

SPECIAL EDITION 2022

SAUDI ARABIA

GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Changing Face of Saudi Arabia



**Social and Economic
Transformation of
Saudi Arabia**



**First Official Visit by Saudi Foreign Minister
H.H. Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud**

**Exclusive Interview: Minister-in-Charge
of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli**

**KSA and Singapore Connections:
Enterprise Singapore | Global School
Foundation | Olam Agri | Saudi Global Ports**

Safe & Smooth Hajj 2022



Commemorating the 92nd NATIONAL DAY of the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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SAUDI NATIONAL DAY 92



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Saudi Arabia

YOUR GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE EAST

SPECIAL EDITION 2022

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Commemorating the
**92nd NATIONAL DAY of the
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**



Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud



Commemorating the
**92nd NATIONAL DAY of the
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**



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



Commemorating the
**92nd NATIONAL DAY of the
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**



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

وجهتنا المستقبل، فماذا ستحمل معك؟

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92nd National Day of the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



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*Ambassador Abdullah Mohammed A. Almadhi
Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
to Singapore*

New Saudi Arabia Arising

Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mr Abdullah Mohammed A. Almadhi, shares with Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, Ms Nomita Dhar, how the Kingdom is changing



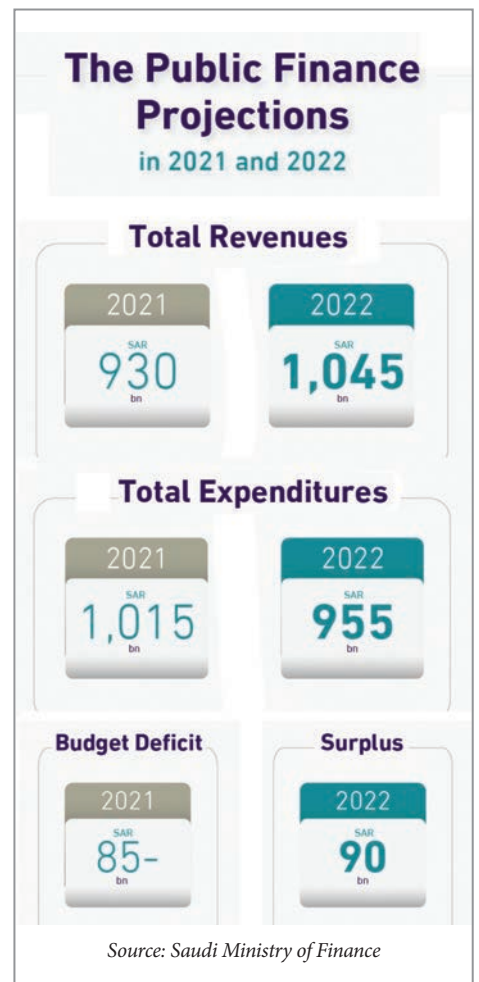
Ambassador, please tell us about the progress the Kingdom is making economically and socially in view of The Vision 2030 agenda.

Saudi Arabia's economy is set to steadily grow apace despite the restrictions created by the pandemic. A major part of this agenda is to create more opportunities for business development as we continue to move away from a fossil fuels-centric economy to a more multi-faceted expansive business landscape. The easing of visa regulations is also aimed to play a significant role in this pivot to a more diversified economic agenda. An additional incentive has been our 'doing business' rules, which now give the go-ahead for 100% ownership in certain Saudi companies and the acquisition of specific real estate projects by foreign nationals.

The recent announcing of the new investment law by the KSA Ministry of Investment under which local and foreign investors will be treated equally, is estimated to increase international business by 50%. This should empower our appeal as a fast-growing international business hub. There are also plenty of opportunities in the Kingdom for the Small and Medium Industries, Industrial Services and Products, Real Estate, Manufacturing, Infrastructure, Technology, Water and Wastewater Projects, Nuclear Energy, Education, Tourism and Hospitality, Entertainment and Media sectors.

The reforms in Saudi Arabia are showing visible effects on the economy and the most recent estimates by the Saudi Ministry of Finance provides for a significant increase in our GDP for up to 7.4%. This year much of this derived from the hike in the price of oil. With costs averaging US\$100 for a barrel of oil this has resulted in the Kingdom's economy being the fastest growing in the G20. State oil company Saudi Aramco has posted the largest quarterly adjusted profit of any listed company in the world.

