SPECIAL EDITION

SAUDI ARABIA-

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Saudi Arabia & Singapore Partners in Progress























SPECIAL FAREWELL ISSUE H.E. Saad Saleh Al Saleh

مع السلامة Ma Salāma



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Saudi Aral

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AT THE HELM



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



King Salman
bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
The Custodian of the
Two Holy Mosques



H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud The Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Main Highlight: Saudi Arabia's economic performance in the first quarter of the year highlighted one important theme: economic diversification. The ambitious economic reform agenda followed by the Kingdom to move away from oil dependency started to bear fruit as the non-oil economy showed a strong annual rebound to 2.9% growth. Although the overall GDP declined by 3% during the first quarter due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, consumer sentiment was on the positive side as POS transactions reached a record \$10.9 billion in value in March and a 64.7% year-on-year growth.

Source:



investsaudi.sa

KSA Issues Highest Number of Foreign Investor Licences in a Single Quarter

In the face of the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA) reported in August that more foreign investor licenses were issued during Q1 2021 than during any previous Quarter since Saudi records began in 2005, as the Kingdom's investment recovery accelerates

he issuance of 478 new licenses breaks the previous record, set as recently as Q4 2020, and marks a 2.6% quarterly increase. The first quarter of 2021 also recorded the fourth consecutive increase in the number of new foreign investment projects since the peak of the pandemic in Q2 2020, indicating a continued rebound in FDI (Foreign Direct Investment).

The Kingdom, a G20 nation, is seeking to diversify its economy. The latest figures show that 114 new licenses issued in Q1 2021 were for the manufacturing sector. Data from the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources show that US\$4.7bn worth of industrial investments were made in the first quarter of 2021, more than four times higher than the same quarter in 2020.

This was followed by brisk activity in retail and e-commerce (78 licenses), construction (78 licenses), professional and scientific (62 licenses) and ICT (41 licenses). These sectors accounted for a significant proportion of growth.

Following a 2018 reform in the Kingdom that allowed 100% foreign ownership of companies for the first time; 59% of new investment projects in Q1 2021 had full foreign ownership, with the remainder being joint ventures with local investors.

Reforms profiled include "Shareek", part of a \$7.2 trillion investment program designed to provide solid support for the Saudi economy via financial, monetary, and regulatory means, as well as through asset investment over the next 10 years. As well as the "Made in Saudi" program to strengthen the private sector's resilience and contribution to GDP,

and the Private Sector Participation Law to accelerate private sector participation in infrastructure projects and the privatization of public sector assets.

Eng. Khalid Al-Falih, Minister of Investment of KSA, said: "These latest figures show that, despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy, foreign investors continue to have great confidence in Saudi Arabia's historic transformation journey under the guidance of Vision 2030. FDI inflow into Saudi Arabia is at its highest level since 2016 when Vision 2030 was launched, and global interest in Saudi financial assets traded on our Tadawul stock exchange continues to grow".

"Our goals are ambitious, but we are making progress at an accelerated pace to make it easier and quicker for international businesses of all sizes to access opportunities, opening up a wide and diverse range of economic sectors. So I am particularly delighted to see such a big increase in manufacturing, evidence that investors are looking beyond oil to other Saudi sectors like construction, retail and e-commerce, professional and scientific services, and ICT."

The report's findings correspond with trends indicated by UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2021, published in June, which noted that FDI in Saudi Arabia remained robust, with inflows increasing to \$5.5 billion and investments concentrating in financial services, retail, e-commerce and ICT.

The report also details recent progress made by Saudi Arabia to ensure that investors in its health sector are supported by appropriate regulatory frameworks for sustainable growth, digitization, and increased efficiency.

Saudi Arabia-Singapore Ties Establish Significant Milestones

ver the past few years the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and city-state of Singapore have upped the ante in cementing their relations on many fronts, even in the times of the pandemic.

Singapore and Saudi Arabia have enjoyed warm and close bilateral relations ever since diplomatic ties were established between the two nations in 1977. In the intervening period this relationship has grown quite significantly with a spurt in high-level visits on both sides and people-to-people exchanges. With political ties getting even stronger, the economic relations too have become more robust over time.

Saudi Arabia is Singapore's largest trading partner in the Middle East and Singapore is one of the major destinations for Saudi non-oil industrial products, the volume of which will likely grow as a result of the GSFTA.

In 2019 Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies, Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited Saudi Arabia in January 2019 to discuss bilateral ties with HRH Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman. During his second visit, which was in the month of July, he met Saudi ministers and senior bankers and officials hosted by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority. SM Tharman's visits to the Kingdom have capitalized on the warm and longstanding relationship between both countries.

A new milestone was reached in the history of diplomatic relations between the two nations, in November of 2019, with the first ever State Visit by a Singapore's Head of State to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the first by a Singapore President, President Halimah Yacob officially visited Saudi Arabia from 5th to 85th November 2019. The timing of her visit was of particular note as the Saudi economy and social structure was undergoing significant transformation, spurred on by the Kingdom's Vision 2030 national development plans, which was launched by the Crown Prince in 2016.

Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Singapore, H.E. Saad Saleh Al-Saleh at the time spoke of how the relations between the KSA and the Republic were witnessing growth and development in all fields. He further shared that the continuous visits between the leaderships and officials of the two countries reflect their keenness to achieve progress in bilateral relations.

During the course of her State visit HE Mdm Halimah Yacob highlighted the growing strength of the ties between Saudi Arabia and Singapore. The President not only had the privilege to meet with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz, she was delighted to be conferred the King Abdulaziz Medal in appreciation of the relations between the two countries by His Majesty.



The year 2020 was a pivotal year for Saudi Arabia. It was the first country in the Middle East to host a G20 Summit, putting the Kingdom's economy in the spotlight on the global stage. Through its presidency of the G20, Saudi Arabia has also provided a number of initiatives to address the pandemic and held several virtual meetings to come up with quick solutions that respond to this crisis.

