

OPPORTUNITY SAUDI ARABIA

in Malaysia



**King Abdullah Announces
Important New Initiatives**

ISLAM'S HOLIEST SITE TO UNDERGO EXPANSION

**World's Largest Female
University Opens Up**

Malaysian Trade Mission to Saudi Arabia



Congratulations

to the Custodian of the
Two Holy Mosques
King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
and members of the Royal Family and the
people of Saudi Arabia on their
81st National Day Celebrations on
23rd September 2011.

Warmest regards from the
President, Executive Council Members (EXCO)
and Secretariat.

**HM King Abdullah Bin
Abdul Aziz Al-Saud**
The Custodian of the
Two Holy Mosques



**HRH Crown Prince Sultan Bin
Abdul Aziz Al-Saud**
Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Defense, Aviation and
Inspector General



**HRH Prince Naif Bin
Abdul Aziz Al-Saud**
Second Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Interior



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Congratulations



HIS MAJESTY
KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL -SAUD
THE CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO HOLY MOSQUES



HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
CROWN PRINCE SULTAN BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF DEFENCE & AVIATION
AND INSPECTOR GENERAL

MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THE CITIZENS OF SAUDI ARABIA ON THEIR
81ST NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS
ON
23 SEPTEMBER 2011

Warmest Regards From The Board Of Directors And Management Of



Celebrating with the Nation 81st National Day



H.M. KING ABDULLAH
BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

Celebrating with the Nation 81st National Day



H.R.H. CROWN PRINCE SULTAN
BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

*Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Defence and Aviation and
Inspector General*

Celebrating with the Nation 81st National Day



H.R.H. PRINCE NAIF
BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

*Second Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Interior*

Celebrating with the Nation 81st National Day



H.R.H PRINCE SAUD AL FAISAL
BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador's Message

by H.E. Mohamed Reda
Abu Al-Hamayel



Today, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia celebrates its National Day. And while we aspire to a bright and better future, we reminisce about the unforgettable events and achievements of the past.

Since the foundation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by His Majesty the Late King Abdul-Aziz Bin Abdul-Rahman Al Saud, Saudi people have remained a symbol of unity in the land of the two Holy Mosques.

The unity has gained its legitimacy from the Holy Quran and the noble prophetic deeds (Sunna) and has stirred emotion in the minds and hearts of all Saudi Citizens, men and women alike.

This unity has been consolidated

by an umbrella of love and solidarity of over 1.5 billion Muslims.

September 23, 1932 was a historical date when his Majesty the late King Abdul Aziz Bin Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud unified segmented regions and warring tribes into one consolidated nation upholding Islamic law and its constitution.

His Majesty, the late King Abdul Aziz Bin Abdul-Rahman Al-Saud

dedicated more than 21 years tireless efforts for the advancement of the country in every conceivable walk of life - consolidating the pillars of security, order and stability in vast territories of the Kingdom and building the basis for its development and progress.

Our Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz, and the Crown Prince, His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin Abdul-Aziz, have committed themselves faithfully to their father's policy by upholding the teachings of Islam, accelerating development, establishing closer ties with Arabs, Muslims and friendly nations and defending world peace. Much had been done in order to create a society where brotherhood and friendship must prevail.

Islamic Issues

Islam has always been the most important factor in the determination of the Kingdom's foreign policy.

Since the foundation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom has devoted all available resources to serve issues of the Islamic World and to achieving solidarity and unity. This Islamic symbiosis is the method to regain Muslims position and honor.

For the sake of achieving Islamic solidarity, the Kingdom sought and initiated together with Islamic countries to establish a system of Islamic governmental and non-governmental organizations, like the Muslim World League, established in 1962, and the Organization of Islamic Conference established in 1969, both headquartered in the Kingdom.

These efforts originate from the motive of Islamic solidarity that includes several concepts - the biggest of which is the collective security of Islamic countries, working to peacefully settle disputes among Islamic countries, providing economic aid to Islamic countries and societies of limited potential, providing emergency assistance and relief to Islamic countries affected by disaster, and backing up Muslims and defending their issues and providing moral and material support to Islamic

groups wherever they exist, through generous contribution in building mosques and establishing Islamic cultural centers.

We can say that Saudi Arabia's foreign policy in the Islamic issues aims at achieving the following objectives :

- ❧ Achieve comprehensive Islamic solidarity.
- ❧ Open new horizons for economic cooperation among Islamic countries aiming at the support of their potential and resources on different levels.
- ❧ Stand against different types and techniques of cultural overflow and intellectual invasion that threaten the Islamic World.
- ❧ Develop the Organization of Islamic Conference and support its activities to achieve more effectiveness in confronting the issues encountered by the Islamic World.
- ❧ Activate the role of Islamic countries within the framework of the new world order.
- ❧ Provide assistance and support to Muslim minorities worldwide, and look after their rights in accordance with the principles of international law.
- ❧ Introduce the real and true image of Islam and its tolerance law Shari'a, and protect Islam from all the obvious accusations and slanders, such as terrorism and human rights violations.

Foreign policy of the Kingdom

The foreign policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on geographical, historical, religious, economical, security and political everlasting principles and facts.

It is shaped within major frameworks, most important of

which are: good-neighbor policy, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; strengthen relations with the Gulf States and the countries of the Arabian Peninsula; strengthen relations with Arab and Islamic countries to benefit the common interests of these countries, as well as advocate for their issues; adopt nonalignment policy; establish cooperative relations with friendly countries; and play on effective role in the international and regional organizations.

The basis and principles of Saudi foreign policy can be generally summarized in the following:

- ❧ Harmonizing with the principles of the Islamic Law (Shari'a) and considering it the constitution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- ❧ Value the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country. In addition, reject any attempt of others to interfere in KSA's internal affairs.
- ❧ Work for international peace and

international organizations or other agreements.

- ❧ Defend Arab and Islamic issues in the international arena through continuous support by all political, diplomatic, and economic means.
- ❧ Nonalignment and rejection of disputes that threaten international security and peace, and respect the right of people for self-determination and their lawful rights to self-defense.
- ❧ Implement balanced and reasonable policy in the field of oil production, in view of the Kingdom's position as the major oil producer and the holder of the largest world's oil reserve .

International Circle

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is very keen to establish equal relations with the great power that is connected with the Kingdom through a series of interests. These interests emerged as a result of the Kingdom's growing major role in both

The Kingdom always stresses transparency and justice among countries in terms of political; economical, social, and other fields since justice is the only method towards flourishing, prosperity, and stability of the world.

justice and reject the use of power and violence or any actions that threaten international peace or lead to the building up of injustice and autocracy.

- ❧ Condemn and reject all methods and mechanisms of international terrorism and confirm that Islam is above all terrorist activities.
- ❧ Adherence to the regulations of international law, agreements, charters, and bilateral agreements, as well as respecting them all either within the framework of

Arab and Islamic worlds

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is proud of being a founding member of the United Nations in 1945. International peace is a big part of the Kingdom's foreign policy. The Kingdom always stresses transparency and justice among countries in terms of political; economical, social, and other fields since justice is the only method toward flourishing, prosperity, and stability of the world. Thus, the Kingdom does not believe in using power as a tool to carry out its foreign policy. At the same time, the Kingdom

believes in lawful self defense as a base of international law.

The Kingdom further believes in the role played by the United Nations and its affiliated specialized agencies and international organizations, and their support to the prosperity of international society in all fields, especially their support for international security and peace. The Kingdom has joined all these organizations and has been keen to support this international system by all the moral and material means and methods, in addition to maintaining active participation in their activities.

It is possible to say that the Saudi foreign policy is based on principles like :

The Kingdom's keenness to interact with the international society through its commitment to the UN Charter, concluded international agreements, and the basis of international law, which determines the framework of general conduct of civilized countries and societies.

🌿 Commitment of the Kingdom not to use power and not to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Also, condemn violence and everything else that negatively affects international security and peace. It emphasizes the principle of peaceful co-existence among the countries of the world.

🌿 Keenness on the stability of international oil markets, and seeking to develop international trade on a fair basis and through the fundamentals of free market economies.

