

SINGAPORE | 2018

# Saudi Arabia

YOUR GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE EAST



## Vision 2030: Promise of Change to Come



**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**  
Minister of Home Affairs & Law  
K Shanmugam

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العيد الوطني الثامن والثمانون 88.



Saudi Global Ports Company is pleased to extend the warmest congratulations  
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*Congratulations & Best Wishes  
to the People and  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
on their 88th National Day*



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Commemorating the **88**<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL DAY of the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



**H.M. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**  
**The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques**



*Congratulations and Best Wishes to  
the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
on their 88<sup>th</sup> National Day*



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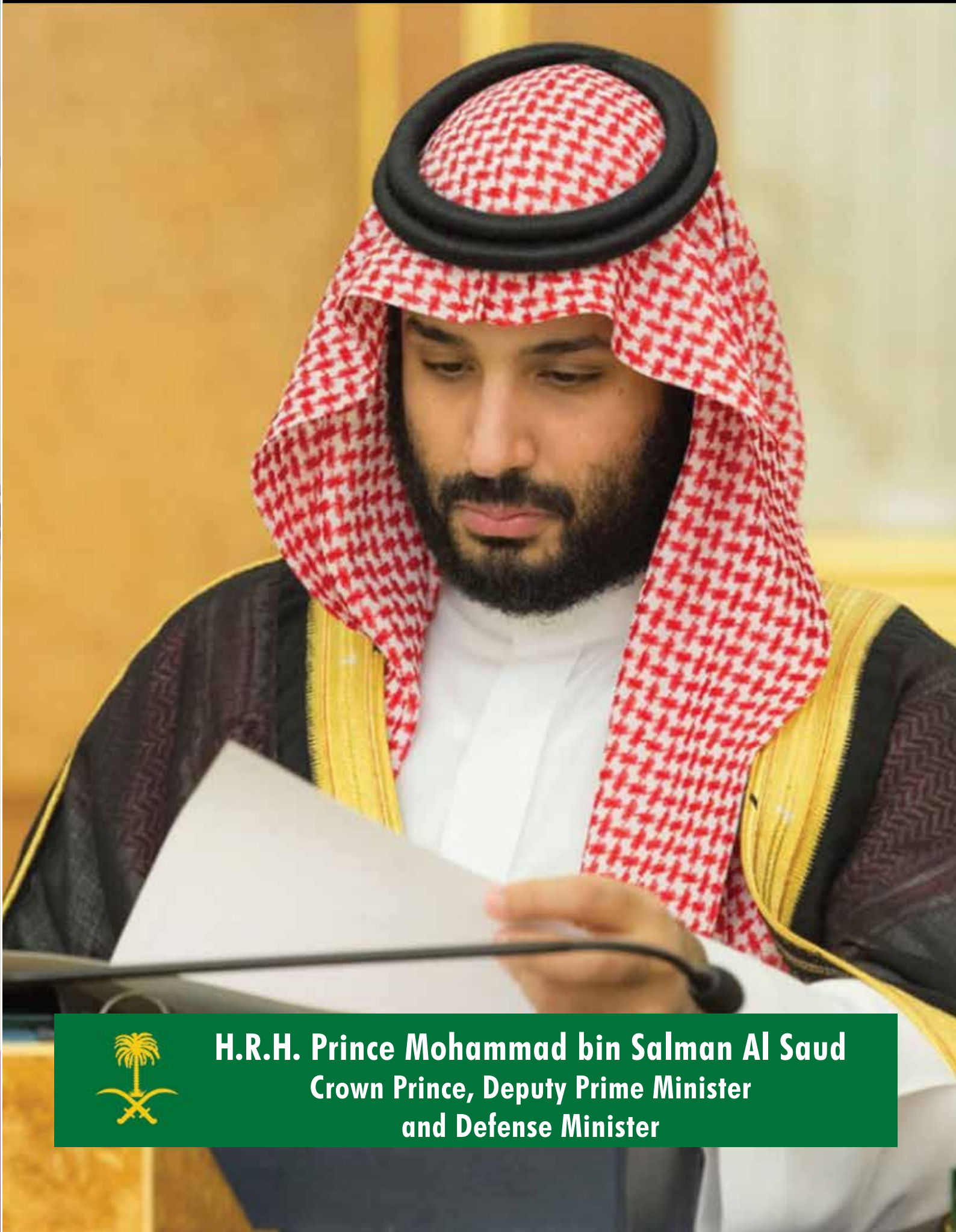
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Commemorating the **88**<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL DAY of the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



**H.R.H. Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud**  
**Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister**  
**and Defense Minister**

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Commemorating the **88**<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL DAY of the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



**HE Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

# FOREWORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

## Towards New Dynamism and Greater Opportunities

We at Sun Media have had the pleasure to chronicle the high points of Saudi - Singapore relations for almost two decades.

The last couple of issues were especially noteworthy and more interesting to put together as the proverbial winds of change are sweeping the Kingdom.

Under the leadership of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques His Majesty King Salman bin Al Saud and dynamism of the forward looking and futuristic Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud, a new foundation of modern Saudi Arabia is being laid. Vision 2030 is clearly a blueprint of the new dynamism that is engulfing the Kingdom.

To be able to report on historical firsts is also a privilege. This year for the first time, the Saudi Arabian government lifted the ban against Saudi women driving. The world welcomes this change and we are certain with this new-found mobility the women of Saudi Arabia will be able to contribute better both at home and at work and be part of the new dynamism that is being felt in the country.

We also had the privilege of interviewing two esteemed female members of the Shura Council, who were on an official visit to Singapore. Read their views on page 38.

This year, there were several high level visits between our two countries. We are honoured to have an exclusive interview with Minister of Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam, who shared with us his impressions of the Kingdom and various aspects of the bilateral relations and interactions that are keeping the two countries engaged with each other.

Although Singapore and Saudi Arabia celebrated 40 years of bilateral ties in 2017, the people-to-people contacts have been going on for much longer. We interviewed Mr Habib Hassan Bin Muhammad Al - Attas, one of the early Arab-origin Singaporeans who have played and continue to play a pivotal role in uniting people through their consistent efforts within the Inter-faith Religious Organisation; we bring you the story.

Finally, we would like to wish all our Saudi Arabian friends, the Saudi Arabian Embassy under the leadership of H E Ambassador Saad Saleh Al-Saleh, the People and Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia a very happy National Day. We hope the future brings greater prosperity to our two countries as well as peace and stability to the world.

**Mrs Nomita Dhar**  
Publisher & Editor in Chief





# SAUDI ARABIA

## FRESH WINDS OF CHANGE

*HE Saad Saleh Al-Saleh, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Singapore in a conversation with Editor-in-Chief Nomita Dhar, speaks about bilateral ties and shines the light on the many changes sweeping through the Kingdom that is set to bring new opportunities and renewed impetus for future economic growth*



**YOUR** Excellency, we meet during the Hajj season, please brief our readers about the number of pilgrims who visited this year and what the Kingdom's future plans are?

Yes, "In the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, The Most Merciful" The blessings and peace of Allah be upon our Master Muhammad, his family and his Companions", it was my pleasure to see the Singapore pilgrims off at the Changi Airport. This year (2018), the quota for Singapore was increased and we are happy that many more brothers and sisters from Singapore were able to fulfill their commitment of Hajj.

This year Saudi Arabia received more than 2.3 million pilgrims from various parts of the world. Under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz, and the Crown Prince Mohammad Salman, Saudi government establishments are working together to ensure high - quality service for the guests of Allah after their arrival in and departure

*(Top right inset): Ambassador Saad Saleh Al-Saleh with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Long at the President's Annual Diplomatic Reception*

### BILATERAL TIES

*On the bilateral front in the past one year we have had many successful meetings and visits. Our two foreign ministers met at the sidelines of at the G-20 foreign ministers' meeting in the Argentine capital Buenos Aires. Singapore's Minister of Home Affairs and Law visited Saudi Arabia, followed by Minister of Interior Prince Abdulaziz Bin Saud Bin Naif's visit to Singapore. Besides we also had a four member delegation under the leadership of Chairman of Shura Council Dr Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, Chairman of the Shura. Also, a health delegation headed by Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiab, Minister of Health of the KSA visited last November.*



from the KSA, and their safe return to their families and places of origin, by harnessing the full potential of our resources which are required to serve the pilgrims.

Special emphasis has been laid on the Umrah pilgrims in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. The government aims to increase its capacity for this category of pilgrims to 30 million per year by 2030.

**This year is special in many ways as the Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman recently completed one year in office. During this year some phenomenal steps were taken in KSA. Please brief our readers on the highlights of this year?**

Yes indeed, many important steps have been taken by the Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, towards growth and prosperity of the Nation in many directions. Primarily under the "Vision 2030, a 360-degree view has been taken to diversify the economy and reduce our dependence only on oil. On all fronts - economic, social and foreign policy changes, forward looking policies have been put into place.

For example, termed as the "World's most ambitious project in 'NEOM', 'Red Sea' and 'Oiddiva' were announced and have the potential to create massive opportunities on many fronts.

These are certainly great initiatives to build Saudi Arabia's future prospects besides that of oil.

On the social front, women in Saudi Arabia started driving from this year. But one must remember that there have been women in Saudi Arabia who have been in many professions, including the Shura Council, many of whom are PHD's Doctors and entrepreneurs. With this approach the opportunities are certainly going to multiply and their participation in the economy will have an additional advantage. All this has happened during the first year in office of the Crown Prince, and we as Saudis can certainly feel the changes.

**Please update us on the bilateral ties between Saudi Arabia and Singapore and any important engagements since the last edition of Saudi Arabia - Your Gateway to the Middle East?**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Singapore celebrated 40 years of establishment of bilateral ties and this relationship is excellent on multiple fronts. There have been several visits at the Ministerial level and several delegations have also visited Singapore with the aim to enhance business, education and cultural cooperation.

Prince Abdulaziz Bin Saud Bin Naif, Minister of Interior of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was in Singapore, following the visit of Singapore Minister for Home Affairs and Law

*(First row, from left to right): Saudi Arabia's Minister of Interior, Prince Abdulaziz Bin Saud Bin Naif, calls on President Halimah Yakob at the Istana; Chairman of the Shura Council, Dr Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, with President Halimah; Singapore Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, meeting his counterpart Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir at the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Argentina in May 2018; Saudi Arabia's Minister of Interior Prince Abdulaziz also called on Singapore Minister of Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam*

*(Second row, from left to right): Ambassador Saad Saleh Al-Saleh and Shura Council Chairman, Dr Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim with Speaker of Parliament Mr Tan Chuan-Jin and MP Sitoh Yih Pin; supporting the Inter-Racial Inter-Religious Harmony Nite 2018 with President Halimah*

*(Third row left to right): Ambassador Saad Saleh Al-Saleh with the Chairman of SGX Mr Loh Boon Chye; Ambassador with Habib Hassan (standing far right) with this year's two selected guests of the Custodians of the Holy Mosque for the Hajj; Ambassador taking part in the Chinese traditional Lo Hei with Singapore's Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs, Mr Masagos Zulkifli and Ambassador of Chile, James Sinclair; Ambassador seeing off this year's Hajj pilgrims at Changi Airport*









**“Singapore’s experience and success are very well respected in Saudi Arabia, and with these developments, I would certainly like to invite Singapore businesses to tap into these new opportunities in the Kingdom.”**

K Shanmugam to Saudi Arabia in November 2017. During the Saudi Interior Minister’s visit he met Mr Teo Chee Hean Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security, K. Shanmugam, Singapore’s Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law and also Mr Yaacob Ibrahim, then Minister for Communications. Our Minister of Interior also called on President Halimah Yacob.