HE Saad Saleh Al-Saleh was also pleased to present the formal G20 invitation to Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong last year. The invitation to Singapore to participate in the G20 2020 meetings underpins the growing distinguished relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Singapore. As a guest country in the G20 meetings 2020, Singapore actively participated in the

group's meetings and put forward many initiatives to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saudi-Singapore relations continue to shine, underscored by an economic synergy that is destined to be only more robust thanks to the GSFTA and the continued appeal of Singapore as a base of operations for Saudi firms seeking an entry in the Asia-Pacific markets.

Capitalizing on the Kingdom's eastward push – over 50 leading Saudi companies, including Saudi Aramco, SABIC and financial institutions, have their regional offices in Singapore, seeking mostly to advantage on the city-state's strategic position at the heart of the Asia-Pacific market, its experience with Islamic banking, highly efficient logistical capacities, as well as its friendly business environment.

It has been an honour for all of us at Sun Media to have worked with Ambassador Saad in these past few years. We bid him best wishes and bon voyage as he moves on to his next assignment. His Excellency's last few years at the Saudi Arabia Embassy have been filled with fulfilling moments, which have further strengthened the relations between the two countries. At the same time his tenure here has seen some of the most challenging times, thanks to the COVID pandemic. Though it has been a challenge to ensure the safety and repatriation of the Saudi diaspora, and providing them with free hotel accommodation during quarantines, the Ambassador has also transformed this joint effort with Singapore to repel the worst of the pandemic's impact on all fronts, into an exercise that has brought the two nations together even closer still.

The future of Saudi-Singapore relations is bright, underpinned as it is by an economic synergy that will only move from strength to strength.



- A Visionary Transformation

operating in the entertainment sector to reach more than 1,000 companies. More than 100,000 jobs were created by the end of 2020. Major projects were launched to contribute to the well-being of society, provide jobs and attract global investments, the most important of which are:





(Top): President Halimah with King Salman on her State Visit to KSA. There were also many other high level bilateral visits (above) Singapore Minister of Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam and KSA Minister of Interior Prince Abdulaziz

NEOM, Qiddiya, Red Sea projects, and other upcoming projects. An "electronic tourist visa" was also launched, which can be obtained within minutes, facilitating visiting tourist places in the Kingdom, the development of many tourist destinations, and the generation of job opportunities, which made the tourism sector in the Kingdom the fastest growing in the world.

Humanity today has come together like never before; how do you think the challenges posed by COVID have changed us all?

There is no doubt that COVID-19 pandemic was the most difficult situation humanity has faced in decades, in which the world suffered from the worst health crisis ever; the pandemic, which brought fundamental transformations in all fields, raised anxiety and fear around the world,

forcing many countries to return to the policies of complete and partial closures to confront the pandemic. This led to social distancing and the interruption of social contacts, whether between the families and relatives, schools and universities or in the workplaces

due to precautionary measures implemented to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

Would you like to share the highlights of your tenure in Singapore?

During my tenure in Singapore, the bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Singapore witnessed many prominent milestones, the most important of which was the historic visit of the President of the Republic of Singapore Mdm Halimah Yacob where she met in Riyadh, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdul-Ziz Al-Saud, who conferred her the King Abdulaziz Medal in appreciation of her Excellency and the distinguished relations between the Kingdom and Singapore. After



"Vision 2030 was introduced and launched in 2016 by the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, to achieve many of its goals on several levels, most notably improving government services, raising the percentage of ownership in the housing sector, developing the entertainment, sports and tourism sectors, attracting many foreign investments, in addition to empowering women and activating their role in the society and lahour market"



An annual tradition - the Gift of Dates to civil, welfare and religious organisations in Singapore

that visit both countries agreed to establish a Saudi Arabia- Singapore joint committee to increase cooperation in all fields, and also The Saudi-Singaporean Parliamentary Friendship Committee. There was also the visit of His Excellency Senior Minister Mr. Tharman Shanmugratnam to the Kingdom in January 2019, during which he met His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. Also, His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef, Minister of the Interior visited Singapore and met Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Singapore and Minister of Home Affairs and Law Mr. K. Shanmugam. The Chairman of Saudi Shura Council Dr. Abdullah Al-Sheikh has visited Singapore in 2018 and met Her Excellency the President and his Singaporean counterpart Mr. Tan Chuan-Jin the Speaker of the Parliament.

Beside all of these important visits, there were many visits by other delegations from both countries aiming to increase ties between the two countries. In the course of its G20 2020 presidency, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invited Singapore to the G20 meetings.

Which are areas of cooperation that still

need more attention and have growth potential in the future?

Cooperation between the Kingdom and Singapore is growing steadily and we are working to strengthen that cooperation in all fields to reach the level that achieves the interests of the two countries and the aspirations of their leaderships.

When the sky's open and people resume travel for Hajj and Umra, how does the Saudi Government plan to meet the pent up demand?

Most of the Muslims in the world are looking forward to the return of life to its normal in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which did not enable them to visit the holy sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whether for Umrah or Hajj. The Kingdom has a duty to protect those who visit these holy sites and always seeks to provide the best services for them to spend their time in peace and comfort.

What was your experience at our little red dot, what learnings would you like to take back to Saudi Arabia and the next post?

My family and I had a great time in Singapore and got to know its friendly people. We have seen Singapore as a small and beautiful country that is always looking to the future with great services and a great advanced health and education system.

What are your favorite places in Singapore and what are the places Singaporeans should keep in their list that deserve to be visited?

Singapore has many beautiful places to visit, like Gardens by the Bay, Botanic Gardens, Marina Bay Sands, Orchard Road, Clarke Quay and Sentosa Island.

Tell us about the annual tradition of the Gift of Dates. How has it contributed towards increasing the sweetness in ties?