🌿 Form the Saudi foreign policy with moral shape through its adoption of the principle of supporting the victims of natural disasters, the homeless, and refugees in many countries of the world.

Saudi Arabia - Malaysia Relations

Saudi Arabia and Malaysia have always

maintained excellent fraternal relations.

Our common religious, historical and cultural heritages have cemented these relations and these have steadily grown in strength, along with our Islamic common history.

The government of Saudi Arabia is keen to build good relations with Malaysia

in various areas such as trade, investment, technical cooperation and other economic sectors. It also aims to exchange and coordinate its political stances in regional and international forums in terms of educational, culture, information, and several other issues.



Our common religious, historical and cultural heritages have cemented these relations and these have steadily grown in strength, along with our Islamic common history.

Q When we talk about Saudi Arabia, we always associate the Kingdom with oil. What other exports is Saudi Arabia famous for other than oil?

A It's true that Saudi Arabia had been projected by the media to be active in only two areas – oil and the Hajj. This is not completely correct. We have a comprehensive economical, education, and cultural and social society. The Kingdom has changed a lot in the last thirty years and now is completely different in many aspects.

Talking about the industrial economy, we now have two large industrial complexes in Jubail and Yanbu, as well nine economical cities such as Jeddah, Riyadh and Jazan. There are more than 7,500 factories, mainly involved in the production of cars and agriculture.

Not every part of Saudi Arabia is a desert, for we do have forests and greenery in the Southwestern region. Further, not many people are aware that we are also exporters of wheat, with a total volume of three to four million tons annually. So, as you can see, we are more than just an oil-producing country.

King Abdullah Announces Important New Initiatives

Following a short medical leave, Saudi King Abdullah returned home with a large bundle of financial and economic programs to benefit the Kingdom's citizens and residents. The initiatives are both far-reaching and generous.



The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, returned to a warm welcome in Riyadh on February 23, following three months in the United States and Morocco for treatment and recuperation from surgery to repair a slipped disc. Hundreds of men in white robes performed a traditional sword dance at Riyadh airport while dozens of princes gathered to greet the king on his arrival. Hundreds of Saudi citizens then lined the streets of the Saudi capital to welcome the monarch home.

The enthusiastic reception was understandable. Shortly before his return, King Abdullah issued a series of royal decrees ordering new appropriations to improve the welfare of Saudi citizens. These measures included US\$10.6 billion for housing loans; US\$7.9 billion to increase the capital of the Saudi Credit



The king actually released a total of 19 orders as part of this stimulus-and-support package which, it is estimated, will amount to around SR135 billion.

Bank and US\$3.9 billion for the General Housing Authority. Further initiatives announced included a 15 percent pay increase for state employees; a 50 percent increase in annual allocations for charitable organizations, bringing the total to \$120 million; and the expansion and extension of the King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship Program for five additional years. There are also a spate of measures to improve job opportunities for young people in the Kingdom.

In addition, the king has reportedly ordered that 40 billion riyals (US\$10.7 billion) be pumped into the country's development fund which provides interest-free loans to Saudis who want to build homes, get married or start small businesses.

The king actually released a total of 19 orders as part of this stimulus-and-support package which, it is estimated, will amount to around SR135 billion. This is more than double a 2008 plan of SR66 billion, which at the time had been formulated to alleviate the impact of inflation on the population.

Amongst the new measures, the Kingdom said it would introduce a new benefit, the first of its kind in the Kingdom, providing wages for one year to Saudis transitioning to new jobs.

Another key feature of the recent royal order is a plan to admit all Saudi students studying abroad at their own expense into a state scholarship program, lessening the burden on many medium-to-high-income families. The King Abdullah Scholarship Program had up to now sent more than 90,000 high-achieving Saudis



to pursue graduate studies abroad, while applying specific performance criteria on recipients. The king also pledged to set aside SR100 million for students in need of financial support, underscoring his long and deep support for education in the Kingdom.

The country will also further expand its social insurance security scheme to

enable families to claim benefits for up to 15 members, almost double the previous cap of eight. It is anticipated that this benefit extension will cost about SR20 billion a year. Further, some SR3.5 billion

will be allocated to start a program for supporting citizens' household expenses such as home furniture, school uniforms and books, electricity and water bills, and home renovations. Some of these measures reflect the fact that the homes of many Jeddah citizens suffered substantial damage following highly atypical flooding on a number of occasions in the past two years.

Meanwhile, the government reiterated that it would not phase out a cost-of-living allowance that had raised salaries of state employees by 15 percent over the last three years, an announcement first made in November. This allowance would become part of each employee's permanent salary under the new royal order. Estimates show the additional wage will entail expenditures of around

Malaysian P.M. Underscores Close Ties During Visit To The Kingdom



Y.A.B. Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Abdul Razak, made a visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 13 to 14 May 2011. Y.A.B. Prime Minister accompanied by Y.A.Bhg. Datin Sri Rosmah Mansor, wife of the Prime Minister, and officials from the Prime Minister's Office.

Y.A.B. Prime Minister had an audience with His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. After the

meeting, Y.A.B. Prime Minister announced that Malaysia stands fully behind the recent actions undertaken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to achieve peace, reconciliation and long-term stability in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

In addition, Malaysia supports the national dialogue process launched by Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa to address the aspirations of the people of Bahrain and to de-escalate the tensions in the country. Considering these facts, Prime Minister Najib is pleased to state that Malaysia stands ready to contribute peacekeepers to the Kingdom of Bahrain, if invited to do so by the Bahraini leadership.

The meeting was followed by a lunch hosted by HRH Prince Muqrin Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, Director General of Saudi Arabia General Intelligence Directorate. Y.A.B. Prime Minister and Datin Sri also took the opportunity to travel to Jeddah to perform umrah in Makkah Al Mukarramah on the same day.

SR37 billion a year, raising the total wage bill for state employees to SR250 billion. However, this measure is not expected to stoke inflation as it has already been absorbed by the economy incrementally.

The King's initiatives will raise the General Housing Authority's budget by SR15 billion, while the Saudi Real Estate Development Fund (REDF) is set to receive a SR40 billion capital injection. In REDF's first 25 years since inception, 22,000 housing units were built yearly. Nevertheless, an ever-expanding population indicates that there is still ample room for growth in this sector.

The government further plans to inject SR30 billion of capital into the Saudi Credit & Savings Bank, one of several specialized credit institutions, including REDF, operated by the Saudi government.

HM King Abdullah also seeks to provide greater support to cultural and sporting institutions. Measures targeted at this objective foresee raising subsidies offered for sports clubs as well as providing SR10 million to each professional committee and cultural club in the country. Among other charity-related initiatives are pledges to increase funds allocated to the charity association by 50 percent per year to SR450 million; support cooperative associations with funding of SR100 million; and allocate SR100 million to the National Charity Fund.

The initiatives appear to target a comprehensive range of concerns among Saudi citizens. While the broad nature of these new measures will benefit all Saudis, they will clearly lend support particularly to those in lower income brackets who look to benefit tremendously from an expansion in social security benefits. The government made firm calls for housing projects to be accelerated and REDF to speed up its lending process, another indication that the government is determined to make targeted efforts to support those most in need of assistance.

In an effort to assure that these monies will be spent efficaciously and in areas that will most benefit the Saudi people,

the King also ordered that 300 new jobs be created in the Saudi Royal Court "to communicate with citizens and find out their needs".

The King further announced that the government would spur creation of 1,200 new jobs to support regulatory programs, including 300 jobs each for the Saudi General Auditing Bureau, Saudi Control & Investigation Board, Saudi Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution, and the Saudi Royal Court.

The measures taken are on the right track toward addressing the economic desires of Saudi citizens. Saudi Arabia is not entirely immune from the various

economic and financial forces that have roiled markets and economies over the last several years. But the Kingdom is well-positioned to deal effectively with any challenges that may be thrown up by events in other parts of the world.

H.M. King Abdullah and his government have a superb track record in meeting such challenges and answering the economic concerns of the populace. The wide range of subsidies and expenditures meant to benefit all Saudis, but especially those most in need of aid in these times, show once again why King Abdullah has earned the proud nickname, "the Compassionate King".