*Ambassador with President Halimah after this year's Eid prayers at Sultan Mosque*

The Minister of Health of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiah also visited Singapore under the Middle East Eminent Person’s Programme (MEEPP) at the invitation of Minister for Health Mr. Gan Kim Yong and they exchanged views on developments and challenges in the healthcare sector.

In July this year, Dr Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, Chairman of the Shura Council lead a four - member delegation which also included two women council members. While interacting with the Singaporean Parliamentarians, they also called on Madam President.

#### **What are the latest developments on the education front?**

We have a Saudi Cultural office that looks after the cultural aspects of the relationship between the two countries.

We are hoping to be able to have exchanges at the under graduate level, so that our students can acquire knowledge from the world class universities in Singapore. It is my pleasure to share that NUS is one of 20 universities worldwide — and the only university in Asia and Oceania — to be recognized by the Saudi MOE Elite Scholarship Programme.

Saudis who have gained admission in any of the 20 universities in the Programme will be granted scholarships administered by the Saudi Ministry of Education. Other prestigious universities on the list include ETH Zurich, Harvard University and University of Cambridge.

We were also honoured to welcome, at the General Cultural Authority King Fahad Cultural Center, the world’s youngest 11 year old talented violinist, Chloe Chua from Singapore who has been a student at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts School of Young Talents (SYT) strings section to perform in Saudi Arabia.

#### **Saudi Arabia is opening up several sectors; how can Singapore investors tap into this new development?**

Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 constitutes a roadmap for the Kingdom’s development and has made provisions for accelerated growth on several

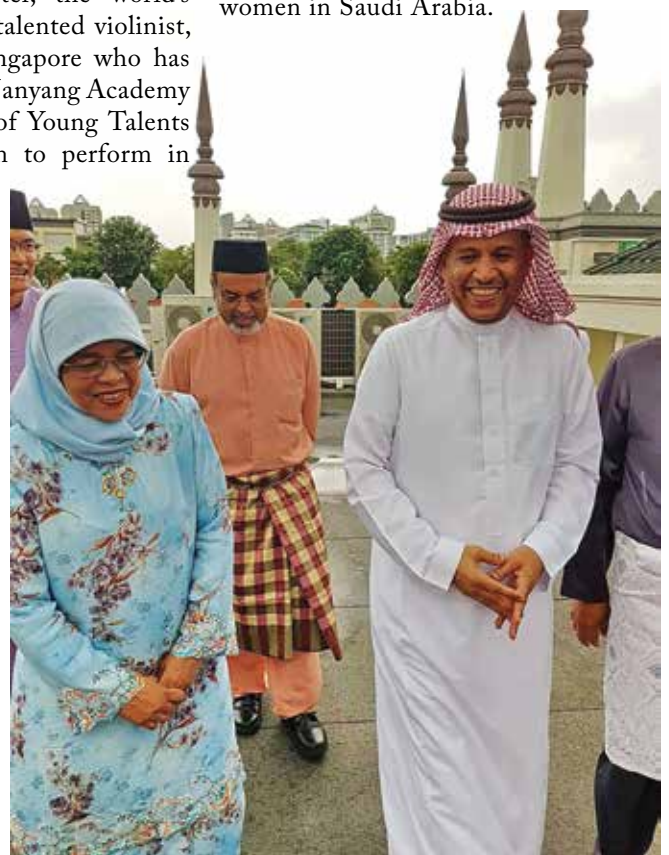
fronts. This includes the mega city NEOM project which has attracted great interest from investors. Singapore’s experience and success are very well respected in Saudi Arabia, and with these developments, I would certainly like to invite Singapore businesses to tap into these new opportunities in the Kingdom.

#### **Women of Saudi Arabia took to the driver’s seat for the first time in history;**

**what would you say is the status of**

#### **Saudi women today?**

Women in Saudi Arabia being allowed to drive is a very welcome policy. We have had highly educated women, some of whom are also the chosen members of the Shura Council, and others have also been entrepreneurs, teachers and doctors. And with this additional change, Inshallah, it will open more doors and opportunities for women in Saudi Arabia.



*During Eid celebrations*



## INTERVIEW

MINISTER K. SHANMUGAM:

MORE COOPERATION  
AND COLLABORATION ON...

*Singapore's Minister of Home Affairs and Law visited Saudi Arabia last year as part of an official trip to the Middle East to understand how countries in the region were dealing with extremist ideology and to continue the high level of engagement with the Kingdom*



*Minister K Shanmugam met Saudi Interior Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif last November to understand how countries in the Middle East deal with extremist ideology and affirmed the strong security cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Singapore.*

**YOUR** Excellency, you visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in November last year, please share with us the agenda of your visit. Also, what are the current engagements between the two countries in terms of training, security cooperation, etc? The world is facing challenges like radicalism. How can the two countries work together towards addressing this issue?

Singapore and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia share common concerns over the threat of terrorism and remain committed to fighting it. The purpose of my visit to Saudi Arabia in November 2017 was to reaffirm the strong ties

between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Interior (MOI), and for the two ministries to work towards stronger security cooperation and collaboration. The trip allowed me to better understand how Saudi Arabia has been working to tackle the issue of violent extremism.

During the visit, I met with my counterpart, His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz Bin Saud Bin Naif. We agreed on the importance of greater bilateral cooperation between MHA and MOI to combat terrorism. MHA also learnt much from the counter-

terrorism initiatives that Saudi Arabia has implemented. What happens in the Middle East affects many other regions of the world. Saudi Arabia's measures to counter the threat of terrorism are therefore vital to the stability of the Gulf region, and beyond.

There is a high level of engagement between MHA and MOI. Our officials have met to exchange their respective experiences and best practices. Saudi officials have participated in training programmes in Singapore, and vice-versa. I also greatly appreciated the visit by His Royal Highness Prince

## BILATERAL TIES

Abdulaziz to Singapore in March 2018, which further strengthened bilateral security cooperation between our two countries. I look forward to even greater opportunities for cooperation between Singapore and Saudi Arabia in the near future.

The spread of radicalism and violent extremism in one region can have a huge impact in another region. Despite our small size and limited resources, Singapore has contributed towards tackling the issue of terrorism in different parts of the world. Like Saudi Arabia, we are members of the Global Coalition to Defeat the Islamic State, and have been deploying military assets in support of the coalition's operations since 2014.

Our two countries also share best practices when it comes to religious rehabilitation. In January 2018, a delegation of Islamic religious leaders from Singapore's Religious Rehabilitation Group, led by Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs Mr Amrin Amin, made a study visit to Saudi Arabia. The delegation visited Saudi agencies such as Ministry of Interior, the Mohamed Bin Naif Center for Counselling and Care, and met with members of the Sakinah initiative to learn about Saudi Arabia's counter-ideology, rehabilitation and successful community engagement programmes.

**What impression of Saudi Arabia did you carry and would like to share with our readers? And what would you say was the highlight of your visit?**

My visit to Saudi Arabia left me with a clear impression of the strong determination of the Kingdom to transform itself through its ambitious reform agenda, Vision 2030.

I also had the opportunity to experience Saudi Arabia's rich cultural heritage through visits to the historic Masmak Fort, as well as traditional souks and

shops in Riyadh. The preservation of these historical landmarks underscored the importance that Saudi Arabia attaches to its longstanding traditions even as it pursues the path of socio-economic reform. Saudi Arabia is a beautiful country, and it was an honour for me to be able to visit the country.

**Singapore and the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia, share long historical ties, especially as a seat of Islam. How can the**



*Masmak Fort, Riyadh (Photo: Francisco Anzola)*

**“My visit to Saudi Arabia left me with a clear impression of the strong determination of the Kingdom to transform itself through its ambitious reform agenda, Vision 2030. I also had the opportunity to experience Saudi Arabia's rich cultural heritage... The preservation of these historical landmarks underscored the importance that Saudi Arabia attaches to its longstanding traditions even as it pursues the path of socio-economic reform”**

**two countries build on this relationship to further enhance collaboration?**

Singapore enjoys warm and friendly relations with all Middle East countries, including Saudi Arabia. In particular, bilateral relations between Singapore and Saudi Arabia are moving on an upward trajectory. Our multifaceted relationship has grown from strength to strength, and is driven by a desire on both sides to expand bilateral engagement for mutual benefit.

Every year, Saudi Arabia receives Singaporean students and pilgrims who travel to the Kingdom to pursue their religious studies and perform the Hajj/Umrah pilgrimages, respectively. Saudi Arabia has generously extended its warm hospitality to welcome these visitors. Additionally, over 9,000 Saudi tourists visited Singapore in 2017. Singapore welcomes more Saudi visitors, not only for business, but also to enjoy our entertainment and leisure facilities.

At the political level, there has been a good exchange of visits by leaders and Government officials. In 2017, there were a total of six outgoing visits to Saudi Arabia by Singapore Cabinet Ministers in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of bilateral relations.

Singapore also welcomed visits by Saudi Minister of Health Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiah in November 2017, and Prince Abdulaziz in March 2018. Most recently, Chairman of the Shura Council Dr Abdullah Mohammed Ibrahim Al Sheikh visited Singapore in July 2018 with a delegation of parliamentarians. Dr Abdullah called on President Madam Halimah Yacob, and met with the Speaker of Parliament Mr Tan Chuan-Jin. Singapore also welcomes the future visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, who has accepted Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong's invitation to visit Singapore.

Our Government-to-Government engagements are strong. Singapore is happy to have shared our developmental experience with many visiting delegations from the various Saudi ministries and agencies to assist in strengthening their technical capacities. We welcome more Saudi officials to consider Singapore as a destination for training and development.



Economically, Saudi Arabia is Singapore's second largest trading partner in the Middle East, and 19th largest in the world. In 2017, bilateral trade reached over S\$12.3 billion, and Singaporean companies secured Saudi projects in the transport, oil and gas, urban solutions and information technologies (ICT) sectors.

Many big Singapore corporate brand names are active in Saudi Arabia. SATS became the first foreign cargo handler to be awarded a cargo handling license in Saudi Arabia in 2016. Singapore hospitality service provider, The Ascott Limited, opened the Ascott Rafal Olaya in April 2017 – the fourth of five serviced residences it plans to launch in Saudi Arabia, with 234 service apartments and other facilities targeted at global executives and other business travellers visiting Riyadh. In the Eastern Province, PSA Singapore and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund partnered to form Saudi Global Ports to manage one of the terminals at the King Abdulaziz Port in Dammam, raising its container throughput and attracting transshipment traffic. Wilmar International is part of a joint venture to develop a new sugar refinery in Yanbu. In return, prominent Saudi companies, including Saudi Aramco, SABIC, Al Zamil Group, Tasnee and Kingdom Group, amongst others, have set up business operations in Singapore. Singapore companies are always on the lookout for opportunities to strengthen economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia, particularly under the umbrella of Vision 2030.

Singapore appreciates the efforts of the Council of Saudi Chambers and the Saudi Arabian General Investment

Authority, which have been helpful partners in facilitating bilateral business links.

**The Kingdom has opened-up new opportunities as it diversifies beyond oil. What areas do you see opportunities for Singapore?**

There are many opportunities for Singapore to cooperate and share our own developmental experiences, as part of Vision 2030. For example, Singapore's



SGP's second container port: The King Abdul Aziz Port, Dammam  
(Source: trends.nauticexpo.com)

**“Many big Singapore corporate brand names are active in Saudi Arabia. SATS became the first foreign cargo handler to be awarded a cargo handling license in Saudi Arabia in 2016. Singapore hospitality service provider, The Ascott Limited, opened the Ascott Rafal Olaya in April 2017 – the fourth of five serviced residences it plans to launch in Saudi Arabia... In the Eastern Province, PSA Singapore and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund partnered to form Saudi Global Ports to manage one of the terminals at the King Abdulaziz Port in Dammam”**

expertise in city and urban development, infrastructure and environmental solutions, as well as tourism and medical services, are all possible sectors where our companies could contribute to the Kingdom's overall push towards economic reform.