Gift of Dates is a tradition that the Embassy has maintained for a long time, because Saudi dates have wonderful taste and people here love to have them, especially the Muslims. The date is a healthy fruit and it is also associated with the rituals of the holy month of Ramadan.

What message would you like to convey to those who you worked with and met?

I had a wonderful team throughout my work in Singapore and I would like to thank them very much for their cooperation and hard work, which contributed to the Embassy's performance in an outstanding manner.

I also extend my thanks and appreciation to everyone I met in Singapore and with whom I formed a wonderful friendship that I hope will last for a long time.

It has been our privilege to work with you, we value your support. Where are you heading to, and what are the special memories you will carry with you?

I would like to thank you Ms. Nomita and your team at Sun Media. We have always been happy with your ideas and contributions to the media work of the Embassy. Your contributions to the media coverage of the various Embassy's events have had a significant positive impact and we highly appreciate your hard work.

Our Appreciation and Gratitude for Your Valuable Contribution Developing Singapore and Saudi Arabia Relations





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FAREWELL MESSAGES

مع السلامة Ma Salāma





E Saad Saleh I Alsaleh arrived in Singapore as an Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Singapore four years ago. He has been very active and has a very friendly personality. He adjusted very quickly in the community and in the country. So, he made many friends among the diplomatic corp as well as in the Singaporean community. He was very active and quick.

Ambassador Saad, is also very generous. He frequently invited us to his house or we would meet outside also. We

were very close with him, specially the Arab group. We had frequent meetings.

During the G20 Chairmanship of Saudi Arabia, Ambassador became even more active and he held many events. He arranged many activities and was very distinguished in his work. Unfortunately, when COVID started, it was a big setback for the whole diplomatic community. Social interactions and the normal social life all got disrupted. Even though we tried our best to have frequent meetings and to keep the regular work but the Covid situation, it was bigger than that. Yet we have a lot of meetings with him and he was always supporting us.

During his tenure the Ambassador brought Singapore - Saudi Arabia relationship to greater heights. I think he did a lot of work to strengthen that and to maintain it.

So, we wish him all the best for his next assignment in Poland. I am sure that he will leave the same fingerprint that he left here and I am sure that he will have a lot of friends and a good relation with the community because of his experience here with us here in Singapore. He is really a great man and a great friend and we love him a lot and we will miss him. Thank you.

H.E. Yaqoub Yousef Alsanad Ambassador of Kuwait to Singapore





Your Excellency Saad Saleh Al Saleh, despite the short time I managed to work with you to serve our beloved countries and to strengthen the relationship and cooperation between the GCC and the Republic of Singapore, the knowledge and experiences of your excellency was a great inspiration for me, and our good memories will always speak for our true friendship wherever we go.

Your Excellency, when time grants us a good and genuine brother like yourself, it's not easy to part. They say whatever has a beginning has an end, but I say the great impact you leave in our souls will make our friendship last a lifetime.

May Almighty God grant you success in all your future endeavours.

H.E. Jamal Al Suwaidi
Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Singapore



n behalf of the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS), I wish to express my deepest appreciation to His Excellency Saad Saleh Al Saleh for his distinguished service as Ambassador in Singapore.

Under His Excellency's strong leadership, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Singapore has further developed stronger working relationship with Muis in a range of areas.

I have enjoyed working with HE Ambassador to strengthen our institutional relations which resulted in significant progress. I would like to commend His Excellency's exceptional efforts and ardent support to ensure the smooth administration of Hajj in the past years.

Allow me to extend my appreciation for Ambassador's support for the work that Muis does. I am confident HE has left a legacy that laid the basis for more partnerships to develop in future.

His Excellency's contributions are widely appreciated and will be remembered by the Muslim community in Singapore. I wish Ambassador Saad Saleh Al Saleh all the best in his next important ambassadorial posting.

Mohammad Alami Musa

President of MUIS (Islamic Religious Council of Singapore)

"I have enjoyed working with HE
Ambassador to strengthen our institutional
relations which resulted in significant
progress. I would like to commend His
Excellency's exceptional efforts and ardent
support to ensure the smooth administration
of Hajj in the past years."



is Excellency Ambassador H E Saad Saleh Al - Saleh, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Singapore has shown great support and understanding to the needs of the Muslim community in Singapore. His Excellency facilitated and paved the way for a smooth journey of our pilgrims to the Holy Land. In many cases, sometimes away from the public eye, His Excellency would accommodate requests from our community especially in fulfilling the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. His Excellency was also proactive in providing supplies such as dates from Saudi Arabia for distribution to the Muslim community here during the holy month of Ramadan. Apart from these efforts, His Excellency was constantly exploring ways in which the ties between the two countries could be strengthened. His Excellency paid special attention to the development of the younger generation. His Excellency for example explored student exchange programs and also opportunities for young Saudi students to study here in Singapore. In all these efforts, His Excellency was mindful of the need to bring the two countries closer in areas of mutual interest. His Excellency constant support for the Muslim community here and his pleasant demeanour and mannerisms have endeared him in the hearts of Singaporeans. We will miss him and wish him well.

Prof Yaacob Ibrahim

Former Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs Republic of Singapore.



have the pleasure of calling His Excellency Saad Saleh Al Saleh a dear friend. His Excellency Saad has represented Saudi Arabia with a charming combination of skill and class. I have learnt a lot from my conversations with him. He is always sharp and perceptive.

His Excellency Saad spoke with passion on Saudi Arabia's Vison 2030 and the amazing positive transformation taking place in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East. His tireless efforts to further Saudi-Singapore ties have been admirable.

But most of all, I remember His Excellency Saad for his personal warmth and kindness. I deeply appreciate his thoughtful personal messages of care and concern during my Hajj pilgrimage in 2019. His Excellency Saad serves with his heart.