But the Saudi economy is not just booming because of oil. Capital spending is also on the increase



New Jeddah Downtown project support city's ambition to be one of the world's top 100 cities



Red Sea Project - a world-class tourism destination



Noem - a "blueprint for tomorrow"



with the property market of Saudi Arabia is also booming with income from high energy prices flowing through the economy and expenditure aimed at building malls and parks, a giga projects for a brand new city - Noem - built on sustainability theme and the luxury tourism development in the Red Sea.

Ambassador could you tell us about the progress of women's emancipation based on the new social and economic agenda of Vision 2030.

There have been many bold reforms introduced by Vision 2030 so that women's legal rights in Saudi Arabia have benefitted 5.5 million Saudi women over 21 years of age. For example, the amendments set in place in the Civil Status Law means a woman can choose where to live in the same way as a man by removing a provision that made the husband's home the default residence. Regulations such as these are path breaking and history in the making.

Apart from the removal of formal restrictions and legislation ensuring equality of employment, women in the labour force have benefited from transport subsidies of up to 80 percent and employers are given incentives to hire Saudi women. In fact, the proportion of Saudi women in the workforce has doubled in the past four years to 33 percent. This is more than the 30 percent target set under the 2030 plan! Today a large number of Saudi women hold managerial positions in new fields and working in the same offices as men in many sectors from which they previously were excluded.

“Capital spending is also on the increase with income from high energy prices flowing through the economy”

What are the kinds of projects that investors should particularly take note of and study for their future potential?

One of the more ambitious projects that is set to play a pivotal role in the Kingdom's Green strategy is the creation of the futuristic eco-city of Neom. It is envisioned as a “blueprint for tomorrow” where humanity progresses without compromising the health of the planet. This US\$500bn project covers more than 26,500 sq-km along the Red Sea coast. It will also incorporate The Line, an eco-friendly city, which will reimagine and revitalize the future of urban living that preserves 95 percent of nature within NEOM, with zero cars, zero streets and zero carbon emissions.

The New Jeddah Downtown project requires the construction of a mixed-use development spread over an area of five square kilometers. This development project will turn the waterfront area into a tourist destination, featuring museums, shopping and commercial areas, parks, resorts and beaches, and will support Jeddah's ambition to become one of the world's top 100 cities. In total, the project will deliver over 12,000 housing units to accommodate 58,000 new residents, as well as 36,000 new jobs.

Saudi Arabia aims to create and host world-class sporting events, attracting globally respected sporting brands, championships and events to the Kingdom. Investment opportunities in stadium development, sports, football tournaments and games solutions are expected to increase, creating more opportunities for private and foreign partnerships.

Many may not also know about our billion-dollar gaming industry. It is expected to double in the next three years. Saudi Arabia is currently the 19th biggest gaming market in the world and is experiencing massive growth of 41.1 percent year-on-year, with more than 21.2 million gamers across the country.

We plan to invest US\$64 billion by 2028 into its entertainment industry as part of Vision 2030. In 2020, the Saudi government issued 117 permits for entertainment events, 219 licenses for operating entertainment facilities, and 398 permits for live shows in restaurants. Now is the time to be part of the first and most essential trade event for professional lighting, live events, sound equipment and installation in Saudi Arabia.

Noem is a grandiose futuristic vision encompassing a total area of over 26,500 sq-km along the on the Red Sea and will also incorporate a 170-km long city, called The Line (below)



Having countered the aftermath of the economic global spill out of COVID-19 the Saudi economy continues to grow apace with higher oil prices and non-oil activities backed by the strengthening of its oil production activities. This has been further impacted by the war in Ukraine. Though the Kingdom's trade links for oil with both Russia and Ukraine are limited, the outcome on the oil markets from the Ukrainian war has bolstered Saudi Arabia's medium-term fiscal and external outlooks.