A crucial ingredient for Vision 2030's success is the upgrading of Saudi Arabia's local workforce. Singapore believes in lifelong learning and the development of a skilled workforce which can contribute to the future economy. In this regard, Singapore has developed a strong vocational educational system in the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), whose private international arm, ITE Education Services, has provided training and consultancy services in Technical and Vocational Education and Training to its Saudi clients.

There is much that Singapore and Saudi Arabia can learn from each other on preparing our people for the challenges of the future economy. For example, a private education college from Singapore, the Raffles Design Institute, has been running a campus in Riyadh since 2013. It is the first international design institute in the Middle East, and is an all-ladies campus offering courses in areas such as fashion, jewellery and accessories. The Institute aims to prepare young ladies to play a role in the Saudi economy in-line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 goal to empower women.

Saudi Arabia and Singapore will have to adapt to the fast changing global economic landscape, which has experienced rapid technological advances. Singapore's plans to prepare for the future economy are similar to Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 development goals. For example, Singapore's 'Smart Nation' roadmap aims to transform the country by harnessing the power of networks, data and ICT, to

improve living conditions and generate new economic opportunities. Singapore welcomes greater bilateral cooperation and study visit exchanges in this area. Singapore will do what we can to work with Saudi Arabia to support its vision.

## BILATERAL TIES

Singapore has seen much success as a multi-racial society, multi religious country. Would you like to share the best practices and policies that have helped Singapore in achieving this?

Singapore's approach to preserve our multi-racial and multi-religious harmony over the past 50 years centres around three core principles - equality and equality of opportunities; accepting and celebrating our diversity while building a common Singaporean identity; and keeping as large a common space as possible in our interactions.

In Singapore, we take an active approach to ethnic relations. For example, we introduced an ethnic integration policy for our public housing to ensure that there are no ethnic enclaves. Our schools are racially-mixed, and our compulsory education system ensures that our children learn to interact with and respect those from other races, from young. We also inculcated

This year, Singapore holds the ASEAN chairmanship. As a successful regional grouping, how can we work with Saudi Arabia collectively and in which areas?

Singapore is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and continues to be a strong advocate for ASEAN unity and centrality. Although each of the 10 member states have unique and distinct histories, cultures, and politics, through ASEAN we are able to work together towards common goals and the betterment of all our people.

Singapore's 2018 ASEAN Chairmanship themes of "Resilience" and "Innovation" encapsulate what ASEAN has to be, to better tackle challenges ahead. This was summed up in the ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement, adopted at the 32nd ASEAN Summit in April, which reaffirms key principles anchoring ASEAN's regional cooperation, and articulates a common vision for ASEAN's future.

urbanisation, with 26 pioneer cities. To enhance our regional connectivity, we also adopted an ASEAN Declaration on Cruise Tourism in January. Third, with a focus on economic integration, we hope to improve trade facilitation for ASEAN and beyond. The Economic Ministers overseeing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have expressed a shared goal of substantially concluding negotiations by the end of 2018. ASEAN is also working on an E-Commerce Agreement and the ASEAN Single Window, which will facilitate the digitalisation of trade procedures and boost intra-ASEAN trade.

ASEAN and Saudi Arabia currently cooperate closely as members of the ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) dialogue, an ongoing process which works to strengthen cooperation between the two regional blocs and also foster closer cooperation between all

***ASEAN and Saudi Arabia currently cooperate closely as members of the ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) dialogue... We hope that Saudi Arabia and the other GCC countries can leverage their relationship with Singapore to establish good relations with ASEAN member states, so as to explore opportunities for investment and trade in the greater Asian region.***

a common identity in our schools by making all students, regardless of their background, wear standard uniforms. In addition, we have a tough legal framework on race and religion, and there are clear rules on what you can and cannot say or do concerning race and religion.

Without such active State intervention, we run the risk of having segregated communities, a shrinking of our common space, and reduced opportunities for the minorities. However, we do not assume that Singapore is immune from several trends that might affect our social cohesion - rising religious extremism and polarisation in the region, as well as rising xenophobia, racism and tribalism in the West. Therefore, the Singapore Government, together with our community partners, continue to focus our national efforts on ensuring that racial and religious harmony is maintained in all aspects of our society.

Singapore's broad Chairmanship themes feed into more specific initiatives. First, preserving ASEAN's strategic security objectives. Facing a complex geopolitical landscape, with challenges such as terrorism, cyber threats, and natural disasters, it is crucial for ASEAN to remain resilient. Our security initiatives this year included a Cybersecurity Statement, that aimed to secure political agreement on the importance of cybersecurity cooperation in ASEAN, and an ASEAN counter-terrorism symposium that we will host in October 2018. Second, leveraging technology to remain relevant, and to ensure that we create opportunities for all ASEAN citizens. We will focus on innovation to keep ASEAN forward-looking and adaptable to the digital revolution, including through advancing e-commerce and developing a network of smart cities in ASEAN. We launched the ASEAN Smart Cities Network this year, envisioned as an inclusive and collaborative platform for cities across ASEAN to work together on sustainable

the countries involved. ASEAN and the GCC's foreign ministers have met previously in Bahrain, Singapore, and New York for high level discussions. There is scope for both sides to bolster cooperation - areas in which Saudi Arabia could explore further cooperation with ASEAN include strengthening ASEAN-GCC economic ties, and the sharing of experiences and best practices on technology, security, and urbanisation. This would allow Saudi Arabia to leverage on ASEAN's strengths - collectively, ASEAN is a US\$2.55 trillion market with over 630 million people, strategically positioned near the fast developing markets of India and China. By 2030, ASEAN will also form the world's fourth largest economy, behind the EU, the US, and China. We hope that Saudi Arabia and the other GCC countries can leverage their relationship with Singapore to establish good relations with ASEAN member states, so as to explore opportunities for investment and trade in the greater Asian region.





***Congratulations and Best Wishes  
to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
on their 88th National Day***



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# SAUDI ARABIA EMBASSY RAMADHAN IFTAR BANQUET



**THE** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invited members of the diplomatic corp, representatives from the government and leading civic and business leaders to its annual Ramadhan Iftar Banquet held on 24th May 2018 at the Ritz-Carlton Millenia Grand Ballroom. The Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Singapore HE Mr Saad Saleh AlSaleh welcomed Guest of Honour HE Masagos Zulkifli Bin Masagos Mohamad, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs at the Grand Ballroom which was set up for a dinner buffet and prayer section. Other dignitaries included Senior Minister of State Mr Maliki Osman and former Minister for Communications and Information, Dr Yaacob Ibrahim and CEO of Mendaki, Abdul Razak Hassan Maricar.



(Middle right): The Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Singapore HE Mr Saad Saleh AlSaleh (centre) with Guest of Honour HE Masagos Zulkifli Bin Masagos Mohamad (far left), Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs and CEO of Mendaki, Mr Abdul Razak Hassan Maricar.  
(Above): The Saudi Ambassador with guests from the Middle East and Africa including Egyptian Ambassador HE Mohamed Abulkheir (2nd from right)





*(Far left): Welcoming Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

*(Left): Warm welcome for Dr Yaacob Ibrahim former Minister for Communications and Information, Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs and Minister in charge of Cyber Security*



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Commemorating the **88<sup>th</sup>** NATIONAL DAY of the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

## MESSAGE

*by Dr Abdulaziz Mohammad Alsaleh, the  
Cultural Attaché to the Saudi Arabian Cultural  
Mission in Singapore*



*“I am greatly honoured to be appointed the Cultural Attaché to SACM-SG and I look forward to working closely with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Singapore, His Excellency Saad Saleh Al Saleh in enhancing opportunities for Saudi scholars in education and training through greater collaboration with Singapore institutions. Singapore has been an attractive destination for Saudi scholars who are granted generous scholarships by the Saudi government and institutions to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies and advanced medical specialist training. This is because of the high educational and research standards, diversity and rich cultural landscape, good infrastructure, safe environment and friendly people. I am glad to have this opportunity to share my vision and hope in creating more opportunities for Saudi scholars to come to Singapore.”*

*Interview with  
Dr Abdulaziz Mohammad  
Alsaleh, the Cultural Attaché  
to the Saudi Arabian  
Cultural Mission in  
Singapore (SACM-SG)*

**1. Please share with us your background and work before you came to Singapore?**

I completed my PhD in Special Education with the University of Arkansas in the United States in 2007. I have two Masters degrees focusing on “Workforce Development and Human Resources” and “Special Education” and a Bachelor degree in Psychology. Given my interest in education, I am indeed grateful to the government of Saudi Arabia for giving me so many wonderful opportunities. I was the Cultural Attaché to Germany and eight other European and East European countries from 2016 to 2017 and the Assistant Cultural Attaché at the cultural mission to Canada from 2010 to 2016.

**2. What are the various engagements that you have planned to improve the visibility of Saudi Arabia in Singapore?**

Ever since I started in July 2018, I have met numerous people from the education and healthcare sectors in Singapore and I am privileged to share information about the King’s scholarship programme and opportunities for collaboration with them. The people whom I have met from the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, various polytechnics and hospitals have been helpful and supportive. The purpose is to open communication channels for better mutual understanding and establish scope for collaboration.



(From left to right): HE Saad Saleh Al Saleh, Dr Abdulaziz M. Alsaleh and Mr Abdulrahman Alamasb from SACM-SG



Dr Abdulaziz M. Alsaleh with Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Singapore, His Excellency Saad Saleh Al Saleh (centre) and embassy staff hosting H.E. Eng Ali Al-Hazmi, Governor, Saline Water Conversion Corporation, Saudi Arabia (5th from right) who attended Singapore International Water Week in July 2018



(Above): Dr Abdulaziz M. Alsaleh with A/Prof Quek Swee Tian, Head, NUH Diagnostic Imaging (2nd from right), scholar and staff from SACM-SG



Dr Abdulaziz M. Alsaleh with Prof Yong Eu Leong, Head, NUH O&G



Nanyang Technological University



National University of Singapore



Singapore Management University

### 3. How is your office working towards getting more opportunities for Saudi students in Singapore?

My team and I have been talking to many people in charge of admissions (and also international relations) to programmes from diploma to PhD levels. The range of good quality programmes here is indeed wide and we believe will be able to meet many of our scholars' needs. Through collaborative discussions, we hope to find as many opportunities as possible for Saudis to study and train here. More definitive numbers will be available soon and we are excited by the prospect.

### 4. In terms of collaboration in education, are there Singapore students who are studying in Saudi Arabia?

There are Singapore students studying in various Saudi universities and the number has been gradually increasing as the standards of these universities are rapidly rising. In fact two Saudi Universities are ranked among the top 150 universities in the world in 2018 by Academic Ranking of World Universities.

### 5. What would you like to share through our publication about your country?

There is a lot of emphasis on education and training to prepare Saudis for a diversified economy. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) with its Vision 2030 is poised for rapid changes. In support of its developmental goals, manpower training and development has been given much impetus through the King's scholarship programme. Till date, approximately 150,000 scholars and dependents have received generous scholarship funding to pursue graduate and postgraduate studies in universities worldwide. Many scholars return to KSA after graduation appreciative of the overseas opportunities given to them by foreign universities, and progress to hold senior and responsible positions in public and private service. They are proud of their universities. It is hoped that SG universities are among these foreign institutions with whom strong alumni links are forged with many more Saudi scholars thus promoting greater communication and closer relations in the long term.

### 6. What will be your focus during your term and plan in medical collaborations?

We are seeking out opportunities for clinical fellowships and residencies. Advanced medical training is available in many subspecialties here. These programmes are structured to meet accreditation standards such as the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). My focus will be on opening more channels of communication and collaborative arrangements in the same way as with the universities. I am open to ways as long as these are mutually beneficial. I am sure that both the people of Singapore and Saudi Arabia will benefit from more collaborative exchanges.