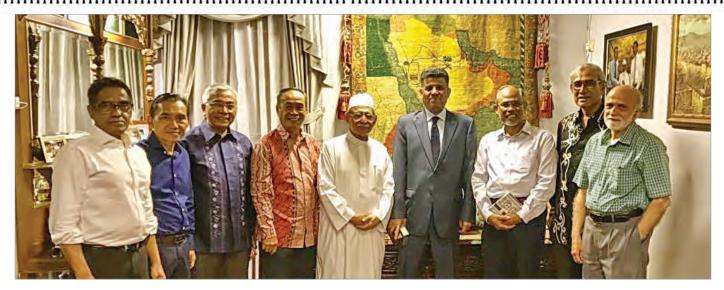
I wish His Excellency Saad continued success and good health. It is my good fortune to count him as my friend.

Amrin Amin

Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Member of Parliament (Sembawang GRC) 2015-2020



"...most of all, I remember His Excellency Saad for his personal warmth and kindness. I deeply appreciate his thoughtful personal messages of care and concern during my Hajj pilgrimage in 2019. His Excellency Saad serves with his heart."



"He has made a great contribution doing his very best to bring to the people the real and peaceful teachings of Islam and also contributed to the promotion of inter-religious harmony here."

mbassador has a very warm and sociable personality. In his time here, the bilateral ties and regular people-to-people ties between the two countries have been raised to a much higher level. He was seen in all the important functions. He has worked so extensively that during his time, the Singapore's Head of State visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and that was the first by a Singapore President in the history of diplomatic relations between both countries which witnessed growth and development in all fields.

He has made a great contribution doing his very best to bring to the people the real and peaceful teachings of Islam and also contributed to the promotion of inter-religious harmony here. He was very kind and generous and held different events and brought new developments in his cultural mission. Due to his generosity the donation of dates has also tremendously increased. He handled the relationship between the community at the highest level very professionally. He was a significant personality. Singapore will miss him. We wish him a very fruitful tenure. Thank you.

Habib Hassan Al-Attas

The Iman of Ba'alwie Mosque and Council Member of the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) in Singapore

ot long after Mr Saad Al Saleh became Saudi's ambassador to Singapore, I had the opportunity to meet him briefly at an event. Therefore, I was pleasantly surprised that soon after, Mr Saad contacted my office, saying he would want to come over for a visit. That was the start of our warmth friendship. Of course, sharing the same name, helps too!

Mr Saad is known to many as a warm and friendly person, and he can relate to people at all levels. He certainly has made many friends in Singapore, always ready to give his time to groups who wanted to seek his advice and help on Saudi matters. Those I spoke to shared similar positive sentiments about Mr Saad. With his experience as a diplomat, Mr Saad is an excellent representative of Saudi in Singapore, and has contributed well in enhancing ties between Saudi and Singapore. Mr Saad will be missed. I wish him all the very best.

Saat A. Rahman Editor, Berita Harian



elations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Singapore are most important and go a long way. It has been strengthened all the way by both the Ambassadors assigned to both countries. H.E. Ambassador Saad Al Saad has played an important role to further strengthen relations between the two countries. This was especially so when HE Amb Saad helped ensure a most successful official visit by Her Excellency President Halimah Yacob to Saudi Arabia in November 2019.

HE Amb Saad had always showed personal interest not only in ensuring that all arrangements for the traditional Hajj and Umrah were in good hands but also to look for opportunities to broaden areas of cooperation, in particular in economic and business developments. We wish HE Amb Saad All the Best in his future undertakings, and to stay in touch with the many friends he now has in Singapore. May the lasting friendship His Excellency has forged with Singapore and Singaporeans remain strong. Jazakallah Khairan.



Singapore's Non-Resident Ambassador to Kuwait, Adjunct Professor, Nanyang Technological University and Former Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs





From the first time we met, I have found Saudi Ambassador Saad Al Saleh to be a man of his word, a kind, compassionate and intelligent human being, someone who is so easy to like and whom I am privileged to call friend.

Saad assumed his Ambassadorial post at the right time in June 2017, the 40th anniversary of Saudi-Singapore diplomatic relations. Apart from high-level visits and economic ties, Saad has worked tirelessly to broaden the areas of cooperation in healthcare, education, tourism and other sectors, as well as facilitate Haj and Umrah visas for Singapore's many Muslims.

The last time I met Saad was at his residence late last March, when he hosted lunch for a small group. I stayed on to have a pleasant chat about what Saad would like to do before leaving. We made plans to meet up again, but alas, the latest endemic restrictions means that I will not see him before his departure. Hence, I want to take this opportunity to wish him and his wonderful wife Nadia, "Bon voyage, safe travel and the very best in all your future endeavours!"

Lawrence Anderson

Singapore Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2013-19



Saudi Arabia & Singapore Partners in Progress

In the last four years a tremendous number of milestones have been established by both countries that have seen progress made in trade and bilateral relations. Much of the hard work and successes were helped by developing closer relations in the area of people-to-people ties.

Following are some of the highlights of the journey and achievements made since 2017

2017

"Many Leaps Forward..."

mbassador Saad Saleh Al Saleh joined the Royal Saudi Arabian Embassy in Singapore during an especially auspicious year. In 2017 marked two significant events in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's relations with Singapore. In September apart from celebrating the 87th Saudi Arabian National Day, it also marked the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the Kingdom. According to the Ambassador: "The time has come to think of many leaps forward for bilateral relations." Highlights of the 'jumps' taken by both nations include greater engagement in security, Hajj matters, water resources, environment and education.