Pivotal Role in OPEC+

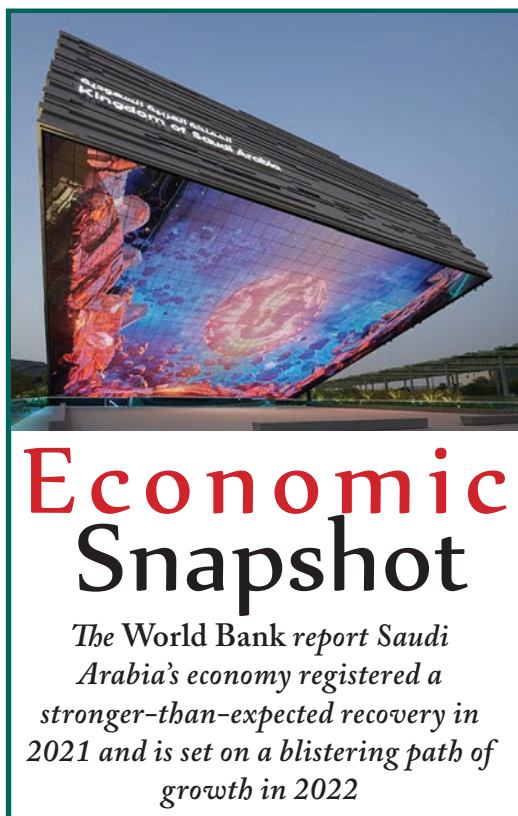
Saudi Arabia continues to successfully control adverse impacts of the pandemic despite experiencing an outbreak of the Omicron variant at the end of 2021. With high vaccination rollout reaching 68% of the population, from January 2022 new cases were on a downward trajectory. Globally, Saudi Arabia continues to assume its pivotal role, under the OPEC+ structure, in resolving oil market imbalances through monthly oil production cuts of 0.4 mbpd, which started in July 2021. Against this background, latest official data suggests that the economy grew by 3.3 per cent in 2021.

Non-Oil Sector

The non-oil sector continued its recovery path registering a 5.1 percent growth in 2021 - lifting the non-oil economy by 3.2 percent above its pre-pandemic level. More recent high frequency data reports a slight dip in January 2022 PMI following the Omicron surge, but the economic impact of the Omicron is expected to be short-lived. Headline inflation registered 3.1 percent in 2021, as the VAT-driven impact on inflation dissipated, but was offset by higher food and transportation prices. The budget deficit narrowed in 2021 to 2.1 percent of GDP, driven by higher oil revenues and fiscal consolidation measures.

PIF Investing US\$40Bn

The government's long-term strategy to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on oil is well-articulated in Vision 2030. The Public Investment Fund (PIF) is envisioned to play a central developmental role in this transformation plan by investing SAR 150 billion (US\$40 billion) annually into the domestic economy. This role would require fund's enhanced transparency and predictability for the private sector.



(Top photo): Interest in new businesses was also catalysed at the KSA's stunning pavillion in Expo 2020, Dubai which highlighted the Saudi 2030 Vision and ambitious economic growth agenda

Periscope

Growth is expected to accelerate to 7 percent in 2022 before moderating to 3.8 and 3.0 percent in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

Stronger oil output is the main driver behind the recovery which is expected to grow by 13 percent in 2022 following the end of the OPEC+ production cuts in December 2022.

The non-oil sector is expected to continue its growth trajectory, estimated at 4 percent in 2022 and 3.2 percent in the medium-term.

Despite headwinds from tighter fiscal and monetary policies in the medium term, stronger private consumption, an increase of religious tourism, and higher domestic capital spending - signaled through the PIF and other state agencies - are anticipated.

Inflation

Headline inflation is projected to slow and hover at around 2 percent during 2022 as result of a stronger US Dollar, against which the Saudi Riyal is pegged, and tighter monetary policy.

Surplus Budget Balance Anticipated

The budget balance is expected to register a surplus of 9.1 percent of GDP in 2022 -

the first surplus in nine years - driven by higher oil receipts. Fiscal performance in the medium term is underpinned by authorities' commitment to compress expenditures and build credible budget envelopes. With most of capital spending channelled through the PIF and other state agencies, the overall fiscal stance is more expansionary than officially reported through the budget.