Dr Abdulaziz was delighted to meet various representatives from Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University, Singapore Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic and National University Hospital to explore collaborative opportunities.



## SACM PROGRAMMES & ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS 2017-18



*Group photo of the second KFUPM delegation taken at the National University of Singapore*

### ■ Student Delegations from King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals

*(7 - 11 Sep 2017 & 17 - 20 Jun 2018)*

SACM-SG had the pleasure of hosting two student delegations from the King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals from 7 to 11 Sep 2017 and from 17 to 20 Jun 2018. The second group was co-hosted by the National University of Singapore Global Relations Office (NUS GRO). The first group consisted of 14 students, an administrator and a Head of Delegation while the second group had 20 students, an administrator, an Assistant Head and Head of Delegation. Both groups came to Singapore for exciting learning journeys and to gain exposure to the culturally rich and cosmopolitan city.

### Programme for the First Group (7 - 11 Sep 2017)

On the academic front, the delegation visited the National University of Singapore's School of Continuing and Lifelong Education, NUS's Nanoscience and Nanotechnology Initiative, and Temasek Polytechnic's Temasek Aviation Academy. Apart from learning more about each institution's work, the delegation also had the opportunity to tour some of the campus facilities used for teaching and research.

In support of the educational element, SACM-SG also made arrangements for guided tours to the Land Transport Gallery and Newater Visitor Centre to gain an understanding of Singapore's quest in addressing transport and water needs over the past years and into the future.

Over at SABIC Innovative Plastics, the delegation was given a presentation of its extensive operations and a plant tour.

What about leisure? SACM-SG arranged for visits to the Merlion Park, Marina Barrage,

Gardens by the Bay and Universal Studios as well as shopping at the Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands.

### Programme for the Second Group co-hosted by NUS GRO

*(17 - 20 Jun 2018)*

NUS GRO rendered help in planning the programme itinerary and hosted a welcome reception at its premises. The delegation visited the NUS Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Science and SERIS – Solar Energy Research Institute of Singapore. At the Faculty of Engineering, the delegation was introduced to the Petroleum Engineering Group under the Department of Civil Engineering, and visited the Multiphase Oil-Water-Air Flow Loop Facility under the Department of Mechanical Engineering. At the Faculty of Science, the group was introduced to its educational and international programmes before spending time at the Science Demonstration Laboratory. At SERIS, it was introduced to the solarisation initiatives of the republic to be followed by a tour of some of SERIS' laboratories.

Over at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), the delegation visited Rolls-Royce@NTU Corporate Lab. Apart from getting an introduction to its research work in Singapore, the group also toured its Electrical Power Systems Integration Laboratory. The group also visited the Nanyang Technopreneurship Centre and the HIVE – a high performance green building for promoting collaborative and interactive learning.

SACM-SG also brought the group to Chinatown, Little India, Merlion Park, International Merchandising Mart and the Newater Visitor Centre. The last stop was at SABIC which played host a second time.

The delegations truly enjoyed their educational and eventful stay with a few delegates planning to visit Singapore again someday!



*Group photo of the first KFUPM delegation taken at Gardens by the Bay*

*Continued next page...*



*(Clockwise from top left)*

- ▶ Dr Abdulaziz M Alsaleh with Prof. Arnoud De Meyer and Mr Abdulrahman Alamasb from SACM-SG at the activity area set up by SACM-SG
- ▼ Group photo of KKH delegation taken with Dr Abdulaziz Mohammad Alsaleh at SACM-SG
- ▶ Group photograph with staff and students from SMU

### ■ Student Delegation from King Khalid University (16 - 23 Jul 2018)

SACM-SG also had the pleasure of having a 23-member delegation, with 14 students, from King Khalid University. The group visited the Singapore Management University's School of Law and Nanyang Technological University's Nanyang Technopreneurship Centre. A trip to FusionWorld, showcasing inventions and prototypes of A\*STAR's research institutes was also arranged. The rest of the itinerary involved leadership training, exposures to Singapore's multiculturalism and site seeing arranged by an appointed agent. All delegations were hosted by H.E. Mr. Saad bin Saleh Al-Saleh, Saudi Ambassador to Singapore, during their stays in Singapore.



### ■ Participation in SMU's Global Village Event (12 Sep 2018)

Dr Abdulaziz M. Alsaleh, the Cultural Attaché at SACM-SG, had the pleasure to attend the grand opening of SMU's Global Village event held to celebrate diversity within its multicultural student

population and foster closer relations among the local and international student community. Accompanied by Prof. Arnoud De Meyer, President of SMU, he had a tour of the Global Village and experienced first-hand the vibrancy within the university.

SACM-SG supported the SMU event by having a cultural installation featuring an exotic activities area where visitors partook of Arabic coffee and dates, tried traditional Saudi dress and viewed videos featuring Saudi life and the country's exquisite landscape. For those seeking comfort for their aching feet, the soft cushions teemed with the lush silk carpet afforded a welcome respite. As always, SACM-SG takes pleasure in offering several vignettes of great Saudi hospitality to its friends and visitors.





# REFLECTIONS

*After their studies in Singapore what the following clinical fellows and scholars think and feel about their time in the island republic*

## Mona Mohammad Alattas

I was born in Jeddah, where I lived for more than 10 years before moving to al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, the City of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) the messenger of Allah. Al Madinah is the second holiest site in Islam after Makkah.

After arriving in Singapore, completing an English course at the British Council was a great experience. It was not only a foreign language learnt, but also different cultures. The opportunity to give Arabic lessons to non-native speakers made the experience fulfilling.



*Mona with memory of NTU for keeps*

I graduated from the Singapore Nanyang Technological University (NTU) with the MSc in Technopreneurship & Innovation in 2018. Learning in Singapore has a slightly faster pace compared to that in my home country and it afforded excitement as the multi-racial and multi-cultural country gave me many opportunities to interact with professors and students from different cultures.

Singapore is highly recommended as the education standard is high. However, being a student by yourself in a different country can be hard. My biggest challenge was having to sit through conventional lectures which were sometimes tiresome. My mind and body were always preparing to move and I couldn't wait to get out of my seat to interact with my peers. During my first year, acquiring effective time management skills was another challenge as I lived far away from the university. Each trip to campus took up about two hours. Also, the volume of work was considerably more compared to that in Saudi Arabia.

Generally, it is very competitive in the university and quite stressful but if you work hard, you can make it. You should consider yourself lucky if you have the opportunity to live in Singapore! The country is safe and the people are kind. Singapore is focusing on education to enable its citizens to keep up with the advancements in technology. Therefore, like them, you should take advantage of thousands of educational opportunities available to you.

I am grateful to my family and the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission for supporting me throughout my

study. Saudi Arabia is developing fast. My hope for the next generation is for them to achieve progress by focusing on education, working hard and smart, and being open to great learning opportunities.



*Mona (3rd from left) with her classmates*



## Abeer Alhejaili

I have graduated from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) with a Master of Information Systems in 2018. Throughout my studies in NTU, teamwork was encouraged in many courses so my course mates and I had learnt much from each other. My course mates who had left a great impact on me were Valli and Divya. Valli was my team mate in two courses and I was influenced by her style of writing. Divya was my course mate for two semesters and I was deeply impressed by how motivated and organized she was. Some faculty members also left deep impressions. Dr. Jonathan had his way of dividing his course into lectures to help us in the course project through working according to the sequence of lectures and combining all to produce one big piece of work at the end. The other instructor was Ms Yiping. As her lectures were very long and intense and with a lot of explanations, she provided recorded lectures so that we could watch the videos if we did not understand any concepts. This was very helpful to international students.

My appreciation for studying in Singapore was that I felt comfortable as a Muslim woman wearing my Hijab and from the first day in Singapore, I never felt that my Hijab was an obstruction to me in pursuing my dream. I had the privilege of being accepted into one of the top universities in Asia, that is, NTU where the education standards are high, instructors are knowledgeable, facilities are great and international peers, with different backgrounds, are motivated and helpful. My experiences in Singapore have expanded my knowledge and made me believe in myself, God willing, to achieve my dream.

The experience of living in Singapore was good as safety came with convenience provided through good public transportation and easy access to amenities, such as playgrounds near my house for my child to play in.

I had a great study opportunity as a scholar of the King's scholarship programme. It gave me the privilege to pursue my masters to participate in the advancement of my country. I received my degree recently so I am now looking for a job in order to transfer my knowledge and experience to help meet my country's needs.

## Dr Susan Alghamdi

I am a 38-year old female doctor who completed her basic degree in Gynaecology in Saudi Arabia. I have always been a hard worker. Three years ago when I was looking for an outreach fellowship programme that would fulfil my training requirements and satisfy my educational and professional needs, Singapore was my chosen destination. I applied and was accepted for a clinical fellowship at the National University Hospital, the largest teaching university hospital in Singapore.

My clinical exposure was great and my educational needs were all fulfilled. Associate Professor Jeffrey Low, Head of the Division of Gynaecologic Oncology and Senior Consultant in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and the National Cancer Institute Singapore, was my direct supervisor. He was a great teacher and he imparted essential knowledge and skills to me to perform as a qualified Gynaecologic Oncologist in my home country. I had great teachers, many local Singaporean friends and a very supportive Cultural Mission. Being in Singapore for two years was a blessing.

I returned to Saudi Arabia in 2018 and currently I am working at King Fahad Specialist Hospital Dammam. I have great confidence to manage all complicated cases that involve women cancer.

I strongly encourage all Saudi scholars to train in Singapore because of the high educational standards and strong infrastructure.

Well done Singapore,  
I will never forget you,  
Majulah Singapura!



# ON TIME MAGAZINE WORLD'S GREATEST PLACES LIST ACCOLADES FOR ITHRA



Source: www.skit.com

*Saudi Arabia's King Abdulaziz World Cultural Center or ITHRA (from the Arabic meaning of 'being rich from knowledge') was picked as one of the World's Greatest Places by the prestigious TIME Magazine*

**THE** Abdulaziz World Cultural Center (ITHRA) was picked as one of the about 100 places from over six continents and 48 countries. The Cultural Center, which lies in Dhahran, was selected for its role as a cultural hub reflecting the changes sweeping Saudi Arabia. The ITHRA, which overlooks the desert from an altitude of 295 ft contains a 1,600 sq mt great hall, as well as a museum with four galleries, each focusing on a special aspect of Saudi Identity and Heritage, Islamic Art and Civilization and the

Culture of the Arabian Peninsula. It also includes a cinema, a library with over half a million items, and a 1,000-seat opera house!

The iconic knowledge tower hosts 2,000 workshops annually, and the topics for discussion include subjects related to science, technology and maths. Since it's opening in 2016, the center has become a world leader in the arts, the culture and knowledge-sharing.

ITHRA'S mission is to make a tangible

and positive impact on human development by inspiring a passion for knowledge, creativity, and cross-cultural engagement for the future of the Kingdom. The Center is the first institution of its kind in the Kingdom bringing together multiple offerings under one roof to make a positive and tangible impact on the knowledge and cultural scene by nurturing local talent in the knowledge and creative industries. The Center was created as an inspiring platform for explorers, learners, creators, and leaders.

*Best Wishes to the People and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their 88th National Day*



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# CHLOE CHUA THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC!

*Music has no boundaries and the highly talented 11-year old Chloe Chua, the world's leading young violinist, proved this once again, beyond doubt, as she mesmerised her audience with her incredible performance at the King Fahad Cultural Centre in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*



IT'S been an astonishing and hugely gratifying journey for this young artist who has taken her audiences by storm with her magical engagement with the violin. In July this year Chloe Chua was invited by the staff from General Cultural Authority in Saudi Arabia, who contacted both the Menuhin and Chloe's music school, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) to give recitals in Riyadh and Jeddah.