HH Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al-Saud Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with Singapore's Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balkrishnan at the Shangri La Dialogue 2017

2 Saudi Arabia particpates in the Shangri La Dialogue with HH Prince Faisal

3 HE Ambassador Saad Saleh Al Saleh with Singapore's then President Tony Tan Keng







Yam at the Presentation of Credentials ceremony on 1st June 2017 at the Istana

Then Singapore's Minister for Communications and Information, Minister-in-charge of Cyber Security and Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs Minister Yaacob Ibrahim with Saudi Minister for Hajj and Umrah, HE Dr Mohammad Saleh bin Taher Benten at the Kingdom's Hajj Ministry





Before leaving for Hajj, Minister Yaacob Ibrahim and Ambassador Saad Al-Saleh were at Changi Airport to bid farewell and Hajj mabrur to the 340 pilgrims leaving that day (24th August 2017)

7 Ambassador Saad Saleh Al-Saleh visiting Singapore civic and business corganisations such as the Singapore Manufacturers Federation

8 HE Masagos Zulkifli (left) with Governor of Riyadh HRH Prince Faisal Bin Bandar Al Saud exploring closer cooperation. Minister Masagos was in KSA for projects involving the Kingdom's water resources and environment

9 Close Cooperation in Muslim Affairs: In February 2017 Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs, Dr Yaacob Ibrahim (3rd frm left), together with Hj Abd Razak Maricar met representatives from the Ministry of Hajj & Umrah to discuss on Hajj arrangements for Singapore pilgrims

Visit of the Saudi Education Minister to Singapore's Ministry of Education:
(Standing left to right): Dr Aiman M Momenah, Dr Salim M Almalik, Minister H.E. Dr
Ahmed M Aleisa, Dr Janil Puthucheary, Dr Teh Liak Woon and Mr Teo Wei Jie











Changi Airport International (CAI) clinched Jeddah Airport concession as CAI will be responsible for management and development of new King Abdulaziz International Airport over a 20-year period









2018

"Excellent Relationship on Multiple-fronts..."

he Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Singapore had just celebrated 40 years of bilateral ties last year and by almost the end of 2018 Ambassaddor Saad reflected how: "The bilateral relationship is excellent on multiple fronts with several visits at the Ministerial level and several delegations visiting Singapore with the aim to enhance business, education and cultural cooperation."

This was also the time when on the social front, women in Saudi Arabia started driving. The Ambassador also conveyed: "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."

Saudi Arabia's Minister of Interior, Prince Abdulaziz Bin Saud Bin Naif, calls on President Halimah Yakob at the Istana

2 Saudi Arabia's Minister of Interior Prince Abdulaziz also called on Singapore Minister of Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam during his visit to Singapore

3 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







4 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

5 The Saudi Embassy also supported the Inter-Racial Inter-Religious Harmony Nite in 2018 with President Halimah

6 & 7 Ambassador Saad with President Halimah after the 2018 Eid prayers at Sultan Mosque

8 & 9 The Saudi Embassy's annual Ramadhan Iftar Banquet in 2018 was held at the Ritz-Carlton Millenia Grand Ballroom on 24th May 2018 where the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invited members of the diplomatic corps, representatives from the government and leading civic and business leaders. This year it was also attended by Minister Masagos Zulkifli who was also the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs

Highly talented, prize-winning 11-year old violinist Chloe Chua charmed audiences in recitals in Riyadh and Jeddah. Chloe who is from Singapore's Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts is just one of the many global talents welcomed to perform in



2019

"Towards New Horizons..."

HE diplomatic highlight for Saudi-Singapore relations in 2019 was undoubtedly the State Visit by Singapore President Halimah to the Kingdom in November. The President met with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz. His Majesty conferred upon her the King Abdulaziz Medal in appreciation of Her Excellency and the relations between the two countries. That visit and the subsequent visits between officials from the two countries is set to enhance bilateral relations in all fields said Ambassador Saad. He was confident that: "In the future, we will notice great progress in the relations between our countries."







1 The first State Visit by a Singapore President HE Mdm Halimah Yacob was a diplomatic success marked by several important initiatives and outcomes at various levels for both

Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong meet Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman at the G20 Summit in Osaka

3 Ambassador Saad presenting the formal G20 invitation for the G20 2020 Summit to Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong



4 The then Deputy Prime Minister HE Tharman Shanmugaratnam (centre) with Ambassador HE Saad Saleh and members of the Singapore delegation visit to Saudi Arabia between 19th to 21st January 2019

5 SM Tharman on his meeting with HRH Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman in January: "I believe that HRH and his team see great value for both countries to do more together."

6 Saudi Arabia is a signatory of the Singapore Convention on Mediation. The delegation for the signing ceremony on 8th August 2019 was headed by HE Bader Al-Haddab, Saudi Arabia Deputy Minister of Technical Affairs in the Ministry of Commerce and Investment

Ambassador Saad at the annual reception at the Istana for heads of diplomatic missions accredited in Singapore on 12th July 2019

8 Ambassador Saad and Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs during 13th Forum of VIVA Foundation on 2nd May

 The Ambassador and HE Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore with Colonel Mushbab Al Qahtani and Colonel Saud Al Saleh during the opening of the Military Leadership Course on 30th July 2019 at RSIS Institute of International Studies in Singapore.

4 Ambassador attended the opening of (Arabs in Singapore) Exhibition under the patronage of Singapore President HE Mdm. Halimah Yacob in

























HRH Prince Saud bin Talal bin Badr,
Advisor to the Minister of Housing and
General Supervisor of the Ministry's Agency for
Housing Support, was Head of the Kingdom's
Delegation to the World Environmental
Building Week (IBEW) on 5th September
2019 vubere together with the Ambassador they
received Singapore's National Development
Minister, HE Mr Lawrence Wong at the
Kingdom's Pavilion. Minister Wong
inaugurated the opening of the IBEW.

2020

"Realizing Opportunities of the 21st Century for A11...