Saudi Arabia is not entirely immune from the various economic and financial forces that have roiled markets and economies over the last several years. But the Kingdom is well-positioned to deal effectively with any challenges that may be thrown up by events in other parts of the world.



Islam's Holiest Site To Undergo Expansion

In mid-August of this year, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques H.M. King Abdullah laid the foundation stone for the historic expansion of the Makkah mosque, the holiest site in Islam and the central point of the annual Hajj.

The announced expansion of the Holy Mosque in Makkah will cover 400,000 square meters northwest and northeast of the mosque and will increase its total capacity to more than 2.5 million.

According to Dr. Mohamed Nasir Khuzaim, the vice president of The Holy Mosque board, the expansion project will employ state-of-art electrical and mechanical systems.

The new expansion will accommodate more than one million and two hundred thousand worshippers. Moreover, sheds will be erected in the northern courtyards.

Justice Minister Mohammed Al-Eissa described the SR80 billion expansion project of the Grand Mosque as a landmark in the history of the two holy mosques of Islam. "It is because of the sacredness and glory of the location, which calls for the highest care and attention of the servants of Islam and Muslims. Those servants who spare no effort in fulfilling their covenant to their Lord will no doubt receive His blessings evermore," the minister said.

The expansion projects are designed to make Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages more comfortable and safer in the face of a phenomenal rise in the number of pilgrims over the past few years, Al-Eissa added. Future improvements will include air-conditioning of the entire Holy Mosque.

"This momentous Islamic initiative to provide room for the increasing number of worshippers, particularly the expansion of the masaa (the running



The new expansion will accommodate more than one million and two hundred thousand worshippers.



course between Safa and Marwa), will remove the hardships faced by pilgrims and enable them to perform their rites in a more relaxed and spiritual atmosphere," Minister Mohammed Al-Eissa said.

The minister added that King Abdullah has always given his priority to undertake those tasks that would provide a serene and relaxed atmosphere for pilgrims in the holy cities.

Saleh Al-Hosain, head of the Presidency of the Two Holy Mosques, praised experts at Saudi universities for preparing the best, environmentally friendly designs for the expansion while incorporating high safety standards. "As King Abdullah wished, the whole Islamic

world will be proud of the new expansion project," Al-Hosain said.

According to informed sources, the total area of the existing Grand Mosque is 356,000 sq. meters, accommodating 770,000 worshippers, while the new expansion covering an area of 456,000 sq. meters will accommodate 1.2 million.

The new project will comprise three parts: construction of a new building; expansion and development of courtyards around the mosque, including walkways, tunnels and toilets; and development of service facilities for air-conditioning, electricity and drinking water. In addition, vast pathways will be created between the buildings for pilgrims and worshippers to reach the mosque.

World's Largest Female University Opens in the Kingdom

On May 15 of this year, King Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz of Saudi Arabia opened the largest women's university campus in the world in a major move to boost women's higher education in the Kingdom. The facilities reflect the most advanced designs and technology and demonstrate another huge step forward for women in Saudi Arabia.

In May, the imposing SAR20 billion (US\$5.3 billion) new campus of Princess Nora Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) on the outskirts of the capital, Riyadh, was inaugurated in the presence of senior royal family members, ministers and foreign diplomats. The university campus, spreading over eight million square metres (26 million feet), can host up to 50,000 students in its 15 departments. It will have enough places in its first-year classes for 60% of all the kingdom's female high school graduates.

The campus also boasts a 700-bed hospital and accommodation facilities that could lodge 12,000 students. The university's library is stocked with about six million titles, including reference books. In addition, state-of-the-art rain channels and tunnels have been incorporated to protect against the threat of flooding.

The university has also been planned as a car-free environment, operating a 19-kilometre shuttle monorail train and electric buggies for internal transport, while solar panels spread across the campus are set to generate 18 percent of the power needed for air-conditioning. The university will be in many respects quite environmentally friendly: for instance, by promoting a paperless work policy and carrying out all its internal activities electronically.

"The new campus is considered the largest women-only university in the world," notes Huda Al-Ameel, the newly appointed PNU president. Most large Saudi universities have separate male and



female campuses, but the new Princess Nora University is unique in that it will serve only women.

Women make up 58 percent of the total student population of 130,000 at seven universities in Saudi Arabia, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Saudi government devotes nearly 30 percent of its annual budget, or \$40 billion, to education.

Ms. Al-Ameel pointed out that the huge campus was completed in a remarkable time of less than three years at the behest of King Abdullah, who had himself laid the university's foundation stone back in October 2008. "We are grateful to King Abdullah for this vital project, which will

surely encourage PNU staff and students to exploit this state-of-the-art facility to excel in education," she noted.

Munira Al-Abdan, vice president for studies and development, said PNU seeks to provide high quality academic education and skills for its students. "We have designed our academic programs to meet job market requirements," she said. "We provide our graduates with additional training courses to strengthen their competitive capabilities in the job market," Ms. Abdan added.

Fawzia Al-Bakr, an education professor at the King Saud University in Riyadh, said the new university and its 15 departments will open educational fields which previously offered only limited



openings for Saudi women, such as computer science, business and nursing.

Saudi women tend to specialize in the fields of health and education, with 85% working in education and 6% in public health. Indeed, some 95% of Saudi women are currently employed in the public sector.

Sara Al-Khushami, lecturer at the Social Planning Department, said it was an “historic event for universities in the Kingdom”.

“It’s a massive step forward for Saudi women’s education and an advancement from the local to the international level,” she said. “It’s something of which we should all be proud and which has had the personal interest of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques.” Indeed, King Abdullah has long been known for his firm commitment to education, and in particular, to advancing the educational opportunities for women.

Upon his arrival, King Abdullah boarded an automatic train and toured the site. He was then briefed about the various facilities. The King moved on to an electric car and toured the administrative building and the central library before announcing the opening of the university.

King Abdullah was received by Prince Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, Emir of Riyadh Region; Dr. Ibrahim Al-Assaf, Minister of Finance; Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Anqari, Minister of Higher Education; and Dr. Mohammed Al-Maziad, Deputy Minister of Finance and supervisor of the project to create the school.

One of the new students described the university as “a turning point in the education process. The university is an example of one of the finest universities in the world and will give us the opportunity for an education in conditions conducive to study and learning,” she said.

And Najla’ Al-Mubarak, lecturer at the Faculty of Literature, described the move as an “honor and responsibility”. “We promise the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques that we will be up to that responsibility,” she said.



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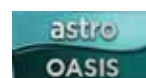
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Malaysian Trade Mission to Saudi Arabia

The formation of the Malaysia-Saudi Arabia Friendship Society was initiated through the vision and great foresight of the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty the late King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud. "It is our endeavour to increase interaction between the businesses of the two nations and in order to do so, we organised a joint council meeting and a trade mission to Riyadh and Dammam", said Mr Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias, President (MSABC).

The recent activity organised by The Malaysian-Saudi Arabia Business Council (MSABC) was a trade mission to Riyadh and Dammam in Saudi Arabia. The programme was a joint collaboration between the business council and its counterpart, the Council of Chambers and Industries of Saudi Arabia, with the objective to meet Saudi businessmen to discuss and explore business opportunities in Saudi Arabia.

"This event exposed new markets and opportunities for Malaysian companies to venture into one of the countries most unaffected by the world economic crisis recently," MSABC said. Led by MSABC president Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias, the delegation included government officials from the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority and Tourism Malaysia. This visit was in line with a follow up programme after the Prime Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia in January.

At the council level, MSABC said members discussed the need for a strategic focus on business relations; the business council meeting outcome; business issues and challenges; business interests and opportunities; and recommendations, initiatives and joint activities.

"These requirements could be implemented at the government level, the council level or privately between Saudi Arabia and Malaysian companies," MSABC said. At the business level, a consortium of Malaysian firms included those in the construction and infrastructure industries; halal hub; logistics; healthcare and pharmaceutical; power; manufacturing;



information technology and telecommunications; water treatment and waste management; oil and gas; agriculture; trading; and investment. MSABC hopes this programme can encourage Saudi Arabia investors and companies to invest or set up operations in Malaysia and similarly, Malaysian companies to establish business operations in Saudi Arabia.