Speaking about this wonderful experience Chloe says "I was much honored to be invited to perform in both Riyadh and Jeddah. When I entered the King Fahad Cultural Centre for the first time I was so bewildered! I didn't know that it was such a huge concert hall and that it had over 3,000 seats. This was my first time to perform for such a huge audience and I felt very excited. Apart from that, the technical crew who did the sound control, lighting and recording were very accommodating to our needs. In Jeddah, the concert hall was very beautiful and big too. Overall it was an enjoyable experience to perform in Saudi Arabia."

Chloe's incredible gift has been showcased in many performances, held not just in

Singapore and Saudi Arabia, but also in the UK, China, Thailand and Switzerland

Recounting her love for the violin and how she has reached these great heights of achievement at such a young age, Chloe's first words of thanks, and acknowledgement of her success, reach out to her music school, NAFA's School Of Young Talents which runs a wonderful violin course and provided her with many opportunities to perform and also the incredible training which helped develop her ability to perform so beautifully.

"The school Principal Madam Fang Yuan also guides me in this area from time to time. She would comment on my performance and give me tremendous encouragement. My success in all the competitions that I have participated in owed very much to my violin teacher and mentor, Mr Yin Ke, who has been teaching me since I was five and a half years old. He is an excellent teacher who has taught me not only the technique of playing the violin but has also shaped my musical taste and expression. He always believes in me that I could one

***The cultural landscape of Saudi Arabia is changing at a rapid pace and it is fast becoming a hub of cultural activities. Since the opening of its doors to global talent, people in Saudi Arabia have been enjoying electrifying performances of various world-class musicians and singers. The Saudi authorities are leaving no stone unturned to promote local talent and to make the Kingdom part of the global cultural revolution.***



day that really boost my confidence,” shares Chloe.

Speaking about her recent performance in Saudi Arabia and her experience there Chloe says “ I like Saudi Arabia. We received a very warm welcome throughout our stay there and I found the people are very friendly, polite and helpful. The audience was very kind and supportive. I felt very encouraged to perform there. Apart from that, I enjoyed the food in Saudi Arabia too. Yes, I would definitely go again to perform in Saudi Arabia if I am invited.”

The cultural landscape of Saudi Arabia is changing at a rapid pace and it is fast becoming a hub of cultural activities. Since the opening of its doors to global talent, people in Saudi Arabia have been enjoying electrifying performances of various world-class musicians and singers. The Saudi authorities are leaving no stone unturned to promote local talent and to make the Kingdom part of the global cultural revolution.

Eleven year old Chloe Chua is a shining star especially after winning the 1st Prize in the Junior Division of the Menuhin Competition held in Geneva in 2018.


Chloe was selected through audition and admitted into the Gifted Young Violinists course at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

(NAFA), School of Young Talents (SYT) when she was 4 years old. Since 2012, she has been under the tutelage of SYT String Programme Leader Mr Yin Ke.


For her talent and hard work, she was awarded many opportunities to participate in master classes and music festivals such as the New Virtuosi Queenswood Mastercourse held in U.K, and also the Singapore Violin festivals.

Chloe has also achieved outstanding results in other competitions, both locally and internationally. These awards mainly include, Singapore Biennial National Piano and Violin Competition Junior Category 3rd Prize (2015), Thailand 4th International Strings Competition, Junior Category Grand Winner (2015), the 24th Andrea Postacchini International Violin Competition, held in Italy 2017, Junior Category 1st Prize, the 2nd Zhuhai International Mozart Competition for Young Musicians Violin Group A 3rd Prize (2017), Singapore Biennial National Piano and Violin Competition Junior Category 1st Prize (2017).







# Happy





# National Day



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**The Kingdom  
of Saudi Arabia**





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# SUCCESS OF HAJJ 2018 LAUDED

*Decades of practice have honed the skills of the Kingdom in ensuring a spirit-stirring, logistically efficient and safe experience for millions of pilgrims descending on the Holy sites in and around Makkah for performing the Hajj*

**THE** World Health Organisation has offered its congratulations to Saudi Arabia for a successful Hajj season this year. In total, 2.3 million pilgrims were received at the Holy sites in around Makkah. Around 18, 000 buses transported 1, 800, 000 pilgrims, while the holy sites train carried 360,000 pilgrims. Experienced Saudi traffic controllers, as well as young scouts, volunteer each year to make the phenomenon a success. The arrangements this year included over 250,000 volunteers, 5,000 beds in 25 hospitals and health centres, which deployed 32,000 health practitioners. Vision 2030 aims to heighten Saudi Arabia's role as a focal point for moderate Islam. The government of the KSA aims to increase its capacity for pilgrims to 30 million per year by 2030.



*Photos courtesy of Saudi Press Agency*



*Pilgrims arrive in Muzdalifah*



*Large nos pilgrims ascend the Holy Arafat*





## KING SALMAN'S ADDRESS TO PILGRIMS

*His Majesty King Salman,  
Custodian of the two Holy Mosques,  
addressed the millions of Muslim  
pilgrims who carried out the Hajj  
Pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia*



God has honoured the kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the duty of servicing the Two Holy Mosques, and those who seek them and strive for their safety and comfort.

To this end, the Kingdom has given every attention and care since the foundation by His Majesty the late King Abdulaziz (May God bless his soul) and the rulers who have followed him (May God bless their souls) and will continue to do so for it is our deep belief that serving His guests and seeing to their every need is our obligation. It is also a great honour which we hold very dear.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which comprises the *Qiblah* and the Mosque of the Prophet (PBUH), insists upon its firm stance in the fight against terrorism and extremism from its position as an Islamic region and global player. Our position is to eradicate them in all forms and to adhere to Islam's noble message of forgiveness.

We seek to unite Muslims and establish security and independence in the region.



*Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud personally supervises pilgrims' comfort and the services provided for them to perform Hajj rituals at eas*





*The Tent City of Mina, Makkah. The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah supervise service for pilgrims from the moment they arrive in the Kingdom until their departure*

## EXCERPTS FROM THE MESSAGE BY DR. MOHAMMAD SALEH BIN TAHER BENTEN MINISTER OF HAJJ AND UMRAH

“The Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques carried out a major expansion of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah throughout Islam’s long history and exponentially increased its capacity. As a result, Muslims from across the globe have been given the opportunity to perform their rituals with much ease and convenience .

The KSA developed mega-infrastructure projects in Makkah , Madinah and the Holy Sites ,with a core focus on a full spectrum of multiple service utilities ,including the expansion of the Two Holy Mosques and the areas dedicated for the accommodation of pilgrims in Makkah and Madinah through the launch of the Al Mashaaer Al Mugaddassah Metro Southern Line, the construction of Jamarat Bridge, and completion of projects in relation to the expansion of airports, ports, Hajj and Umrah lounges, transportation, health and hygiene services, coupled with logistics for Hajj pilgrims, Umrah performers and visitors, and the creation of a new hospitality industry to bolster up the economies of Hajj and Umrah.

At the threshold of the Saudi Arabia’s Vision for 2030, the Hajj and Umrah sector is currently experiencing unprecedented dynamics. The Ministry strives to put in place a new approach with an emphasis placed on a shift from the culture of seasonal employment to the culture of action throughout the whole year by opening up scope for additional gains in performance – enhanced technology, fostering transparency, implementing quality and performance standards with a view to scaling up availability and capacity, improving operational efficiency, increasing Hajj and Umrah system-wide coordination in response to the Vision’s goals and the initiatives of the National Transformation Program.”



## STEADY PROGRESS IN SERVICE & FACILITIES FOR PILGRIMS

There have been many expansions of the Two Holy Mosques and the current one, the third, is considered the largest in history in terms of size and cost. The project is divided into three sections. The first includes the expansion of the Holy Mosque building to accommodate two million faithful at a time.

The second section aims at expanding and developing the Holy Mosque's outer squares, which include bathrooms, pathways, and tunnels, and other supporting facilities to facilitate the entry and exit of the pilgrims.

The third section aims to develop the services area, which is considered one of the most significant supporting facilities and includes air conditioning and electricity generator stations, water stations and others that offer services to the Holy area.

The Prophet's Mosque also witnessed several expansions throughout the Saudi era. The latest is also considered the largest and one highlight - the installation of canopies covers all areas around the mosque offering protection against the sun and rain especially from the dangers of slipping.

Travel between the two Holy Mosques is now more convenient



with the introduction of the Masha'ir elevated light-rail train in 2011. This will be joined by the Al-Haramain electric train that can travel at speeds of 300kmh and shorten the travel time to just two hours between the two Holy Mosques.

**Salutations to the people and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their 88<sup>th</sup> National Day**

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*Salutations to the People and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their 88<sup>th</sup> National Day*

**From EXCO and All Members**



الاتحاد شركات السياحة للمسلمين في سنغافورة

PERSATUAN AGENSI PELANCONGAN ISLAM SINGAPURA  
ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM TRAVEL AGENTS (SINGAPORE)

# HABIB HASSAN AL-ATTAS

## PREACHING & PRACTICE OF PEACE & HARMONY

*The Imam of Ba'alwie Mosque lives by example and is a strong advocate for the development of inter-faith dialogue amongst civic society and diplomatic circle in Singapore. He also recalls how Saudi Arabia has contributed to the promotion of inter-religious harmony here*

**SAUDI** Arabia and Singapore have had great bilateral ties and a regular people-to-people ties for generations. Some Arabs who came here to trade, have made Singapore their home and have been an excellent bridge between the two countries. One prominent name is Habib Hassan, the Imam and head of Ba'alwie Mosque for over 41 years.

Spreading the sweetness of faith through generations, a prominent face in the media, Habib Hassan or Habib Syed Hassan Bin Mohamed Al-Attas, invited us to his home and to the mosque to share with us his life's mission and the work he does.

The seeds of spreading the words of Islam were sown in the Al-Attas family, by Habib's Hassan father who built the mosque in 1952.

The mosque, which is located in Lewis Road, Bukit Timah can accommodate 1,000 worshippers for daily and Friday prayers.

Spreading the words of harmony and brotherhood, the mosque has a rare collection of the Qur'an and other holy scriptures. Welcoming people of various faiths from far and near and giving them a tour of the mosque, explaining the teachings of Islam with warmth and passion is one of the roles Habib Hassan takes on with pride and with great finesse.

A respected member of the Arab community, which made Singapore home long ago, he can still be seen wearing the traditional long Arabic robe or *jubah* every day. Also a council member of the Inter-Religious Organization

(IRO), the oldest interfaith organisation in the world, Habib Hassan shared with us his observations about the warm and friendly relations that Singapore and the seat of Islam - Saudi Arabia have been sharing for centuries.



*Last year's donation of dates was marked by a visit to the Saudi Arabian Ambassador HE Saad S Al-Saleh (2nd from right) led by Singapore Senior Minister of State (Defence & Foreign Affairs) Dr Mohamed Maliki Osman (3rd from right) leading a delegation with Habib Hassan (centre) and other Singapore civic leaders*

Way back in time Arab merchants who had made Singapore their home had contributed significantly to its economic growth through their trading activities, and even today these connections continue to be very strong on many levels. This also includes the travel to Saudi Arabia, both for the Hajj and the Umra each year.

### Annual Gift of Dates

Sharing with us another important aspect of the sweetness of Saudi - Singapore ties, he said, "We are grateful for the annual gift of dates that we receive from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the beginning of the fasting month."

Expressing his gratitude, he said, "We have been involved with distribution of dates for over 20 years, which we began with 20

tonnes. This year we received 40 tonnes which we distributed to mosques, public religious groups and other organizations."

On 8th November 2015 Habib Hassan received the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) Award, for his outstanding contributions to the community and inter-faith dialogue. Towards this end, the Imam has made a great contribution, doing his very best to bring to the people the real and peaceful teachings of Islam. Recollecting the cooperation of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, he says "We cannot forget what the Saudi's have done, they contributed to the seed funding for Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) when the then Crown Prince visited Singapore."