As higher energy prices and further unwinding of OPEC+ oil production cuts kick in, the current account surplus is projected to widen to 14 percent of GDP in 2022 before moderating to an average of 9.2 percent in the medium term.

Ease of Business and Investment

Though the World Bank has discontinued its 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking report for a bit, KSA continues to ease its 'doing business' rules, by permitting 100% ownership in certain Saudi companies and the acquisition of specific real estate projects by foreign nationals.

New Ministry of Investment

Investment vehicles and structures can take the form of a 'direct presence' through the new Ministry of Investment Saudi Arabia (MISA), which was created in February 2020, as the former Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) was transformed under Royal Decree. It will give SAGIA additional powers enjoyed by ministries to increase its effectiveness in attracting local and international investments

The recently announced new investment law by the KSA Ministry of Investment is estimated to increase international business by 50%, according to Sovereign Saudi Arabia. With unemployment on the decline and a robust non-oil diversification steadily progressing, the Kingdom's economy is expected to more than double in 2022.

Before the new investment law was announced, official data from the World Bank projected the country's GDP to reach US\$820bn by the end of 2022, in comparison to \$700bn in 2020. However, this recent development, which will see foreign investors enjoy neutral treatment without any discrimination, could see KSA's business activity spike significantly to shatter the World Bank's projections..

Why **Invest** in Saudi Arabia?

Visionary leadership lays the groundwork for vast opportunities that are leading to an economic revitalisation of the Kingdom



Business towers in Riyadh's King Abdullah Financial District

As the economy of Saudi Arabia continues to stabilise despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, significant opportunities are opening up for business development at an unprecedented rate. This shouldn't come as much of a surprise given the Kingdom's Vision 2030 agenda for moving away from a fossil fuels-centric economy to a more multi-faceted expansive business landscape.

EASING OF VISA REGULATIONS

This new outlook is what now informs and outlines all of Saudi Arabia's business and economic persuasions. The easing of visa regulations is also pivotal to a new outlook for international players looking to grab the business opportunities in KSA.

FULL OWNERSHIP

An added incentive is KSA also continuing to ease its 'doing business' rules, by giving the go-ahead for 100% ownership in certain Saudi companies and the acquisition of specific real estate projects by foreign nationals. The recent announcement of a new investment law by the KSA Ministry of Investment under which the local and foreign investors will be treated equally, is estimated to increase international business by 50%.

This gives a further thrust to Saudi Arabia's appeal as a burgeoning international business hub. Official data from the World Bank projected the country's GDP to reach US\$820bn by the end of 2022, in comparison to US\$700bn in 2020. However, this recent development, which will see foreign investors enjoy neutral treatment without any discrimination, could see KSA's business activity spike significantly to counter the World Bank's projections.

LARGEST FREE ECONOMIC MARKET IN MID-EAST

What makes Saudi Arabia so attractive also for new businesses is that it is the largest free economic market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It's also a key member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and has free trade agreements with the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), as well as Singapore.

NEW SECTORS OPENING UP

Opportunities are rapidly opening up in KSA in the Small and Medium Industries, Industrial Services and Products, Real Estate, Manufacturing, Infrastructure, Technology, Water and Wastewater projects, Nuclear Energy, Education,

Tourism and Hospitality, Entertainment and Media sectors.

TWO SPECIAL SECTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

Also worth noting are the new areas for consideration. For example there are also major opportunities in the field of water desalination which according to recent estimates is an US\$80 billion industry. A designated "investment zone" called NOEM is bound to attract more than US\$500 billion in funding and provide another direct alternative when it comes to investing capital in the region.

OPPORTUNITIES IN FINTECH, FINANCE & ENERGY

Saudis are looking at ways to modernize and improve their financial system with new technologies. The "fintech" industry is spreading out roots in Saudi Arabia. The revolution of the Saudi banking system as it moves toward digital and paperless designs, and even looking at cryptocurrency and blockchain digital ledger technologies for the purposes of financial organization. The Saudi Arabia stock exchange – the Tadawul, with its index of about 150 companies, offers investment opportunities in fields like finance and energy. The privatization of industries like telecom is one other factor

“What makes Saudi Arabia so attractive also for new businesses is that its the largest free economic market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It’s also a key member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and has free trade agreements with the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), as well as Singapore.”

in evolving foreign investment climate. That said, the Saudi market is highly competitive and business transactions can take place only on the basis of quality, cost and punctuality in delivery.