During their visit, the Malaysian commercial delegation met its Saudi counterparts at the Council of Saudi Chamber's head office in Riyadh. According to Sheikh Saleh Abdu Allah Kamil, the chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers, the meetings aimed to discuss the opportunities of bilateral trade and investment cooperation and develop effective business mechanisms through the joint business council to achieve this objective. Sheikh Saleh noted that the

economic strength of Saudi Arabia and Malaysia in the Asian region asserting that they have enormous economic potentialities as well as the promising chances for commercial and investment partnership.

Moreover, Mr. Kamil stated that the volume of bilateral trade, though developing successively, neither reflects the actual opportunities available in the different sectors nor satisfies the business sectors in both countries. The volume of bilateral trade between the two countries amounted to SR 12.5 billion in the year 2008, whereas the volume of investment in the licensed Malaysian Saudi enterprises in the Kingdom, which represent projects, amounted to SR 401 billion. Thus, HE Mr. Kamil was hopeful that the Malaysian delegation's visit to the Kingdom and its meetings with the different sectors would enhance the volume of bilateral economic cooperation between the two countries as well as making use of the good climate for investment and the available chances in

each of the two countries.

Also, Mr. Kamil said that the Council of Chambers' organization of such activity aimed to push the economic relations between the two countries forward and open more chances of partnership and commercial and investment cooperation between Saudi and Malaysian business sectors. He pointed out the great role played by the councils of business in supporting the Kingdom's economic relations with commercial partners all over the world. Mr. Kamil went on to add that Malaysia is considered one of the advanced Asian countries in the field of economy, knowledge and industry and the Kingdom can benefit a lot from its relation with Malaysia, while Malaysia is particularly interested in enhancing its ties with the Kingdom in order to attract Saudi investments.

The Malaysian delegation also met the Governor of Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) to discuss issues concerning investment between the two countries as well as to meet Saudi businessmen from the Eastern Region Chamber of Commerce. The Saudi-Malaysian Business Council at the Council of Saudi Chambers seeks to develop the relations between the two countries through organizing mutual visits for businessmen to let people know about the economic and commercial potentialities as well as about the investment opportunities available in both countries.

Building Solid Bridges



Mr. Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias heads two important groups that work admirably to strengthen ties between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia on many fronts, including the cultural, political and economic, as well as on a person-to-person level. Here we offer a brief look at Mr. Khairuddin Ilias and the positive work carried out by those two groups he heads.

There are, of course, great natural affinities (based on religion, values, and culture) between Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, and they stretch back to the beginnings of the Republic of Malaysia. However,

the affinities were given a great boost in early 1991 with the formation of the Malaysia-Saudi Arabia Friendship Society.

The current president of the Society is Mr. Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias, who first became associated with Malaysia-Saudi Arabia Friendship Society at its inception some 20 years ago. At that time, Mr. Ilias joined the society first as Secretary General and later moved on to assume the position of the Society's President.

As Mr. Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias says, "In all these years with the society, I witnessed its tremendous expansion and growth in stature as well as continually developing new roles and responsibilities, in line with its professed objective of promoting close bilateral ties between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Malaysia."

As he goes on to say, "We have witnessed how both sovereign nations achieve remarkable progress through the harnessing of their enlightened leadership, vast resources and advancement of concepts and policies that have greatly benefitted the peoples in terms of development and higher standards of living."

As the group's current president, Mr. Khairuddin Ilias hopes to see Malaysia-Saudi Arabia Friendship Society continuously moving ahead and he wants to be "part of that progress as a facilitator, agent or partner for the continued well-being of the leaders and peoples of the two countries, Malaysia and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

As H.M. King Abdullah said at a gathering held at Kuala Lumpur's Mandarin Oriental Hotel on January 31, 2006, "You know that Saudi and Malaysian economies are passing a stage of great growth and prosperity. There are many available opportunities that should be exploited to enhance economic relations and contribution to the prosperity of the two countries." Mr. Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias and the two groups he heads are doing all they can to follow the King's suggestions in ways that benefit both countries in many areas.

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Members of the Royal Family
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Arab Malaysian Chamber of Commerce

The Arab Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, a nonprofit organization, has an imperative role to play in fostering business relations between Malaysia and the Arab region by promoting the development of business, commerce and investment.



The Arab Malaysian Chamber of Commerce (AMCC) was inaugurated in March 2011 by the Governor of Malaysia's Central

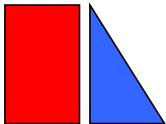
Bank, Y.A.B. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz, in the presence of the Ambassadors of all Arab countries represented in Malaysia, including HE Mohammed Reda Hussein Abu Al-Hamaye Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, together with leading figures from national and international organizations, banks, and the Commercial Counselors and Ministers of all Arab embassies in Malaysia.

In line with the role and objectives of the chamber, AMCC works to enhance

investments and trade between Malaysia and the Arab region. Guests are typically given an introduction to the Arab Malaysian Chamber of Commerce's scope of work and activities and made familiar with the basics for starting businesses and making investment in Malaysia and the best possible avenues for forming companies. Assistance provided includes Arabic translations as well as arranging good and reliable match-ups with Malaysian companies.

At AMCC, we work to cultivate close

Congratulations to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the 81st National Day



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relations with all Arab embassies in Malaysia as well as the Trade Offices.

AMCC also builds strong relations with other Chambers of Commerce and business organizations in both regions which admire our commitments to developing the areas of trade, services, education, tourism and investment between Arab countries and Malaysia.

Visitors from both regions get to discuss in greater depth the prospect of partnership, joint ventures and investment opportunities in Malaysia and in the various Arab member countries.

AMCC is pleased to offer its members a platform to exchange information and experience by providing a network of useful business contacts. AMCC helps Arab companies to find the right business partners in Malaysia, and we direct the companies from both sides to the right contacts in Malaysia.

AMCC members are invited to events where they can listen to experts on various issues of direct relevance to their business and where they have an excellent opportunity to network. AMCC also encourages companies and individuals with an interest in trade between Malaysia and Middle East to apply for AMCC Membership if they have not yet joined.

As the AMCC gears up for another successful year, it appreciates everyone who helped to achieve its role in promoting business between Malaysia and Arab countries.

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Strengthening ties through Education

Besides promoting quality education for Saudi youth, King Abdullah's scholarship scheme has also helped foster stronger people-to-people ties between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. Nomita Dhar speaks to Abdurrahman Mohammed Fusayil, Saudi Arabia's cultural attaché to Malaysia.

Q Saudi Arabia and Malaysia are both Islamic countries and are bound by culture and traditions. How does this help in integrating Saudi students who are in Malaysia currently on King Abdullah's scholarship scheme?

A Since both Saudi Arabia and Malaysia are Islamic countries, it becomes very easy for Saudi students to pursue their education here. The environment is extremely friendly and understanding, which helps them cope with the new society fairly easily. The similarities between the two countries enable Saudi students to learn more about the customs and lifestyles of the Malaysian people, which in turn helps in creating an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding towards each other.

Exposure and interaction with their Malaysian counterparts has a positive impact on Saudi students. Their experience in Malaysia and the Malaysian way of life can also be implemented and integrated into Saudi Arabia once these students return to their country.

Q What is the selection procedure for the students and how does the Ministry shortlist universities? Which are some of the popular universities and courses which students from Saudi Arabia like to undertake in Malaysia?

A King Abdullah's scholarship program includes some of the world's best universities, where students can pursue a Bachelor's or Master's degree, a doctorate as well as a medical fellowship. Academic disciplines and scholarships are selected depending on the needs of government

ministries, the National Corporation and the private sector. The selection aims to fulfil the requirements of the work market and industrial cities. The program is commissioned keeping in mind Saudi youth, who will play an active role in the development of all fields in government and private sectors in the future. There are several conditions for accepting students for the scholarship program:

- ✿ The applicant must be a Saudi citizen.
- ✿ He/she must not be a government employee.
- ✿ He/she must study fulltime and reside in the country designated.
- ✿ The applicant's age must fulfil the specific condition for each level of study.