020 will be remembered for the year when COVID changed the world. Lives and lifelihoods throughout the world were badly affected. Fortunately as Ambassador Saad highlighted Saudi Arabia, through its Presidency of the G20 that year was able to provide a number of initiatives in cooperation with the Group to address the pandemic and held several virtual meetings to come up with quick solutions to respond to this crisis. It is worthwhile noting that Singapore, which the Kingdom invited to participate as a guest country in the G20 meetings actively participated in the Group's meetings and also contributed initiatives to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Never has a G20 theme, which for 2020 was 'Realising Opportunities of the 21st Century for All', been more needed globally. Saudi Arabia and the G20 provided urgent economic initiatives and financial packages to meet the challenges of COVID and revival of the world economy.

COVID NOTE: One of the obvious casualties of the pandemic were the reduction in physical meetings and events. The restrictions, however, did not stop the Embassy from organising online and virtual activities.

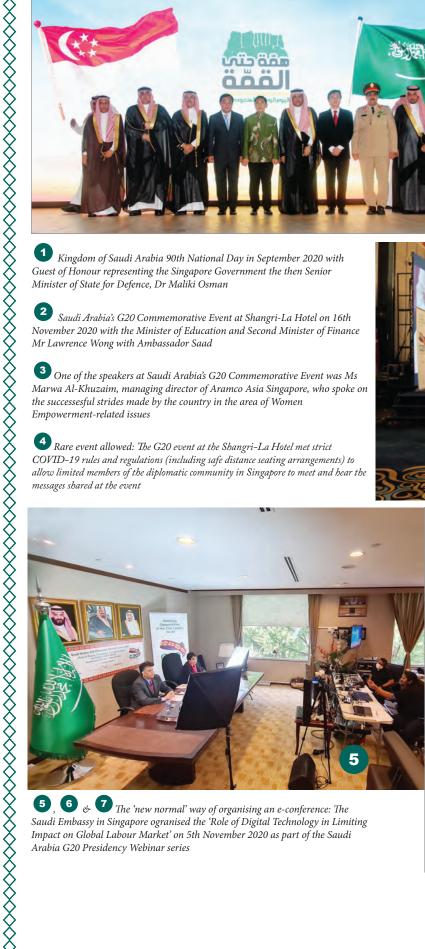


Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 90th National Day in September 2020 with Guest of Honour representing the Singapore Government the then Senior Minister of State for Defence, Dr Maliki Osman

2 Saudi Arabia's G20 Commemorative Event at Shangri-La Hotel on 16th November 2020 with the Minister of Education and Second Minister of Finance Mr Lawrence Wong with Ambassador Saad

3 One of the speakers at Saudi Arabia's G20 Commemorative Event was Ms Marwa Al-Khuzaim, managing director of Aramco Asia Singapore, who spoke on the successesful strides made by the country in the area of Women Empowerment-related issues

4 Rare event allowed: The G20 event at the Shangri-La Hotel met strict COVID-19 rules and regulations (including safe distance seating arrangements) to allow limited members of the diplomatic community in Singapore to meet and hear the messages shared at the event



5, 6 & 7 The 'new normal' way of organising an e-conference: The Saudi Embassy in Singapore ogranised the 'Role of Digital Technology in Limiting Impact on Global Labour Market' on 5th November 2020 as part of the Saudi Arabia G20 Presidency Webinar series













Aramco Supports Southeast Asia's Growth Ambitions with Reliable **Energy Supplies**

Aramco delivered its first direct Arabian Crude cargo to Brunei Darussalam in June 2020

Association Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a major global hub of manufacturing and trade, as well as one of the fastestgrowing consumer markets in the world. Taken as a whole, ASEAN is the third-fastest growing economy in Asia - and it is now the world's fifth-largest economy, and the third-largest in Asia. It is projected to rank as the fourthlargest economy globally by 2050.

According to a June 2021 report by Oxford Economics, commissioned by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), Southeast Asia is still set for in 2021, despite a resurgence of COVID-19 cases reintroduced restrictions across the region.

Meanwhile, the International Energy Agency (IEA) reported that energy demand in Southeast Asia will grow by 60% over the next two decades.

As the world's largest integrated energy and chemicals company, with one of the lowest carbon footprints per unit of hydrocarbons produced, Aramco is well-positioned to play a key supporting role in the Southeast Asia region. Aramco has been working with innovative companies in Southeast Asia to provide and invest in supply chain expertise, as well as both upstream and



Marwa Al-Khuzaim, managing director of Aramco Asia Singapore

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of energy security and a 4.8% rebound in growth reliability. Apart from long held relationships that we have in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, Aramco's recent hydrocarbon deliveries into Brunei and Vietnam demonstrate our commitment to support the local economies in Southeast Asia with reliable energy supply."

- Marwa Al-Khuzaim

downstream technologies and services to help shape the energy sector for the future.

Energy Security

Marwa Al-Khuzaim, managing director of Aramco Asia Singapore said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted importance of energy security and reliability. Apart from long held relationships that we have Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand the Philippines, Aramco's recent hydrocarbon deliveries into Brunei and Vietnam demonstrate our commitment to support the local economies in Southeast Asia with reliable energy supply."

First Direct Sales

Last year, Brunei Darussalam took delivery of its first ever Arabian crude oil. The cargo was purchased by Hengyi Industries' Pulau Muara Besar refinery, in Brunei, and resulted from cooperation between Aramco and Hengyi Industries, which has since developed into close partnership with a long-term supply contract.

In June this year, stateowned PetroVietnam Gas (PV Gas) took delivery of its first direct Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) purchase from Aramco, making it Aramco's first direct hydrocarbon sale to Vietnam.

Aramco Asia Singapore is a wholly owned subsidiary of Aramco, the world's largest petroleum and chemicals enterprise, and provides marketing support, material sourcing, supply chain logistics and inspection services in the Southeast Asia and Australasia regions.

When Saudi Arabia Opened Up for Tourism

A historic milestone for the development of Tourism in KSA occured in October 2019 when visitors from 49 nationalities – including Singapore – were able to get a one-year, multiple entry visas that allows them to spend up to 90 days in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia!