NEW SERVICE FOR EASE IN ESTABLISHING BUSINESS

A new service announced by the Ministry of Investment in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce, allows investors and companies to establish and start a business in the kingdom from outside the country. The service is aimed at supporting companies and investors to receive investment licences “quickly and easily”, as reported by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA). Under the new service, investors can complete the process of authenticating the agency and attesting the establishment contract in three easy steps. This new development is part of the kingdom’s reforms implemented to improve the ease of doing business in the country.

STARTING A BUSINESS

The first thing to keep in mind is that its important to do actual research on the ground or get more detailed information about what Saudis are doing right now, since the country is quickly changing (*see box story on Federation of Saudi Chambers of Commerce*).

For those who have already decided to do business there can benefit by striking up partnerships with Saudi companies to enjoy lower rates of taxes.

To establish a new business this would entail some basic groundwork that involves a registration process for new businesses. Business leaders should anticipate bringing documents to the Saudi consulate and submitting an application to the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA).

There’s also necessary interaction with the company’s Department of the Ministry of commerce and registration with the general Department of passports ministry of

interior and the ministry of labour to take care of any Saudi visa requirements.

Other essentials include opening a Saudi bank account and getting the articles of Association notarized for business. When a business has obtained a file number and a certification of business, commencement, business leaders can register with the general organization of social insurance. With all of this in place, one can look toward various opportunities such as direct exporting for integrating a foreign business into the national economy.

NEW COMPANY LAWS

In June this year the new Companies’ Law passed by the Kingdom’s Council of Ministers will help the nation develop its commercial sector by protecting companies and enabling the private sector to keep pace with international best practices.

According to news reports by the *Saudi Gazette*, under the law, a new form of company has been created called the ‘simplified joint stock company’ that meets the needs and requirements of entrepreneurship and venture capital growth. It will also serve as an investment arm that enables non-profit companies to advance to the third sector, stimulate social responsibility, and allow them to generate returns in their businesses and spend them on non-profit purposes.

The new law brings down the statutory requirements and procedures for small, medium and micro companies, in addition to simplifying the requirements and procedures for establishing companies. It gives flexibility to include special terms and conditions in the contracts of incorporation of companies or their articles of association, and created possible mechanisms for entrepreneurs, owners of venture capital and private ownership.

REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS

The law removes many restrictions at all stages including establishment, engage in business and exiting the market as well

as restrictions on company names, and allowed the limited liability company to issue debt instruments or negotiable financing instruments. The law modified the provisions of transformation and merger between companies, permitting the company to be divided into two or more companies, and allowing the owners of individual entities to transfer their assets to any types of companies

With regard to attracting investment, the law allowed the issuance of different types of shares with varying categories and rights, privileges or restrictions, and the possibility of issuing shares allocated to employees to attract and motivate talent. It also allowed the distribution of profits temporarily or annually with governance that ensures that the company’s creditors obtain their rights.

FSC - Facilitator for Networking and New Business Opportunities

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the largest economies in the Middle East with its position as a high-growth market, and offers numerous opportunities for new businesses and investment, which come well supported by the Federation of Saudi Chambers of Commerce. The Council for Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry is the official federation for the 28 Saudi Chambers and has its head office in Riyadh. The FSC offers support to enhance efforts of research and shed light on available commercial opportunities for the local and international investors community.



اتحاد الغرف السعودية
Federation of Saudi Chambers

www.fsc.org.sa

First Official Visit by Saudi Foreign Minister H.H. Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud

Visit takes place when both nations are celebrating 45 years of diplomatic relations



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Foreign Affairs Minister, His Highness Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud arrived in Singapore on 13th January 2022 on his maiden official visit, at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. The longstanding relations between Singapore and Saudi Arabia were underscored by the visit which comes at a time when the two nations are celebrating 45 years of diplomatic relations this year. Prince Faisal called separately on President Halimah Yacob then, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Istana.

During the course of the reception, Prince Faisal conveyed the greetings from Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, to President Yacob, the government and the people of Singapore.