There are some special conditions for acceptance to the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degree.

Q What are some other activities that are being organised by your department for the welfare of the students?

A Several cultural activities are organised throughout the year. We invite senior Saudi officials to give lectures to students, besides encouraging exchange of experience and expertise in scientific and cultural fields between Saudi students and their Malaysian counterparts. The department also organises book exhibitions and many other social and educational

We in the cultural office encourage our students to represent our country well, by organising activities in Saudi clubs as well as in universities where our students are studying. Since we are an Islamic country, we try to educate others about the tolerance of Islam.





activities for the welfare of the students.

In addition, we organise activities with Saudi students clubs in Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, and Penang for national occasions such as National Day and other religious occasions, like Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al Adha festivals.

Q What are the aspects of Malaysia that are fascinating and according to you, can be incorporated into Saudi Arabia?

A There are many aspects of the Malaysian educational system that we can incorporate into our system in Saudi Arabia. For over a decade now, Malaysia has been on a transformation to becoming a Knowledge Economy. Information Communication Technology (ICT) has been fully integrated into the education system to create a paradigm shift in the way people are educated. This has resulted in the explosion of ICT-related and ICT-relevant programmes, such as distance-learning and virtual universities, and we think that we may find this aspect suitable to incorporate into our country as well.

Q These young scholars are like ambassadors of Saudi Arabia. What aspects of the Kingdom would you like them to highlight for Malaysians to know them better?

A We in the cultural office encourage our students to represent our country well, by organising activities in Saudi clubs as well as in universities where our students are studying. Since we are an Islamic country, we try to educate others about the tolerance of Islam.

We also encourage our students to portray our country as a leader in the region and as the centre and birthplace of Islam. Our students also try to educate others about the huge development in our country, particularly in the city of Makkah and Madinah.

Q What is the number of scholars currently in Malaysia?

A The number of Saudi students sponsored by the Ministry of Higher Education of Saudi Arabia in Malaysia:

PhD	: 164
Master's	: 141
Bachelor's	: 538

Q How is education in Malaysia helpful for students and for the Kingdom in the longer run?

A Saudi's studying in Malaysia help enhance the existing friendship between the two countries, along with consolidating historic ties between the people.

Besides, such education will further develop and enhance the scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries in the field of higher education. We strongly believe that such collaboration will promote the development of new and creative knowledge experience needed in today's and tomorrows tasks and challenges.

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Map showing location: Jalan Pehang, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, Jalan Sultan Ismail, Jalan Sultan Hassan.

Saudi Arabia Reaching out to the world

Saudi Arabia has been reaching out to those in need both within and outside the country. Through the directives of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, a great visionary, the Kingdom can be seen heading the deeds of philanthropy worldwide.

More Than 202 Million Riyal In Relief To The Somali People

The total cash contributions to 'Saudi National Campaign for the Relief of the Somali People' has amounted so far to more than SR202 million, in addition to donations in kind including hundreds of tons of dates, foodstuffs, sheltering materials and medical supplies throughout the provinces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The donation campaign came in response to the call of the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah

Ibn Abdulaziz Al Saud for the relief of the Somali people suffering from famine in the worst drought East Africa has seen in the last 60 years. The donations could not come at a more propitious moment: aid agencies have called this latest famine in Somalia "the worst humanitarian crisis in the world now" (statement of CARE). It is estimated that 3.7 million people in that area are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. Thousands have already died

and relief agencies fear that the death totals could reach a staggering 750,000 within the next four months if there is no adequate response to the crisis.



Saudi National Basketball Team For The Crippled Qualifies For The Finals Of Athens Olympics



The Saudi national basketball team, comprised solely of players of special needs, qualified for the finals of the

Athens Olympic games after beating Romania 22 - 8. The team was set to meet Italy in the final match.

In other contests, Tale'a Al-Yamai and Ali Faqihi yesterday won two gold medals at the 200-meter race for the 22-29 and 16-21 age groups respectively, while Fares Gharway won a bronze for the 800-meter race for the 22-and-above age group.

This brings to seven gold and two bronze the number of medals won by the Saudi

national team in the special Olympiad taking place in Athens.

On the sidelines of the games, the leader of the Saudi mission to the games, Dr. Nasser Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saleh, held a meeting with the leader of the Russian mission. During the meeting, matters of mutual concern to the two sides were reviewed.

Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia Receives Two Bronze Medals In 2011 Mathematics Olympics

The Kingdom took two bronze medals in the Mathematics Olympics held in the Netherlands last July. This achievement is a result of close cooperation between the Ministry of Education and King Abdul Aziz Talent and Innovation Institution.

In his letter to the Kingdom's leaders, the Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Khaled Al-Sibti, lauded this achievement. He said competitions are a means for discovering future scientists

and mathematicians.

According to the Deputy Minister, the kingdom's objective is to become amongst the world 20 best nations in science within the coming years. The Kingdom's ranking has leapt from the lowest 3% to the best 70% nations during the last two years.

The Deputy Minister stated that the Kingdom achieved second place amongst the Arab countries. Morocco, in comparison, ranked No. 62, while it has



participated in the Olympics since 1983.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Harthi, the General Supervisor of the International Olympics project, stated that Saudi Arabia is enjoying a prominent role now in

this and other similar contests. Earlier academic competitions the Kingdom has participated in include the Physics Olympic in Malaysia and Chemistry Olympic in Turkey.

Deal Signed To Build World's Tallest Tower In Jeddah

Kingdom Holding Company has signed a SR4.6 billion (US\$1.2 billion) deal with the Saudi Binladen Group (SBG) to build the world's tallest tower. The Kingdom Tower, to be built in Jeddah overlooking the Red Sea and Obhur Creek, is part of the first phase of Kingdom City.

The sprawling mega-project, first announced in 2008, is slated to cover a two-square mile area.

Kingdom Tower is to be over 3,280 feet (1,000 meters) tall. It will include a hotel, serviced apartments, luxury condominiums and offices, occupying roughly 5.4 million square feet.

The Kingdom Tower complex will contain 59

elevators, including 54 single-deck and five double-deck elevators, along with 12 escalators. Elevators serving the observatory will travel at a rate of 10 meters per second in both directions.

The deal was signed between Jeddah Economic Co., a KHC affiliate, and the Binladen Group, a construction giant that will also take a 16.6 percent stake in JEC.

"Building this tower in Jeddah sends a financial and economic message that should not be ignored," said the Chairman of Kingdom Holding Company, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal.

"We intend Kingdom Tower to become both an economic engine and a proud symbol of

the Kingdom's economic and cultural stature in the world community," said Talal Al-Maiman, Executive Director of Development and Domestic Investments, a board member of Kingdom Holding Company and of Jeddah Economic Company, which was formed in 2009 to develop Kingdom City in Jeddah.

The Kingdom Tower design is highly technological and distinctly organic. With its slender, subtly asymmetrical massing, the tower evokes a bundle of leaves shooting up

from the ground. The sleek, streamlined form of the tower was inspired by the folded fronds of young desert plant growth, according to the Saudi Gazette newspaper.



Madinah Is The Capital Of Islamic Culture 2013



Prince Abdul Aziz Ibn Majed Ibn Abdul Aziz, Governor of Madinah Province, announced on Sunday that Madinah is The Capital of Islamic Culture 2013.

The announcement came during a meeting with scholarly, literary, culture and information personnel in the presence of the Minister of Culture and Information, Dr. Abdul Aziz bin Muhaydin Khoja.

Addressing the meeting, Prince Abdul Aziz Ibn Majed

conveyed to the attendees the greetings of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz Al-Saud and his best wishes for Madinah, pointing to a royal decree in 1431H approving the proposal of the Minister of Culture and Information for the nomination of Madinah as the Capital of Islamic Culture 2013 and for holding the 8th session of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers in Madinah according to a decision of Islamic Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization

(ISESCO).