Ambassador's, Ministers, visiting dignitaries and locals also from other faiths are regular visitors to the mosque and can at anytime spend time here in remembering the Almighty, have water, and also sometimes taxi drivers come here to rest between shifts, shared the Imam.

In times like these when world peace and harmony are being largely threatened by radicalism and wrong interpretations, Habib Hassan, receives guests on a regular basis, both local and international, believers or those from other faiths, and takes great pride in bringing them around and walking the talk, through his wise words and warm hospitality.

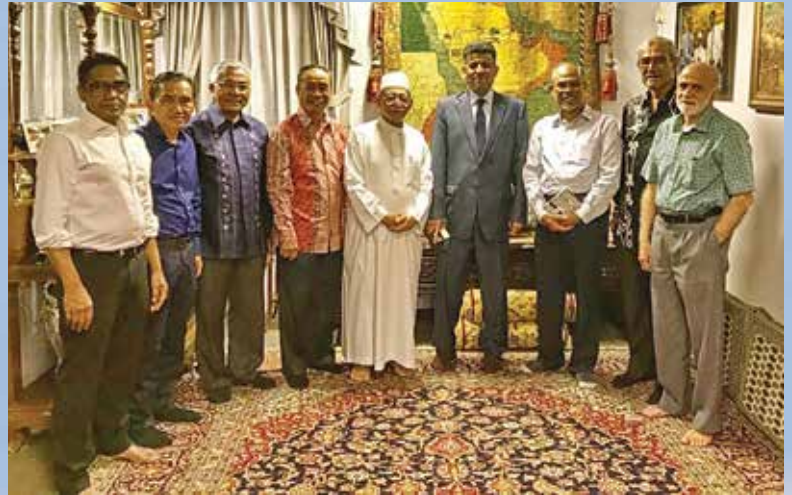
Always smiling, energetic and optimistic its little wonder in 2017, the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordan, placed Habib Hassan amongst the ranks of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world.







*Habib Hassan at home - hangs a 100-year old hand-woven carpet of the map of Saudi Arabia*



*(Above): A visit by Singapore civic leaders and the Saudi Ambassador to Habib Hassan's home. (Below): Apart from an impressive collection of Qurans from the past, there are also many historical memorabilia of Singapore on display at Ba'alwīe Mosque*



*Habib Hassan in the photo with Inter-Religious Organisation President Noor Marican and former US Ambassador David Adelman. (Below): Meeting His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Ibn Abdul Aziz Al-Saud*



*He is proud to have helped quickly organise an unprecedented joint statement of 122 groups of Muslim and non-Muslim organisations to condemn the tragic events of 9-11 and declared solidarity for a "multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious" society for Singapore*



*Ba'alwīe Mosque at Lewis Road - is the annual distribution centre for more than 20 tonnes of dates donated by Saudi Arabia for the month of Ramadan*



# CHARTING A NEW COURSE FOR WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION



*Dr Nora Mobammed AlMerri, (left) the pioneering woman member of the Shura Council with interviewer, Editor-in-Chief Mrs Nomita Dhar*



*“Women behind the wheels in Saudi Arabia”, made headlines around the world. For the first time in the history of Saudi Arabia. Singapore welcomed two women members of the Shura Council as part of a four-member Shura delegation headed by Dr Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, Chairman of the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We spoke to Dr. Nora Mohammed Al Merri (paediatrician and Dr Nuhad Mohammed Saeed (Arabic scholar) about the many aspects of their life in Saudi Arabia*



*(Above): Visiting Saudi Arabian Shura delegation meeting some of their Singapore parliamentary counterparts at the Parliament of Singapore  
(Source: Parliament of Singapore)*

#### **PLEASE** tell us something about the Shura Council.

Shura Council (consultation) is the Saudi Parliament and it serves as Saudi Arabia's formal advisory board. The Shura in Saudi Arabia has passed through several stages since the arrival of the late King Abdul - Aziz into Mecca in 1924.

The Shura is tasked to propose the draft laws which are then forwarded to the King. The Shura advises the King on policies, economic plans and international treaties and also examines annual reports. However, it is the King who has the ultimate power to pass or enforce the laws.

The members of the Shura are also appointed by the King and traditionally chosen from different Provinces in the Kingdom, they represent three groups – religious groups, the established bureaucracy and business groups. The chosen members are usually highly educated and regarded as experts in their field. It was only in 2011 that King Abdullah included women in the Shura Council.

#### **Please** share something about Saudi women.

Saudi women have all the basic rights. The basic right of education was given to them about 50 years ago. Many who took this opportunity to educate themselves have achieved a lot in the fields of education, medicine and even economics. They were able to achieve this due to quality education available in the country itself.

Socially women may have restrictions, but now things are changing. This being a sensitive issue, changes have to be implemented slowly to give ample time for society to accept the changes.

Today Saudi women travel and study abroad. About 1.2 Saudi students are studying abroad and almost half of them are women. Society too is almost ready to accept the new position of women in the Kingdom.

**What is it like for women to be members in the Shura?**

Saudi women were allowed to join the Council from 2013 as part of King Abdullah's plan to modernise the government and widen participation to all segments of Saudi Society. As of October 2017, women make up to 20 percent of the Assembly's total number. There are 29 women members in the Shura Council. They are very well educated with the majority of them equipped with doctorate degrees.

**How does the selection process work for the Shura Council for women members?**

The women members of the Council are appointed by the King. The members are well qualified and mostly have made some exceptional contribution to society in terms of social issues.

Saudi Arabia has 13 provinces and different tribes, so a fair representation is expected. The entry age is 30 years and all the members have to be university graduates. The members do not need to be from the Royal family.

**What is the seating arrangement for women members in the Council during the sessions?**

The women and men sit together, but on respective sides.

**How does it play out for Saudi men and women when it comes to rights and salaries?**

Women in Saudi Arabia have all the basic rights as men and there is no discrimination in salaries between men and women.

*St Regis Hotel's lobby interview venue also saw Dr Nora Mohammed coincidentally - but aptly - framed against William Zorach's sculpture of a mother and child titled "New Horizons"*



### Give us some insights into Saudi society please.

I, in my role as a practising doctor and a Shura member, am able to do justice to my commitments with good support from my husband. The maturity of Saudi men is reflected in them being supportive and proud of the achievements of the women in their lives - be it their wife, mother, sisters, daughter I am very happy that my husband is one of them.

I joined the Shura in 2006, as a consultant when King Abdullah wanted some women Advisors to join the council. I have great support from my family and in particular from my husband. I live about three hours from Riyadh, but I am able to keep my commitments as a practicing pediatrician and a Shura member, because of this excellent support at home.

### What are the learnings you can draw from Singapore?

We can develop ties on many levels, especially in the fields of Health,

education and water. Singapore has a proven track record for development. Saudi Arabia needs skilled manpower. Exchange of experience and co-operation in training are certainly areas of collaboration that can enhance our ties.

### What is the reaction to Saudi women driving?

As parliamentarians the matter was discussed by us and when the final decision was taken, you must understand, it did not happen overnight. Prior to the announcements policies were drafted and incorporating the do and don'ts and also provisions for protection of women on the road were made.

We had also factored in the time lapse between announcement and implementation, so as to give time to the society to accept the new change. So, the idea itself was accepted months ahead before the official announcement.

### How has Saudi society reacted to the use of Internet

You might be surprised to learn that Saudi Arabia has the highest percentage of internet users— yes, almost 9 million Saudis are using the internet. This has brought in tremendous amount of exposure. Also, don't forget, with many Saudi's studying abroad they bring in experiences and share them back home.

### What is the potential for Saudi women to be leaders and what are the opportunities available for them?

In Saudi Arabia have many highly educated women. Some are heads of Chambers of Commerce and professional organisations. Saudi women also get appointed to the boards of the municipality. Many doors have been open to us, especially in the recent years, we also have female diplomats representing the country

## WOMEN, CARS, TRUCKS AND MOTORCYCLES



Source: www.arabnews.com

As news of Saudi Arabia lifting the ban on women driving becomes old, the result of the move continues to be felt as work choices expand as the Kingdom's first woman taxi drivers take to the road in June. Women drivers are already joining the fleets of ride hailing apps such as Uber and its Middle Eastern variant called Careem. Careem is targeting to attract 100,000 women drivers. Saudi authorities have also allowed women to drive commercial vehicles, trucks and motorcycles.

The move to lift the ban has been described as a major step forward that allows Saudi Arabia to move towards a goal set by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to raise women's participation by 30% in the workforce by 2030.

Congratulations to the people and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their 88<sup>th</sup> National Day

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# TECHNOLOGY POWERING GROWTH TRAJECTORY

*The Saudi Arabian economy that has always been always associated with oil is now on the fast track, embracing technology for growth. With new-age engagements like Fintech, Hackathons, and startups, the Kingdom is not only in tune with global trends by coining new words like “Hajj Hackathons” but also setting new records. All this is a crucial part of the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 plan*

## Hajj Hackathon

An interesting word was coined this year – the Hajj Hackathon – and Saudi Arabia played host to this record-breaking event. The 36-hour Hackathon was held just ahead of one of the largest human collectives in Makkah.

Announced in Jeddah on August 1, with a largest number of Hackathon participants in the world, numbering 2,950, the Kingdom broke the Guinness world record. The Hackathon was dedicated to the sectors involved in the Hajj season, a peak period of activity in the Makkah region, that poses huge logistical challenges in terms of crowd management, public health, travel and accommodation.

“The Kingdom’s entry into the world records through the Hajj Hackathon confirms the aspirations of Saudi youth that their country be the gateway to technology in the region”, said, Saud Bin Abdullah al -Qahtani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Federation for Cybersecurity. Headquartered in Jeddah, the Digital assembly was supported by Google and it broke the 2012 Guinness world record of 2,577 participants held by India.

According to media reports Steve Wozniak, Apple co-founder, who was highly pleased with his involvement in this first of its kind project, said, “One of

the most powerful points of being here is to help the community, which as a country has one of the greatest missions - Hajj”. The Saudi Federation for cybersecurity, programming and drones had allocated over \$ 500,000 in prizes and funding for participants’ projects.

## Badir Programme

In line with Vision 2030, tech focus, start-ups powered by one of Saudi Arabia’s incubation programmes have raised \$3.1 million in Q 2 of 2018 - up 7.66 per cent from the previous quarter. The Badir Programme, an initiative by the King Abdulaziz City for science and technology, has been serving as an incubator for tech companies since 2008.

During the second quarter of 2018, the start-ups raised over US\$3 million, in addition to \$ 2.8 million raised during the previous quarter. Overall, the Badir Programme has 228 tech start-ups in the incubation programme. This significant investment reflects the kingdom’s priority in making Saudi Arabia a leading technology hub, best reflected by their ambitious NEOM project - the city of the future - with an economy revolving around a burgeoning technology sector. As the Vision 2030 Gains momentum, the Saudi economy embraces diversification and thereby harnesses the latest technological advancements.

## Saudi Women in Tech

Beyond just driving cars, Saudi women are learning the skills of tomorrow so as to drive the Kingdom’s female tech startup sector. Work is in progress on several fronts, some examples are at home and others overseas. For example, early this year, at Google’s community space in San Francisco, two companies held “Invested” - a business empowerment event specially geared to inspire the next generation of Saudi Female Tech Entrepreneurs.

The event supported Saudi students in achieving their dreams, by providing them with access to tools, networks and resource services. “Invested” hosted educational professional opportunities such as mentorship, networking, events and speakers. Within the Kingdom, more and more women are creating their own businesses, as new opportunities are presented to them through the Vision 2030 plan.