In response the Singaporean President conveyed her warm greetings and appreciation to the Crown Prince and to the Saudi government and people. She also said she welcomed the inaugural Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee (SSJC) meeting held in Riyadh last month (December 2021).



Saudi Prince Faisal's first visit as Foreign Minister where he called on Singapore leaders (from top row): President Halimah Yacob, PM Lee Hsien Loong; Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and Minister Masagos Zulkifli

President Halimah congratulated Saudi Arabia for its successful management of the haj pilgrimage and reiterated Singapore's request for an increased haj quota when it is resumed for Singaporean pilgrims. Discussions took place on the relations between the Kingdom and Singapore, and opportunities to enhance cooperation

between the two countries in all fields. Special attention was paid to the efforts of the two countries to protect the planet, and the Kingdom's announced "Green Saudi Arabia" and "Green Middle East" initiatives.

During his visit, Prince Faisal also met Minister Balakrishnan and Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Second Minister for Education Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman. While reaffirming the on-going engagement with Saudi Arabia Dr Balakrishnan shared that he was: "Delighted to host a good friend, Saudi FM Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud. This is his introductory visit to Singapore as FM. We reaffirmed our warm bilateral relations, and discussed how we can deepen cooperation. I thanked Prince Faisal for Saudi Arabia's invitation for Singapore to attend the G20 meetings in 2020 under its presidency. We discussed the challenges of living with endemic COVID-19 and how to facilitate safe cross-border travel. I know many Muslim Singaporeans are keen to visit Saudi Arabia for the Haj or Umrah." Prince Faisal also called on Singapore's Minister for Social and Family Development Masagos Zulkifli, who is also Second Minister for Health and Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs.

Saudi Visit Explored Closer Cooperation in Renewable Energy and Logistic Services

Minister Balakrishnan visit to Kingdom strengthen ties and includes an invitation for Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to visit Singapore

Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan was in Riyadh from 3rd to 5th September 2022 where he met his counterpart H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud (pictured right). The Ministers reaffirmed the warm and longstanding ties between Singapore and Saudi Arabia as both countries commemorate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year.



Minister Balakrishnan also conveyed a letter of invitation from President Halimah Yacob to H.R.H. Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Al Saud to make an Official Visit to Singapore. The Ministers agreed there was scope for closer cooperation in areas such as renewable energy and the green economy. They also had a wide-ranging exchange of views on global and regional developments.

Among the many dignitaries he met on the visit included the Kingdom's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Member

of the Council of Ministers H.E. Adel Al Jubeir. They had a good discussion on global and regional developments, including energy markets and climate change. Minister Balakrishnan also called on the Minister of Transport and Logistic Services H.E. Saleh Bin Nasser Al Jasser, who is the co-chair of the Saudi-Arabia Singapore Joint Committee (SSJC). They noted the complementarities between their economies and welcomed closer cooperation in areas such as logistics services and renewable energy. The Ministers reaffirmed

the SSJC as a useful platform to broaden bilateral cooperation and looked forward to the convening of the next SSJC meeting in Singapore later this year.

Minister Balakrishnan next called on the Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) H.E. Dr Nayef Al Hajraf. The duo noted the strong foundation for cooperation set in place by the GCC-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, which entered into force in 2013, and encouraged

greater exchanges between the GCC and Singapore as well as with ASEAN in areas of mutual interest like food security and education.

Minister Balakrishnan also met Royal Court Advisor Dr Fahad Al Toonsi. During the meeting Minister Balakrishnan welcomed opportunities for mutual exchange in developing the respective public services and expanding human capital development challenges for a future-oriented economy.