Some of the promotional posters on display when announcing the re-Visa spotlighting the Kingdom's beauty in nature

t was on 1st October 2019 that travellers were told that they can purchase an e-Visa or Visa on arrival to the Kingdom which cost then just 440 SAR or approx.. S\$160 (including VAT). Saudi Ambassador to Singapore, HE Saad Saleh Al-Saleh, together with officials from Saudi Arabia's national airline Saudia, announced at a press conference held in Singapore the launch of the new visa system. He said: "It is a historic milestone in the implementation of Vision 2030. It will continue the ongoing process of opening and connecting the Kingdom to the world and will help to diversify the country's economy in line with Vision 2030 objectives to reduce its dependence on oil."

While today COVID has put a damper on international travel for the last one and half years, at that time the Ambassador announced that opening the Kingdom to tourism will provide visitors an opportunity to discover the warm hospitality of its people; its rich heritage and vibrant culture; and the beauty of its landscapes, from the mountains of Abha to the beaches of the

Red Sea to the shifting sands of the Empty Quarter. KSA's unique heritage attractions include the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Al-Diriyah, the Al-Ula and Jeddah Historical District.

The Kingdom expects to increase international and domestic visits to 100 million a year by 2030, attracting significant foreign and domestic investment and creating a million jobs. By 2030, the aim is for tourism to contribute up to 10% towards Saudi Arabia's GDP, compare to just 3% today. As Saudi Arabia opens to tourists from across the world, the General Investment Authority (SAGIA) and the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage announced a number of memorandam of understanding and agreements with regional and international investors to develop tourism, entertainment and hotels projects totaling around one hundred billion SAR (US\$27 Billion). These (MOUs) and agreements demonstrate the private sector's confidence in the potential of the country's tourism sector, and its future growth.

(The) beauty of its landscapes, from the mountains of Abha to the beaches of the Red Sea to the shifting sands of the Empty Quarter. KSA's unique heritage attractions include the UNESCO World Heritage Site at AlDiriyah, the Al-Ula and Jeddah Historical District

Discover Saudi Arabia!

Latest tourism highlights keep the Kingdom up-to-date as a top attraction for world

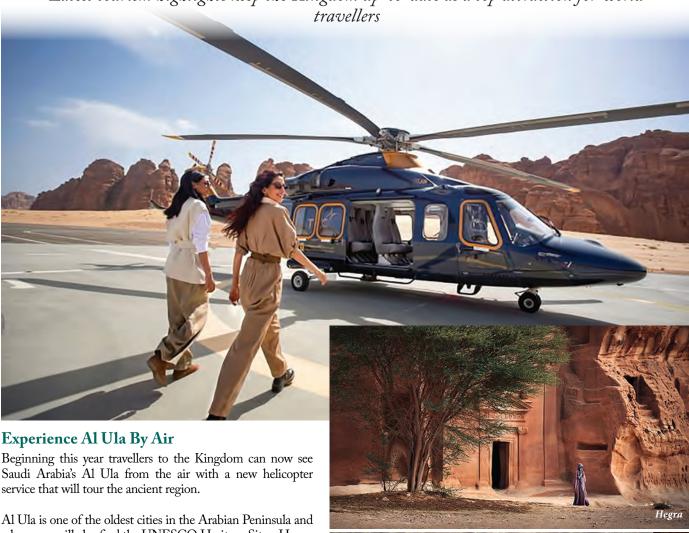


Photo: The Royal Commission for AlUla

Al Ula is one of the oldest cities in the Arabian Peninsula and where you will also find the UNESCO Heritage Site - Hegra.

A land rich in historical, geological and geographical significance, this ancient city, once at the crossroads of the Silk Road and the Incense Route, has only recently been rediscovered by the world.

Before it was only accessible to archaeologists, geologists and those with private bookings; helicopter rides over one of Arabia's oldest cities are now open to the public.

The air route covers the Elephant Rock and the world's largest mirrored building - the Maraya Concert Hall, and takes in altogether seven major sites within a flight time of 30 minutes. The landscape seen today is basically the same as 7,000 years ago and geologists said that visitors can expect to be "blown away" by what they see from the air.

"Visitors will be able to see three completely different landscapes - the Precambrian Arabian shield rocks, the sandstone that was laid down over it and then the black basalt formed by volcanic eruptions - all in the one area, which is what makes Al Ula so special," said geologist Don Boyer.

The tour ends with a fly-over of Jabal Ikmah Al Ula's open-air library and the stone city of Dadan.





Photo: www.guinessworldrecords.com

Esquire Rates the Top 6 Hiking Spots in KSA

The Esquire magazine Middle East edition noted how borders are now beginning to reopen and recommends the Kingdom as a hiking destination that offers "a wide range of hiking options in magnificent terrains". These range from exotic rock formations, hot, but snowy, hikes, to hiking above clouds on the country's highest mountains and trekking on one thousand-year-old trails! Esquire short listed six outstanding choices:

Jabal Alsoudah which is in the Asir National Park and also the highest peak in the Kingdom standing at 3,000 metres high. It has different climbing, hiking and camping spots and there are trails to go up or down the mountain.

Jebel Firhrayan or the Edge of the World is just a 90-min drive from Riyadh. It is part of the Tuwaiq cliffs and the trail runs along a ridge of Tuwaiq offering spectacular views of the valley floor to the horizon!

The **Moon Valley** is an hour's drive from Jeddah and is situated in a stunning park with exotic rock formations!

Jabal Al Lawz means Almond Mountain. It is over 2,500 metres high with snow almost every year and according to Esquire "making it perfect for a winter hike."



Jebel Firhrayan - Edge of the World (Photo: Aramcoexpats.com)

The Caravan Trail (Aba AlQid) is part of an ancient route that is hundreds of years old near Riyadh. It is about one kilometre but the road is steep and rocky with many turns.

