicopter Ingenuity on Mars early yesterday, the first powered flight on another planet and a feat a top engineer called "our Wright brothers' moment."

At 3.34 am Eastern Time (0734 GMT), the four pound (1.8 kilogram) rotorcraft lifted off, hovered 10 feet (three meters) above the Martian surface, then came back to rest after 39.1 seconds. Data and images from the autonomous flight were transmitted 173 million miles (278 million kilometers) back to

Earth where they were received by NASA's array of ground antennas and processed more than three hours later. Engineers were tensely watching their screens at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, where the mission had been designed and planned for the past six years.

They broke into applause as one of them read off a checklist of tasks Ingenuity had achieved and concluded: "Ingenuity has performed its first flight-the first flight of a powered aircraft on another planet." Ingenuity quickly sent back a black-and-white image from its downward pointing navigation camera, showing its bug-like shadow cast on the surface.

Then came a choppy color video from the Perseverance rover showing Ingenuity on the ground, in flight, and then once again at rest. More images and a smoothed-out video are expected to follow.

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**NASA's Ingenuity Mars Helicopter captured in this shot as it hovered over the Martian surface yesterday. — AFP**