Investment Opportunities in Digital Economy and Innovation

Saudi Arabia's Minister of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Eng. Abdullah bin Amer Al-Swaha led a delegation to Singapore in September 2022 to visit a number of Singaporean government agencies, universities, major technology companies, and investment capital funds. This included Singapore's Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Mr Tan See Leng. Minister Al-Swaha also signed a Memorandum of



Saudi delegation visit to Enterprise Singapore with Minister Abdullah bin Amer Al-Swaha and Chairman Peter Ong (3rd & 4th from left)

Cooperation with Singapore's Minister of Communications and Information, Ms Josephine Teo, which covered digital economy, emerging technologies, and digital government. The Saudi delegation also called on the Chairman of Enterprise Singapore, Mr Peter Ong. In his welcome remarks to the delegation Chairman Ong said: "Saudi Arabia is a leading economy

in the Middle East and is undergoing rapid economic and social transformation. Singapore companies recognise this and are venturing into the Kingdom. Today, Singapore is represented in the market across the transport, logistics, engineering, oil & gas

and education sectors, among others. Our bilateral ties are also underpinned by the Saudi Arabia-Singapore Joint Committee (SSJC) at the Ministerial level." Mr Ong said he shared with the Minister Singapore's journey in developing a vibrant startup and innovation ecosystem, and how the global exchange of ideas and knowledge is important.

Changing Face of Saudi Arabia



(Above): 92nd SAUDI NATIONAL DAY LOGO & IDENTITY THEME - It is Our Home

The Chairman of Saudi Arabia's General Entertainment Authority (GEA) Turki bin Abdul Mohsen Al Al-Sheikh, on the 92nd Saudi National Day logo which was launched in August, explained that the identity came in line with the projects of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030.

The identity of the National Day takes its verbal slogan from the phrase "It Is Our Home" because of the sincere and deep connotations related to the sentence, and also because it touches the conscience of the Saudis who used to describe their homeland as the home in many popular songs and poems that represent part of their heritage and present times.

GEA designed the logo on the country's map, and wrote the phrase "It Is Our home" in the script on the Saudi flag. The design was supported by a set of colours reflecting a number of meanings associated with the Kingdom such as growth, security, ambition, determination, wisdom and loyalty. The identity also reflects the role of the National Day in instilling Saudi cultural values in the hearts of generations, celebrating the projects of the wise vision, as well as belonging to a great entity with its passion and determination to make the impossible a tangible reality in the land of the Kingdom.

(Right):

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Walking confidently down Old Town Jeddah Following the launch of Vision 2030 Saudi Arabia has actively championed women as entrepreneurs, leaders and employees. Now 38% of all small and medium enterprises are owned and operated by women

(Opposite page):

Vision 2030 has reimagined the way Saudi citizens and residents live, work and play



Photos:
Saudi Arabia
Vision 2030
A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



ENTERTAINMENT

Qiddiya is planned to be the world's largest entertainment city, at least three times bigger than Walt Disney World. It will feature over 300 leisure and entertainment facilities, including a 20,000-seat clifftop stadium, motorsports facilities, the world's largest Six Flags theme park, a world-class waterpark, golf courses, cinemas, and a performing arts theatre. Qiddiya aims to attract over 14 million visitors per year. The US\$500 million purchase of a 5.7 percent stake in Live Nation Entertainment by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund beamed out the government's serious intent to support growth in this sector. Live Nation is the world's largest live-entertainment company.

Over the past five years, the area of entertainment has progressed swiftly with the government lifting its 30-year ban on cinema in the Kingdom. This change has been underpinned by the over 10000 films screened across 45 cinema halls by the end of 2021 alone. Adding more power to this initiative was the fact that the inaugural edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival would feature Arab and international films. The AIUla region will see the coming up of an exclusive, spanking new film studio to support both domestic works and attract international film and TV productions. Set

to be established in the Fadhla area it will feature two sound stages with the backup of all facilities.

The performing arts in the Kingdom have witnessed huge developments, particularly so with the setting up of the Theater and Performing Arts Authority, to further improve the sector. The year 2021 ended with # Soundstorm21 the region's biggest music festival in Riyadh, in December, with a 200-strong line-up of international artists and DJs, over four days of incredible live performances.

Live entertainment has also come by way of international entertainers such as Grammy superstar Alicia Keys at the Al Maraya Concert Hall as recently as February 2022. The American singer-songwriter rocked the audience with her thrilling performance in the setting of the historic AIUla archaeological site. The event was part of the AIUla Moments season of events, which ran until March 27. She also co-host a town hall event discussing female empowerment initiatives and plans for the Kingdom's evolved vision, alongside HRH Princess Reema Bint Bandar Al Saud, the first woman Ambassador from the Kingdom to the United States.