Indicating in this regard the selection of Makkah in 2003 as the first Capital of Islamic Culture and now the selection of Madinah as The Capital of Islamic Culture 2013, he said, "This comes within the interest and keenness of the Saudi Leadership of this blessed country in the service of Islamic nations and their causes to embody the its historical, cultural, economic, and social characteristics of this blessed city to be a capital of culture, a symbol of Muslim unity, and its association with its tolerant

Islamic religion."

Prince Abdul Aziz Ibn Majed Ibn Abdul Aziz expressed his thanks to and appreciation of the King, the Crown Prince and the Second Deputy Premier for their efforts in the service of the issues of Islamic nations, also expressing his thanks to and appreciation of Prince Salman Ibn Abdul Aziz, the Governor of Riyadh Province, who is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of King Abdul Aziz Foundation for Archives and Research and President of Madinah Research and Studies Center, and to the Minister of Culture and Information for the success of this event.

IIROSA Sponsors More Than 1,200 Surgeries

The International Islamic Relief Organization of Saudi Arabia (IIROSA), an affiliate of the Muslim World League (MWL), has sponsored 1,212 open-heart surgeries and angioplasties performed on youths in several Muslim countries, said IIROSA Secretary General Dr. Adnan bin Khalil Basha. In a press statement, Basha noted that the figure includes 797 surgeries in Yemen; 200 in Egypt; 73 in Morocco; 71 in Kazakhstan; 43 in Syria; and 36 in Pakistan. Basha said that the surgeries have been supported by volunteer doctors from around the world.

UNRWA Thanks Saudi Arabia For Donations To Palestinians In Gaza

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has



thanked the Kingdom for donating enough food aid to feed 56,000 Palestinians as part of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Campaign for the Relief of the Palestinian People

in the Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the UNRWA said, "The generous donation by the Kingdom, led by the Custodian of the

Two Holy Mosques

King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, provides poor families in the Gaza Strip with basic foods, including flour, rice, sugar, cooking oil, and legumes, to alleviate their daily sufferings.

Djibouti, Syria Gifted With Hundreds Of Tons Of Dates



Saudi Ambassador to Djibouti Ibrahim

bin Abdul Aziz Al-Nofal handed over 10,000 cartons containing 200 tons of dates on July 28 to the Executive

Secretary of Djibouti's

National Bureau for the Relief of Refugees, Alami Othman Younes. The aid was given as a gift from the Kingdom to the people of Djibouti, especially those currently suffering from the effects of drought.

On August 2, Saudi Arabia handed over 424 tons of dates to the World Food Program (WFP) at the Saudi Chancery in Damascus. According to Saudi Ambassador to Syria, Abdullah Al-Aifan,

300 tons of dates will be used as part of the WFP's emergency response to the drought in Northeastern Syria, while 124 tons of dates will go to the WFP's school nutrition project.

THE WORLD BANK'S INDEX "EASE OF DOING BUSINESS"

Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority has announced in 2010 that Saudi Arabia has once again improved ranking in the World Bank "Ease of Doing Business" Index 2011.

From the 183 countries surveyed for the report, Saudi Arabia has made significant progress by moving up to 11th place from the 67th place in the global ranking it occupied in 2005. This is a testimony to a number of impactful reforms conducted in the past 5 years to ease the regulatory environment, protect investment and enforce commercial contracts, making Saudi Arabia a more competitive and attractive investment destination globally.

"We are extremely pleased to improve our ranking and continue to be recognised as one of the easiest countries to do business with on a global basis. Saudi Arabia has been very successful at attracting a steadily growing flow of foreign investment since 2005, which contributed to the country's rapid and sustainable economic growth," said Amr bin Abdullah al-Dabbagh, the Governor of SAGIA.

"Saudi Arabia is already ranked as the easiest place to do business in the entire MENA region and now we are keen to compete in the international arena. We are pleased that Saudi Arabia's efforts to reform have been recognised by the World Bank and the country moved up the ranking yet again this year. According to the World Bank, about 85% of economies made it easier to do business in the past 5 years, with Saudi Arabia ranked as the 5th fastest reformer. This is a testimony to our work over the past five



Saudi Arabia has made significant progress by moving up to 11th place from the 67th place in the global ranking it occupied in 2005.

years on the creation of a pro-business environment, a knowledge-based society, and by developing new, world-class 'Economic Cities'.

Saudi Arabia's improvement in the World Bank "Ease of Doing Business" 2011 Index ranking was driven by major reforms, including the elimination of the minimum capital requirement for starting a business, streamlining processes for starting a business and creating the foundations of a competitive internal credit market. Saudi Arabia was able to sustain and improve its position as a global investment destination ahead of 172 countries this year, while some of the other neighbouring countries in the region, like the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar moved down the league table. In 2005, Saudi Arabia was ranked 67th in the World Bank's "Ease of

Doing Business" Index, and has dramatically improved its stance ever since to 38th place in 2006, 23rd in 2007, 16th in 2008, 13th in 2009 and 11th in 2010.

SAGIA is working to introduce positive change in Saudi Arabia's investment environment through institutional work combined with a measurement of progress based on the criteria of the International Finance Commission (IFC), the World Bank, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the IMD. SAGIA monitors and benchmarks the Kingdom against the nearly 300 indicators used by these organizations to measure the development of the investment environment and the capacity to attract foreign investment.

The World Bank "Ease of Doing Business" 2011 Index analysed regulations affecting 11 areas of the life of a business across 183 countries, including starting a business, dealing with construction permits, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, closing a business, getting electricity and employing workers.

Top corporate investors in Saudi Arabia over the past 5 years were Chevron Phillips Chemical (USA), Alcatel-Lucent (France) and BUPA Investments (UK). SAGIA and General Electric Company signed an MOU to pilot innovative and sustainable technologies in the Saudi Economic Cities in June 2010.



Congratulations

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His Majesty

KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

Members of the Royal Family

and the Citizens of Saudi Arabia on their

81st National Day Celebrations

on 23 September 2011

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ISI today is expanding beyond its property development portfolio and diversifying into fields which include education, banking, telecommunication, investment, oil & gas, information technology & consultancy and logistics.



Sky is the limit

Traditionally one of the safest instruments of investments, Gold prices have now reached an all-time high and are expected to hit the \$2000/ ounce mark soon. Opportunity Saudi Arabia speaks to Ahmad Khairuddin Bin Ilias, Group Executive Chairman of Genneva Malaysia Sdn. Bhd., one of the leading companies in gold trading in Asia, about the merits of the metal.

In a stumbling and unstable global economy, gold has managed to become a universal favourite with prices of the commodity surging 33.8 per cent since the beginning of the year and another whopping 18.25 per cent since the end of July 2011. Over the last month, gold prices have surged by over 4 per cent a week.

Speculations have it that the prices will soar once again and this time will breach the barrier of \$2000 an ounce.

Several factors have contributed to the rise in gold prices, like the US and the European debt issues, lack of safe investments like the Japanese yen. The health of the banking sector and central banks buying gold is another cause aiding the price hike. And while now gold prices have hit an all-time high, the hike is not a sudden one, since the commodity was always showing a sideways upward trend.

But the biggest and most important factor for the hike in prices is the investors' confidence in the metal. "Gold is the most stable currency the world has ever seen. Gold bullion products will remain a viable and flexible investment both now and in the future," says Ahmad Khairuddin Bin Ilias, Group Executive Chairman of Genneva Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.

But all that glitters is not gold; hence even when the metal is an attractive investment option, one has to be cautious about where to buy the metal.

One of the biggest companies in terms of sales in Asia, Genneva Malaysia is definitely one you should turn to if you decide to invest in gold.

Incorporated in Malaysia under the Companies Act 1965, Genneva is involved in the trading of gold bullion, traditionally one of the most cost-effective media of investing in gold. From its humble



Gold has managed to become a universal favourite with prices of the commodity surging 33.8 per cent since the beginning of the year and another whopping 18.25 per cent since the end of July 2011.



beginnings in 2007, Genneva has evolved to become one of the most innovative gold traders in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, China and the Philippines, with a vision of being recognised as a leader in the world's gold industry by providing the safest and most convenient gold trading opportunities.