The 1000-Year-Old Camel Owners Trail is like a hike through history. It was formed some 10 centuries ago and paved with large stones and zigzag architecture during the Ottoan Empire.



Jabal Alsoudah (Photo: Khuloud Al-Saleh)

F1 Coming in December

Motorsports fans in Saudi Arabia will be treated to the Formula One (F1) circus this December when the 2021 Saudi Arabian Grand Prix comes to the city of Jeddah boasting according to its website the fastest street track in the history of F1.

Prince Khalid Bin Sultan Al Faisal who is President of the Saudi Automobile and Motorcycle Federation told CNN Sports: "We managed to design a street circuit which is fast and challenging."

It will attract not only motorsports fans but also international visitors who will be going as part of the premium corporate incentive and hospitality packages that are offered by the organisers of the sport.

Saudi Arabia joins Bahrain and Abu Dhabi as part of the F1 circuit in the Middle East. The last few years the Kingdom has opened up its sports calendar with many other international events such as boxing and football tournaments.

Unprecedented Discovery: 600-Year Old Coral Colony in Red Sea



Photo: Saudi Press Agency

A huge coral colony measuring 10 metres high and 600 years old, has been discovered on the island of Al-Waqadi - the first of its kind in the Red Sea. This was announced by the Sea Development Company, which is heading the territorial development project of the Saudi coastline. Experts confirmed this coral colony was the first discovery of its kind in the Red Sea. Marine experts stated

the reef is not only a great dive attraction but also provides an opportunity to study more about past centuries as well as the temperature of the ocean by its chemical composition at that time through the scientific reading of the coral reef rings. The age can be estimated by measuring the size and number of rings grown annually on the external structure of the colony

Singapore Selected to Receive the **Kiswah** this Year

Gift shows the close ties that exist between Saudi Arabia and Singapore



The annual ritual of changing the Kiswah (Ghilaf-e-Kaaba) was held on 18th July 2021 at Masjid al-Haram in Saudi Arabia (Photo: SPA)

n the morning of 29th July 2021, Singapore's Minister for Social amd Family Development and Minister in charge of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli witnessed the gifting of the Kiswah from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Singapore.

The Minister described in his Facebook post of the event how the Kiswah is a beautifully embroidered black cloth which covers the Kaabah or the holy cube at the centre of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. It is replaced annually on the eve of Hari Raya Haji following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Every year, the old Kiswah will be cut into smaller pieces and gifted to foreign dignitaries and organisations.

The Minister said: "Receiving the Kiswah reflects the strong and long-standing good relationship between Singapore and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Over the years, Muis and the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Singapore have maintained close institutional relations,

cooperating on various issues including the yearly administration of Hajj for Singaporean pilgrims, prior to COVID-19. On behalf of Singapore, especially the Malay/Muslim community, I thank the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz



Ambassador Saad presenting the Kiswah to MUIS President Haji Mohammad Alami Musa witnessed by (far left) MUIS Chief Esa Masood and Minister Masagos

Al-Saud for honouring us with the opportunity to own a piece of the Kiswah. I look forward to working closely with the Saudi government in strengthening our bilateral relationship further.

King Salman on Climate Change



ing Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, gave a speech during the Virtual Leaders Summit on Climate in April 2021. The King stressed that achieving sustainable development requires a comprehensive methodology that takes into account the different development circumstances around the world, adding that enhancing the level of international cooperation is the optimal solution to meet the challenges of climate change. Following are exercepts of his speech during the virtual meeting.

"In the beginning, we would like to thank President Biden for holding this summit to combat climate change which threatens life on our planet.

These challenges recognize no national borders. The objective is sustainable development. And in order to achieve this, there must be a comprehensive methodology that takes into account the different development circumstances around the world.

The Kingdom has incorporated the notions of sustainable development into its Vision 2030, launching in accelerated steps packages of strategies and regulations such as the National Environmental Strategy with the aim of producing 50% of the Kingdom's energy need by 2030 using clean renewable sources.

Enhancing the level of international cooperation is the optimal solution to meet the challenges of climate change. During our G20 presidency last year, we advocated the need to adopt the notion of circular carbon economy, launching two international initiatives to curb land degradation and to protect coral reefs. HRH the Crown Prince announced recently two new initiatives: the Saudi Green Initiative and the Middle East Green Initiative, which aim at reducing carbon emissions in the region by more than 10% of global contribution. They also aim at planting 50 billion trees in the region in addition to a number of unique initiatives.

These two initiatives have been endorsed by the international community. We will work with our partners to achieve their goals by hosting this year, the Green Saudi Initiative Forum and Middle East Green Initiative Summit.

Finally, we would like to affirm our keenness on and commitment to cooperation to combat climate change in order to create a better environment for future generations, wishing success for our efforts to protect our planet.

May peace be with you."

Preparing for Inaugural Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee

First meeting between Saudi Arabia and Singapore received a strong turnout and enthusiasm

he Singapore Embassy in Riyadh reported the inaugural meeting between Singapore and Saudi Embassy was well attended and enthusiastic. The meeting was co-chaired by the Ministry of Trade and Industry's Permanent Secretary (Development) Mr Lee Chuan Teck and Saudi Ministry of Transport Deputy Minister of Planning and Information Dr Mansour Al Turki. Ambassador Saad Saleh Al Saleh

also participated in the virtual preparatory meeting which was held in June 2021 for the inaugural Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee. The Singapore Em-



bassy wrote: "We are heartened by the strong turnout and enthusiasm of the various stakeholders, and the consensus to step up economic cooperation between Singapore and Saudi Arabia in a wide variety of sectors including in emerging fields such as green energy and artificial intelligence."



Thank You For Your Service H.E. Saad Saleh Al Saleh



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