Emon Shakoar, a Saudi techpreneur is helping other women to actualize their dreams. She is the CEO and founder of Jeddah-based Blossom, the first Saudi accelerator dedicated to women’s startups in the Kingdom. “This year Saudi women are not only driving cars, they are also driving the economy and paving the way for Saudi Arabia’s future”, she says.

**“The Kingdom’s entry into the (Guinness) world records through the Hajj Hackathon confirms the aspirations of Saudi youth that their country be the gateway to technology in the region”**





## Tadawul Saudi Stock Exchange

It has a promising future, as Vision 2030 continues to attract foreign investment with a rising market value and a change in status.

Saudi Arabia's Tadawul stock exchange has continued to climb, and is projected to reach 10,000 points thanks to its new status as an MSCI Emerging market. Spurred on by Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 reforms, the number of foreign investments reached \$ 25.9 Billion, and the bourse's value has increased by seven per cent in the second quarter 2018.

Thanks to confidence in the Saudi stock market, Tadawul recently reached its highest index levels in years. This comes as the IMF raised its growth forecast

for the Kingdom, the third time since October 2017. Given all of this, the S and P Dow Jones plans to upgrade Tadawul to Emerging Markets

status, next year. This follows close on the heels of the same move by MSCI earlier this year.



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# SAUDI ARAMCO EXPANDS ITS DOWNSTREAM PRESENCE IN ASIA

*Saudi Aramco has stepped up its investment in Asia as the region remains dominant as the company's biggest market for its crude oil and chemical products*



(From left to right) Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Judaimi, Senior Vice President of Downstream, Saudi Aramco; Datuk Md Arif Mahmood, Executive Vice President & CEO, Downstream, Petronas; YBhg Tan Sri Wan Zulkiflee Wan Ariffin, President & Group CEO, Petronas; and Mr. Amin Nasser, President & CEO, Saudi Aramco at the brand launch of PRefChem in Pengerang, Johor, Malaysia

**SAUDI ARAMCO'S** approach to downstream integration, expansion and petrochemicals growth is underpinned by its unwavering commitment to technology and innovation, and developing world-class collaborative partnerships to advance cutting-edge science.

Saudi Aramco's downstream division continued to provide an engine for the company's growth and diversification, driving value across the hydrocarbon chain by expanding and integrating the company's portfolio and partnerships, and creating additional revenue streams.

In 2017, crude oil exports averaged 6.9 million bpd, and gross refining capacity was 4.9 million bpd.

Saudi Aramco has aggressively stepped up its investment in Asia in the recent

years as the region remains dominant as the company's biggest market for its crude oil and chemical products.

In Malaysia, Saudi Aramco executed the Share Purchase Agreements with Petronas to participate in a grassroots full conversion refinery and integrated chemical cracker located in Malaysia. The joint ventures include a 300,000 bpd refinery, three million tons per annum olefins capacity, downstream chemicals manufacturing units.

In May 2018, Saudi Aramco and Petronas launched the corporate identity for two joint ventures, namely Pengerang Refining Company Sdn Bhd (PRefChem Refining) and Pengerang Petrochemical Company Sdn Bhd (PRefChem Petrochemical), collectively known as "PRefChem".

Situated adjacent to Singapore, the refined trading products hub for Asia, this venture is an integral part of Saudi Aramco's refining and fuels marketing and chemicals business strategies and will help in strengthening the company's growth position in Southeast Asia through crude supply and world-scale downstream operations. The two ventures also closely align with Aramco's downstream strategy to invest in a global refining and petrochemicals system of world-scale manufacturing complexes in key regions with participated refining capacity of eight to 10 million barrels per day by 2030.

In China, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Norinco to build a 300,000 bpd capacity refinery and expand another in China.

In Indonesia, following the joint venture development agreement signed with Pertamina in 2016, Saudi Aramco has completed the basic engineering for the upgrade and expansion of the Cilacap Refinery in Central Java.

In April 2018, Saudi Aramco signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with "Ratnagiri Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd." (RRPCL), a consortium of Indian oil companies which includes The Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCI), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL),





*Mr. Khalid S. Halawani, Commercial Counsellor, Commercial Office, Far East & Pacific Region, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Kuala Lumpur (4th from the left); Mr. Nader Al-Arfaj, Managing Director, Aramco Asia Singapore (5th from the left); and YB. Ir. Dr. Mohd Shabreen Zainooreen Madros, CEO of MATRADE (5th from the right) along with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Embassy in Malaysia, Aramco and MATRADE representatives*

**Saudi Aramco also marked another two significant milestone in its international portfolio expansion with the opening of two new offices in New Delhi, India in 2017 and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this year, bringing the total number of Aramco offices to eight across Asia**

and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL), to jointly develop and build an integrated mega refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri, in the state of Maharashtra. The refinery will be capable of processing 1.2 million barrels of crude oil per day. It will produce a range of refined petroleum products, including gasoline and diesel, meeting BS-VI fuel efficiency norms.

During this period, Saudi Aramco also marked another two significant milestones in its international portfolio expansion with the opening of two new offices in New Delhi, India in 2017 and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this year, bringing the total number of Aramco offices to eight across Asia.

In 2018, Aramco also hosted its first Supplier Forum in Malaysia on 28 February to promote In Kingdom Total Value Add (IKTVA), and attract more contractors from South East Asia. The event was supported by Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA). The event was very well-received, with over 170 delegates from manufacturers and contractors in South East Asia participated at the event. The half-day event covered a wide range of topics, including the business opportunities with Aramco, how to be qualified and registered with Aramco as a supplier or contractor, and the IKTVA.

# ARAMCO TRADING INAUGURATES ITS FIRST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE IN SINGAPORE



*The inauguration marks ATC's global expansion to optimize its business and capture new markets*

Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Judaimi, Senior Vice President of Downstream, officiated the inauguration ceremony of Aramco Trading Singapore (ATS) along with Mr. Ahmed Al-Subaey, Vice President of Marketing, Sales & Supply Planning; Mr. Ibrahim Al-Buainain, President and CEO of Aramco Trading; Mr. Mohammed Al-Mulhim, Vice President, Supply and Trading of Aramco Trading; and Mr. Nader Al-Arfaj, then Managing Director of Aramco Trading Singapore

IN late 2017, Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Judaimi, Senior Vice President of Downstream, officiated the inauguration ceremony of Aramco Trading Singapore (ATS) along with Mr. Ahmed Al-Subaey, Vice President of Marketing, Sales & Supply Planning; Mr. Ibrahim Al-Buainain, President and CEO of Aramco Trading; Mr. Mohammed Al-Mulhim, Vice President, Supply and Trading of Aramco Trading; and Mr. Nader Al-Arfaj, then Managing Director of Aramco Trading Singapore.

"The expansion of Aramco Trading in Singapore is part of Aramco's strategy to optimize value across the whole oil and products chain, servicing our markets and customers as well as support Saudi Aramco's expanding refining operations and petrochemical output," said Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Judaimi.

Oil product demand in Asia Pacific has grown over the past decade to reach 32.6 million b/d in 2016 and Wood Mackenzie forecast it will continue to grow based on an average GDP growth of 3.7% between 2016 and 2035. Demand will reach about 41 million b/d in 2035. China and India is forecast to account for over 75%, or

7 million b/d, of the demand growth in Asia Pacific.

According to Wood MacKenzie, cumulatively, demand from the Southeast Asian economies is forecast to increase by 2.3 million b/d between 2015 and 2035. Transport fuel demand will be the main driver of oil demand growth, accounting for around 66% of overall demand increase. The petrochemicals sector will also be a significant contributor to regional oil demand.

"The opening of Aramco Trading's first office outside of Saudi Arabia is testament to the tremendous growth opportunities we see in Asia and reinforces our commitment to this region," said Mr. Ahmed Al-Subaey.

Currently the largest physical oil trading hub and price discovery centre in Asia, Singapore also has the largest concentration of oil storage in Asia, with 10 million m3 of independent oil storage capacity. Home to over 80% of the top 30 oil & gas companies, Singapore owns the world's largest bunkering port.

"Proximity to our key markets is vital and the Singapore office will enable us to better penetrate the markets in Asia," said Mr. Ibrahim Al-Buainain, "We are now

expanding our manpower and looking to start non-Arabian crude oil trading to improve the supply efficiency to refineries and increase margins."

Saudi Aramco Trading Singapore was registered in late 2015 and renamed Aramco Trading Singapore in April this year. With a current staff strength of over 20, Aramco Trading Singapore is still recruiting for various positions to increase its staff strength to over 30 in the next few months. Aramco Trading Singapore started trading activities in Singapore in July 2018.

Saudi Aramco Products Trading Company (Aramco Trading Company, ATC, or Aramco Trading) was established in October 2010, as a wholly owned subsidiary of Saudi Aramco that trades refined, liquid chemical and polymer products. Officially launched in January 2012, Aramco Trading is the global integrated platform for Saudi Aramco's downstream assets, as well as for our international partners. Aramco Trading is a key player in the region, supplying to Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Indian subcontinent.





**“The opening of Aramco Trading’s first office outside of Saudi Arabia is testament to the tremendous growth opportunities we see in Asia and reinforces our commitment to this region”**

## HOW ARAMCO CONNECTS WITH COMMUNITIES

*Supporting the communities in which Aramco operates is fundamental to its success*



*Universiti Kuala Lumpur –Malaysia France Institute undergraduate team with Aramco Asia management.*

**I**N addition to supporting communities in Saudi Arabia, Saudi Aramco also seek to contribute meaningful assistance to the communities that host its offices and operations around the world.

In Asia, Saudi Aramco brings the youths in Asia Pacific region together to develop innovative solutions to promote sustainability.

Last November, the regional winners of the “Aramco Asia Energy Cup” - qualifiers from China, Singapore, Malaysia,

the Philippines, and South Korea — gathered for a key event in the Chinese capital of Beijing for the final contest after one year of intense competition, careful selection, and evaluation of the researchers’ innovative projects.

The Aramco Asia Energy Cup is designed to help university students in five Asian countries including China, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and the Philippines develop innovative solutions that address issues related to climate change, environmental sustainability and energy efficiency in their communities.

### **Final Contest**

The final contest attracted more than 150 graduate students, academic advisers, and industry experts, with Aramco Asia management acting as judges and observers at the event.

The North China Electric Power University (Baoding) undergraduate team won the top award of the Asia-Pacific competition with its creative design of a biogas photovoltaic

complementary power generation system that helped farmers save electricity.

The team from Universiti Kuala Lumpur – Malaysia France Institute was awarded first runner-up for their invention of the “Multi-Purpose Air-Conditioner” or MPAC that helps to recycle heat to generate energy thus reducing dependency on fossil fuel.

Funded through Saudi Aramco’s 2017 annual donation to the Asia-Pacific region, this innovative program was jointly developed and carried out by Aramco Asia and Enactus — a nonprofit organization.



# TOURISM A KEY DRIVER OF ECONOMY

*Reimagined tourism sector to serve as one of the key drivers of the Saudi economy. Comprising 13 regions the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia offers visitors some of the choicest holiday experiences served by its fabulous geo-cultural landscape*

**IN** 2017, Saudi Arabia received over 18 million tourists, collectively spending over \$26.1 billion in the Kingdom. Around \$20 billion were spent in the restaurant industry alone. Over 100,000 new positions are being created in the hospitality, catering and trade sectors, to target both expatriates and locals. The tourism sector has been restructured to serve as a key driver of the Saudi Economy. KSA's Vision 2030 aims to double the number of UNESCO World Heritage sites listed within the Kingdom. Within the framework of this new agenda, tourism capacity is projected to increase to 30 million visitors per year. Here is an inviting selection of the Kingdom's leading tourist spots

## OASIS OF AL - AHSA

Located in the eastern Arabian Peninsula, lies one of the Kingdom's most precious geocultural treasures from antiquity. This is the Al-Ahsa Oasis— a serial property comprising gardens, canals, springs, wells and a drainage lake, as well as historical buildings, urban fabric and archaeological sites. They represent traces of continued human settlement in the Gulf region from the Neolithic to the present, as can be seen from remaining historic fortresses, mosques, wells, canals and other water management systems.