"With a business model based on the Syariah principle of 'Al Bai' (Sale & Purchase), the company makes transactions more attractive for its customers with discretionary payments pursuant to the Syariah principle of 'Hibah'. The entire trading procedure and all sale & purchase agreements are vetted by a Syariah Advisory Committee Board set up by Genneva, comprising learned and well respected Syariah experts in Islamic jurisprudence (*Usul al-Fiqh*) and Islamic transaction/

commercial law (*Fiqh al-Mu'amalat*)," says Ahmad Khairuddin Bin Ilias.

The company prides itself on the tens of thousands of satisfied and loyal customers from Malaysia and abroad that have taken advantage of its trading opportunities.

Genneva is also a member of the Gold Bullion Entrepreneurs Association of Malaysia (Gold-BEAM), a reporting institution under the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing Act 2001, while complying with the requirements of Section 21(1) of the Banking and Financial Institutions Act 1989.

Its latest Syariah compliant gold products were officially launched by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir, on December 15 2010.

Colours, Sounds and Allures of the Kingdom's Festivals



One of the great, centuries-old traditions in the land mass that is today Saudi Arabia is the festival. Today, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia keeps this tradition fresh and vibrant with a series of festivals. Here we offer a quick look at some of the most popular ones.

Perhaps the most famous and beloved of the Saudi festivals is the Janadriyah Heritage and Culture Festival held annually in the Riyadh region. It has now grown into a fortnight-long extravaganza that celebrates the rich cultural treasures of Saudi Arabia and its peoples. It is the closest thing to a national festival, as it showcases a cornucopia of traditional art forms.

The centre of activities is actually a locality called Janadriyah, located 45 kilometres outside Riyadh. The Janadriyah Festival brings out all the colours, sounds and spirit of Saudi Arabia in a most impressive way.

On the arts front, this festival features prose literature, poetry, music, drama, along with a series of intellectual discussions. These performances let the attendees appreciate the richness of the nation's and the region's folk arts while at the same time entertaining them.

However, one of the main attractions



of the Janadriyah is the camel race that typically draws thousands of spectators. The race itself demonstrates the wonderful art and the skill involved in pushing camels to such breath-taking performances in this competition.

Each year the festival honours one foreign country whereby that guest country sponsors a pavilion where visitors get to see, hear, taste and feel the various appeals and attractions of the country. The theme of this year's festival was Japan, while next year's festival will have as focal theme and honoured guest South Korea.

Another popular festival is the annual Taif Flower Festival of Riyadh. This year's festival, held in April, drew 104,000 people from all over Saudi Arabia as well as foreign visitors.

The festival is held at the beginning of the harvest season at the Taif flower farms and features leading flower farms from across the Kingdom offering their prime products: rose oil and flower waters (for both medicinal and beauty aids purposes).

While the central attractions of this festival are the beautiful flower carpet as well as side displays of flowers, flower farms and factories, there are also a number of exhibitions and activities that take place during the festival, such as folk shows, a market, folk games, theater performances, scientific lectures, symposiums, a photo gallery and plastic arts exhibition, and fireworks shows. The various activities offer something suitable for visitors of all ages.

Other leading festivals held in the Kingdom include the three-day Eid al-Adha, recalling the readiness of the prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail for Allah; the Milad al-Nabi, which celebrates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad with festive decorations, processions and large feasts, along with prose and poetry recitations on the life of the Prophet; and the annual Jeddah Book Fair, where writers, publishers and agents from diverse lands gather at the city's huge exhibition and convention centre to hear,



Another popular festival is the annual Taif Flower Festival of Riyadh. This year's festival, held in April, drew 104,000 people from all over Saudi Arabia as well as foreign visitors.



discuss and enjoy published works in the Arabic language.

And no overview of the Kingdom's festivals would be complete without mentioning the Jeddah Festival and the Saudi National Day. The first of these runs for several weeks in Jeddah, the Kingdom's second largest city. The festival has been held since 2000 and consists of more than 200 events, including fireworks displays, musical shows, theatre, sports events and numerous other cultural events. Local

handicrafts and traditional dishes are also widely on offer.

The Saudi National Day, one of the country's few non-religious events, is a festival that commemorates the day when Saudi Arabia was officially declared an independent state. It is an important day for all Saudis and residents of the Kingdom with parades and enthusiastic celebrations that appeal to everyone from young children to seniors, all packed into a single, joyful day.

Royalty and Grandeur come together in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Think Saudi Arabia and the first thing that come to mind is oil. For followers of Islam, of course the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah take precedence.

But there is a lot more this desert country has to offer. Here's a glimpse of the little known cities of Saudi Arabia...

We have all been enamoured by the beauty and serenity of the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah, have learnt of the sweeping coast lines of Jeddah, have been charmed by the architectural genius of Riyadh and the vibrant business environment of Damman.

But we have heard little about other majestic cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Discover the beauty and magnificence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through...

Al-Baha

The summer capital of Saudi Arabia, Baha plays host to countless tourists and visitors every year, and is a welcoming retreat from the summer heat. Located in the Sarraat Mountains which rise sublimely from the Tihama plains, this province is also famous for its scenic vistas and luscious beauty.

It is also the perfect spot for adventure, with various sporting activities on offer like hiking, trekking, rock climbing, mountain biking and

abseiling for serious athletes. Rich in archaeological and cultural heritage, Baha is known for its over 200 forts and watchtowers, some dating back more than 300 years. Art, beauty, culture history, food and traditional wares make Baha a perfect retreat to relax, recharge or rejuvenate.

Jizan

From a rustic fishing town, this province has developed into one of Saudi Arabia's biggest shipping ports, but in spite of its growth, it still retains its old world coastal charm, with evocative forts, traditional boat-builders and *souqs* (markets) specializing in local pottery.

Located in the southwest of the Kingdom, Jizan is surrounded by over 100 islands, most famous of which is the Farasan Islands, an aquatic wildlife reserve of outstanding clarity and beauty.

A gateway to the Farasan Islands, Jizan is one of the greatest secret destinations of Saudi Arabia. Its crystal clear water and warm currents are perfect for year-round diving.





The province stretches inland through the hills of the Tihama plain, into the foothills of the Asir Mountains, featuring a range of different landforms from coastal beaches to rolling, fertile hills, hot water springs and forests.

A mineral-rich province, Jizan is a major source of cement and plaster ores. It is also an important producer of grain, vegetables, fruit, dates, and fodder, and an important source of milk and honey. The province is also a popular getaway for fishing,

Jouf

Located at the northern curve of the Greater Nufud Desert, this province comprises plateaus, valleys and fertile plains and covers an area of 108,000 square kilometres.

Formerly known as Dumat al-Jandal, the province is situated on the ancient trade route that once linked Mesopotamia, Persia and Syria with Arabia and Yemen, and was vital to the spread of Islam as the gateway to Palestine and Syria.

Legend has it that the town was first settled by Dawma, son of Ismail and grandson of the prophet Ibrahim. Yet archaeologists have found abundant evidence that long before Ismail's time (around 2000 BC) Jouf's fresh water and fertile soil had proved attractive to settlers.

It is a big producer of wheat, citrus fruit and olives. The Jouf festival, which lasts two weeks, is popular in the province. Celebrations that last one week for men and the second week for women include activities like a 15km camel race, competitions for best male and female camels, etc.

Northern Borders

The Northern Borders is a challenge few will take up, but those who do will satisfy their pioneering spirit and sense

of adventure.

A land of expert falconers, it is also an ancient pilgrim route between Baghdad and Makkah, which means this area has always sustained a tide of holy visitors.

The province has seen enormous growth since 1947 due to the construction and use of The Tapline (Trans Arabian Pipeline), a large pipeline for transporting oil from the eastern part of the Kingdom into Jordan and on to a port in Lebanon.

Many unique animals have adapted to the deserts of the Northern Borders, which makes Harrat al Harrah reserve (a protected area there) a must-visit. You can visit the reserve for camping with a permit and spot wolves, scorpions, falcons, jackals, reems (sand gazelle), hyenas, Houbara Bustards and the Onager(now extinct).

The reserve is also well known for its high quality truffles.

Tabuk

Rich in antiquities and archaeological sites, Tabuk Province is situated in the Wadi Hisma, which continues north into Wadi Rumm in Jordan.

The Hisma Mountains provide some of the most exceptional canyon landscapes in the country. The Red Sea at the western border of the province is known for some of the most beautiful diving spots in the world.

An ancient town dating back 3,500 years, Tabuk was also the scene of Prophet Mohammad's, most dangerous battle.

It's now home to the King Abdul Aziz Military City, King Faisal Air Base, and the Royal Saudi Land Forces, as well as military academies and infrastructure to support the personnel.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranks the first religious tourism destination

A recent report issued by Merits Holding Co., a real estate entity, says that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is capable of establishing tourism as an essential pillar of its economy. Besides religious pilgrimage as a source of revenue, other types of tourism include recreational, conferences and exhibitions. The vast geographical diversity of the country, with its sea shores, mountains and deserts is conducive to establishing a major tourism industry in KSA. The report noted that spending during pilgrimage season helps the local markets and economies in Holy Makkah, Madinah and other pilgrimage areas and cities.

KSA issued more than 5 million visas this year to Umra pilgrims. This figure is expected to increase to 5.5 million by mid-Ramadan, which is the highest it has ever reached. Last year only 4 million visas were issued. Besides, over 10.9 million tourists visited the Kingdom; which is an increase of 28 per cent. Classified hotels and accommodation units increased to 1319, with more than 77167 room capacity in total.





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Discover the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia, the largest country of Arabia, is situated in Southwest Asia and borders the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the north of Yemen. Its extensive coastlines on the Persian Gulf and Red Sea provide great leverage on shipping (especially crude oil) through the Persian Gulf and Suez Canal. The kingdom occupies 80 per cent of the Arabian Peninsula. Most of the country's boundaries with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, and the Republic of Yemen (formerly two separate countries: North Yemen and South Yemen) are undefined, so the exact size of the country remains unknown. The Saudi government estimates the area to be 2,217,949 square kilometres. Other reputable estimates vary between 2,149,690 square kilometres and 2,240,000 square kilometres. Less than one per cent of the total area is suitable for cultivation, and in the early 1990s, population distribution varied greatly among the towns of the eastern and western coastal areas, the densely populated interior oases, and the vast, almost empty deserts.



Key Facts

CAPITAL: Riyadh

GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES: 24 38 N, 46 43 E

MAP REFERENCES: Middle East

AREA: 2,149,690 sq km;
Land: 2,149,690 sq km;
Water: 0 sq km

TERRAIN: The terrain is varied: fairly barren and harsh, with salt flats, gravel plains and sand deserts. A few man-made lakes exist, but there are no permanent streams. In the south, the Rub Al-Khali (Empty Quarter) is the largest sand desert in the world. There are mountain ranges of over 9,000 feet in the southwest.

CLIMATE: June through August, midday temperatures in the desert are over 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Humidity in coastal regions is up to 100 per cent, but is mild elsewhere. Winter temperatures in the northern and central regions can drop below freezing point. Rainfall in the

country can vary from none at all for up to 10 years in the Rub Al-Khali to 20 inches a year in the mountains of Asir Province.

RELIGION: Islam, which is the basis of the legal system and of government.

LANGUAGE: Arabic; English is widely spoken in urban areas.

NATIONAL DAY: September 23 commemorates the foundation of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932.

FLAG: Green background, with the Muslim creed in white Arabic letters: "There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God."

CALENDAR: Islamic (Hijrah), dating from emigration of Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah.

WEEKEND: Thursday and Friday.

THE 12 MONTHS OF THE ISLAMIC LUNAR YEAR: Muharram, Safar, Rabi' Al-Awal, Rabi' Al-Akher, Jumada Al-Awal, Jumada Al-Akher, Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, Shawwal. Dhu Al-Qadah, Dhu Al-Hajjah.

HOLIDAYS

All offices and schools are closed on Eid Al-Fitr, the feast of the breaking of the fast, from the evening of the twenty-fifth day of Ramadan through to the fifth day of Shawwal. Eid Al-Adha, the culmination of the Hajj, from the fifth through to the fifteenth day of Dhu Al-Hajjah, is also a public holiday. National Day September 23 is a holiday as well.

Travel Information

CURRENCY CONVERSION RATE:

1 (Malaysian Ringgit) MYR = 1.25637
(Saudi Arabian Riyal) SAR
1 SAR = 0.795947 MYR

DISTANCE BETWEEN KUALA LUMPUR AND RIYADH: 6,342 km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME FROM KING KHALED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RIYADH) TO THE CITY BY TAXI: 30 minutes

NUMBER OF REGIONAL AIRPORTS: 6

NUMBER OF PASSENGER TERMINALS AT KING KHALED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (RIYADH): 3

BUSIEST PERIODS OF THE YEAR: The month of Hajj and Ramadan

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS:

- King Fahd International Airport (Dammam)
- King Abdulaziz International Airport (Jeddah)
- King Khalid International Airport (Riyadh)
- Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz International Airport (Madinah)

National Day Celebration



Saudi Arabia celebrated its National Day on September 23, marking

the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Kingdom by King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud. To mark the occasion, the Saudi Embassy in Kuala Lumpur held its annual celebration, attended by Saudi Ambassador to the Malaysia, H.E. Mohamed Reda Abu Al Hamayel, Embassy staff, Saudi and Malaysian citizens, members of the diplomatic corps and others. The guest of honour for the occasion was Hononurable Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Deputy Minister of Higher Education of Malaysia.

In his own statement, Ambassador Mohamed Reda Abu Al Hamayel declared, "On the occasion of our 80th National Day, Saudi Arabia is proud of its accomplishments. The Kingdom will continue to be a source of global energy, promote regional security and diplomacy, and foster social development around the world."

In the Kingdom, this year's celebrations were the most boisterous to date. Although the National Day commemorates the 1932 victory of King Abdul Aziz Bin Saud and his allies in uniting most of the Arabian



Peninsula under the banner of one nation, it was not actually declared a national holiday until 2005.

The celebrations are becoming more popular by the increased numbers of people on the streets and the evident enthusiasm and joy of those celebrants is any measure. This has always been a holiday that sparked the positive emotions of Saudi youth, but this year they seemed especially exuberant and hopeful.

This is probably a reflection of many of the changes and developments initiated over the last several years under the leadership of The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques H.M. King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz al -Saud. This year's celebrations saw activities arranged for all Saudis, from the very young to the elderly.

Young children posed on camels as parents and grandparents watched proudly, clicking photos. For older residents of the Kingdom, including both Saudi citizens and millions of foreign workers, there was a spate of late-night events to keep the enthusiasm going well

into the evening.

Girls and women attended the festivities in their traditional black abayas, in a proud display of their modesty. But Saudi males, from teenagers to young men, left their traditional outfits at home and donned T-shirts and jeans for this holiday.

Most of the shirts sported splashes of green, the colour of the national flag. Not only that, but large numbers of the young male celebrants adorned their cheeks and foreheads with green face paint.

Some even dyed their beards green in honour of the holiday. Some of the Kingdom's young women also added little streaks of green make-up to the parts of their faces still visible above the modest veils. As the news agency reports testified, both Saudis and foreign observers were taken by the outpouring of patriotic fervor in this year's celebrations.

As Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Naif put it, "We are proud of this day, not only because it is an anniversary of the nation, but because it is for a state established on the basis of fear of God."

Best Wishes to the People and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their 81st National Day



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Congratulations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosque and the People of Saudi Arabia on the 81st National Day

Saudi Asma Environmental Solutions LLC (SAES) is a Saudi company specializing in environmental consultancy, monitoring, contracting, laboratory services, GIS and equipment supply. We cover the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Middle East and North Africa regions. SAES is a joint venture company between Dr Fadil Fouad Basyoni and ASMA Environmental Solutions (ASMA) of Malaysia. SAES upholds a professional relation with its clients, fostering partnership and long term mutual growth, by providing cost effective and sustainable solutions with the highest integrity. Our vision is to be the leading company in the Middle East offering comprehensive environmental technology, engineering, consultancy, services and solutions.

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