(Top & above): Oasis of Al-Ahsa

With its 2.5 million date palms, Al-Ahsa is the largest oasis in the world. The site is also a unique geocultural landscape and an exceptional example of human interaction with the environment.

Al Ghat village or the Wadi Hanifah, a spectacular natural site in the Riyadh region. Go dune bashing (Tat'eess) on the golden sands, ride an Arabian horse, join a camel caravan or climb the Tuwaiq mountain.



## RIYADH

The modern metropolis is an exciting mélange of the past and present beautifully revealed in its many pursuits be it in business, shopping, culture and entertainment or the stream of events and festivals held throughout the year. Travel through time and discover the most beautiful heritage and cultural sites, be it the UNESCO-acclaimed World Heritage Site of historical Dir'iyah or the



(Above left): Riyadh by night. (Above): Diriyah, a historic town





*A glimpse of 'Old Jeddah'*

## MAKKAH

A jewel of religious significance with its important holy sites, it's a melting pot of cultural diversity. Al-Noor Mountain and the Cave, recount the history of human life while the Museum of the Two Holy Mosques is an eye-opener

for history, heritage and spiritual significance.

## JEDDAH

The Bride of the Red Sea serves up a beautiful experience of the sun and sea, shopping delights and cultural

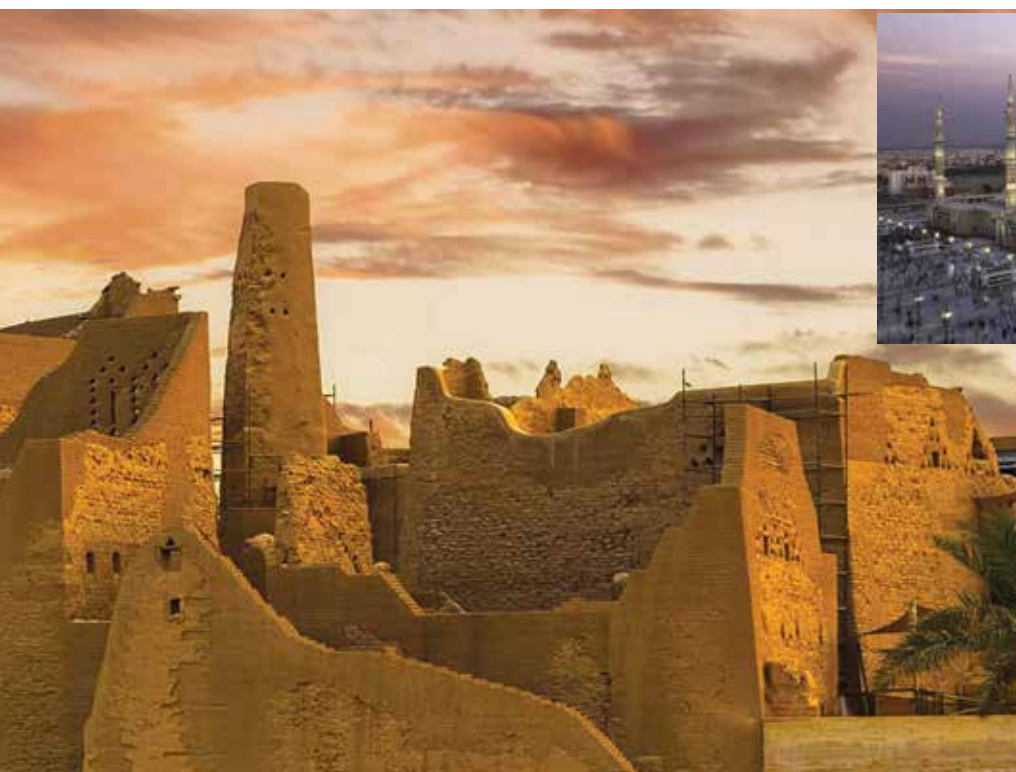
diversity. The Corniche extends 35 km along the city beach and features a range of restaurants and recreational areas. To enjoy swimming, you can head to North Ubhur to spend a wonderful time on the smooth sandy beach. Check out the Bedouin Market and Al-Otaibah Market for local experiences.

## MADINA

Home to some of Islam's most potent spiritual landmarks, it also abounds with historical battle sites and landmarks and engaging architectural traditions. Do visit the famous pre-Islamic site of Mada'en Saleh (Al Hijr) which is a bewildering mass of huge rock cut tombs and designs. It is the most important settlement of the Nabataeans, and is second only to Petra in Jordan. Also take in the Hejaz railway



*Makkah*



*in Saudi Arabia located on the north-western outskirts of the Saudi capital, Riyadh*



*The Prophet's Mosque in Madina*

to learn about the trade routes that were used in ancient times. Yanbu City is considered one of the best areas in the world for scuba diving enthusiasts, as it overlooks the Red Sea which is rich in vibrant corals reefs and sea life.

*Pictures courtesy of  
Saudi Tourism*



### DAMMAM

Regional capital of the eastern region of Saudi Arabia it is popular for its beautiful beaches and excellent fishing spots. The most popular beach is Half Moon Bay. King Fahd Park is scattered with cafes, swimming pools, fountains and green spaces. Dive centers organize cruise programs that include fishing and diving in several tourist areas, such as Jana, Jarid and Karan Kareen Island as well as visiting ship wrecks at Half Moon Bay and the wreckage of sunken ships near the port of Dammam, Khobar and Al Qatif.

### HA'IL

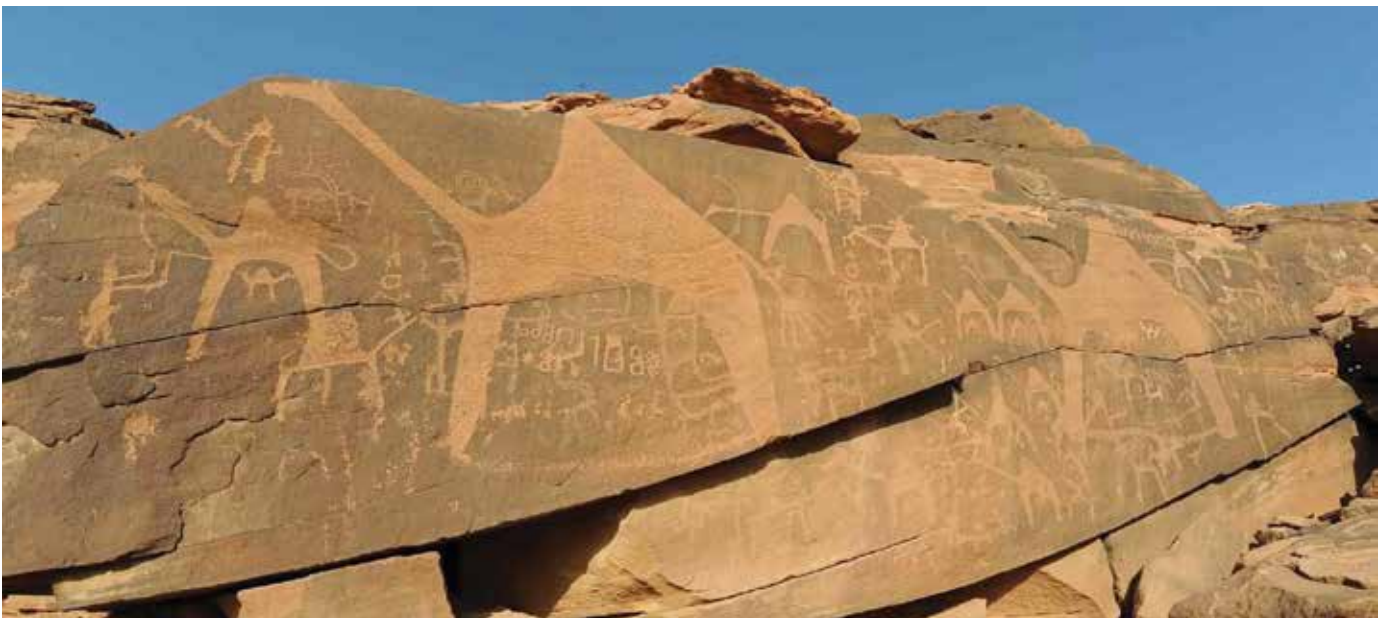
Here you will encounter an ancient civilization that thrived vigorously and was documented vividly in its monuments, heritage, ancient culture and Arabic traditions of the local population. This is where the much-acclaimed poet Hatem Al-Ta'i hailed from. Adventure buffs can enjoy desert sports like sand boarding and dune bashing, mountain climbs in the Nafud Al Kabir, bird watching and even the thrilling Hail International Rally. Amongst its numerous archaeological sites are Jubbah and Ha't, famed for rock drawings and ancient inscriptions. Catchy melodies are played on the rabab by the local Bedouins during the dance performances.



*Dammam*



*Ha'il City*



*Ancient inscriptions at archaeological site at Ha'il*





***The tourism sector has been restructured to serve as a key driver of the Saudi Economy. KSA's Vision 2030 aims to double the number of UNESCO World Heritage sites listed within the Kingdom***

**OKHDOOD**

The City of Okhdood is among the richest ancient sites in the Arabian Peninsula and the most important cultural tourism and historical landmark in Najran, famed as it is for rock carvings and inscriptions dating back more than 1,750 years.



*Okhdood*

For more information visit:  
[www.sauditourism.sa](http://www.sauditourism.sa)



*An Okhdood ancient site in the Najran region*



# CROWN PRINCE CAMEL FESTIVAL

*Even as Saudi Arabia undergoes significant reforms, led by HRH Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's Vision 2030 plan, the Kingdom remains true to its centuries-old traditions including that of camel racing*

**NOW** Saudi Arabia has added a new camel festival to its diary! The Crown Prince Camel Festival in Taif, under the patronage of Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has thousands of camels competing in the hope of winning millions in prize money for special breeds, good looks and speed.

For over 30 days in August and September, business leaders, politicians and camel enthusiasts flock to one of the Middle East's largest displays of the finest camels in Saudi Arabia and the world. Camels compete in more than 700 racing rounds and beauty competitions, putting the festival firmly on top of the annual fixtures to celebrate Saudi culture, sport and the value of the camel. Early inhabitants of the Arabian desert relied on camels for milk, meat, leather and transport. They were also part of the battleground due to their agility and speed. Camels can reach up to 40 miles an hour in short sprints and can run at 20 miles an hour for more than an hour without rest.



مهرجان ولي العهد للهجن  
Crown Prince Camel Festival



Sheikh Hamdan, Crown Prince of Dubai (far left), speaks with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman in Riyadh at the King Abdulaziz Camel Festival in February 2018. He hailed the role played by Saudi Arabia to promote the Arab and Islamic culture through sports and heritage activities (Source: [www.thenational.ae](http://www.thenational.ae) / Wam)







السعودية  
SAUDIA



الله أكبر  
الأمم المتحدة

SAUDIA congratulates the Saudi government  
and its noble citizens on the occasion  
of the 88th Saudi National Day  
and wishes them prosperity and glory





# celebrating a nation with an ambitious vision

Aramco—in collaboration with Aramco Asia Singapore and Aramco Trading Singapore—congratulates the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on its 88th National Day. We honor the new Saudi Arabia as a country where every individual is an agent of change, invested in a future of promise and prosperity.

Aramco is a dedicated advocate for people's energy, and a believer in its power to make a positive impact on a global scale. We extend our deep appreciation to the Kingdom on this occasion for its continued support.