The Al Maraya concert hall in Saudi Arabia's northwestern desert holds the Guinness World Record for being the largest mirrored building on earth. Five hundred seats, along with five boxes with space for up to 60 more guests have been accommodated in the main auditorium. The complex also features a terrace, a conference centre, exhibition space and a restaurant.

Another major all-family entertainer was the Cirque du Soleil's show, Fuzion, scheduled in Jeddah on the first day of the Eid Al Fitr holidays until June 28 as part of Jeddah Season 2022 in King Abdullah Sports City. An agreement was signed by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture with the Canadian entertainment group to enable it to put on its renowned creative performances in the Kingdom. Cirque du Soleil has presented six shows in Saudi Arabia since 2018, the last of which was the "Messi 10" show, which was held in November during the Riyadh Season.

THE ARTS

Explore the Kingdom's amazing offerings in the canvas of modern art. Find the contemporary artsy mojo of Saudi Arabia at Desert X AIUla, where giant installations are scattered across the stunning desert

landscape. A living museum, AlUla is painted by Nature's hand to bring you even more delights to keep the artist in you inspired. Stand entranced as you gaze upon its natural beauty, ranging from the colours of the rocks... the sand – and even the fantastic shape of the rocks.

CULINARY CAPERS

Abandon yourself to the superb culinary adventures across the Kingdom which can range from samplings of regional favourites like Kabsa and Jareesh in traditional local restaurants, to international fine dining options in the metros.

World-class restaurants, live music and a thrilling line-up of immersive art activities are the highpoints of The Groves, Riyadh's must-visit five-star dining hot-spot. With a traditional *qahwa* (Arabic coffee), or just a classic cup of Joe, you can indulge your pick-me-up-cravings in hosts of pit stops in Riyadh and Jeddah, which are awash with cafés. In winter, Riyadh's cafe culture is abuzz with the citizenry stepping out to a line-up of amazing hubs for conversations over coffee. In Jeddah, an alluring cauldron of cultures and traditions, indulge your seafood fantasies with some sensational culinary offerings.

Unmissable experiences await at the strawberry farms of Asir. Visitors loved the celebrations of the first Citrus Festival here, which brought together local farmers, traditional auctions, and delicious homemade products from AlUla's oasis farms, which grow over 25 types of citrus fruit.

SPORTS

The envisaged Sports Boulevard in Riyadh will stretch 135 km from end-to-end and feature green pedestrian pathways, cycling lanes, horse-riding tracks, arts centers, museums, studios, libraries, conference halls, and indoor sports facilities.

Saudi Arabia has hosted the Diriyah ePrix, the PGA European Tour, the WWE Crown Jewel, the Clash on the Dunes Boxing Heavyweight Title Fight, the Saudi Cup Horse Race, and the Saudi Formula 1 Grand Prix.



(Above): Mayada Badr is one of Saudi Arabia's most prominent figures in the F&B industry after spending years training under world-class chefs. Now she is the CEO of Saudi Arabia's Culinary Arts Authority (Photo: www.caterermiddleeast.com)

"World-class restaurants, live music and a thrilling line-up of immersive art activities are the highpoints of The Groves, Riyadh's must-visit five-star dining hot-spot"

Amongst the fabulous line-up of events at the Riyadh Season 21, climbing, combat games, ice hockey, next-level football challenges and much more was enjoyed by participants and viewers alike at Boulevard Riyadh City.

The Ikhmah Fashion Cavalry Show turned out to be a unique and elegant event where horses meet high fashion, against the beautiful backdrop of AlUla. The event was a fabulous showcase of antiquity and the contemporary world as it celebrated the elegance and power of the Saudi horse and the creativity of haute couture. Attendees were blown away by the fabulous parade of 10 Arabian horses attired in customised equestrian accessories outfitted by a global fashion house.

Journey to King Abdullah Economic City for its fantastic sporting allurements raging from golf to scuba diving to go-karting.

Dune bashing in Qasim is one of the hottest adrenalin-pumping activities which are becoming a huge draw for sporting buffs. This winter season adventure involves a bit of camping to embrace the tradition of Kashta, sleeping under the stars after riding a camel in the desert.

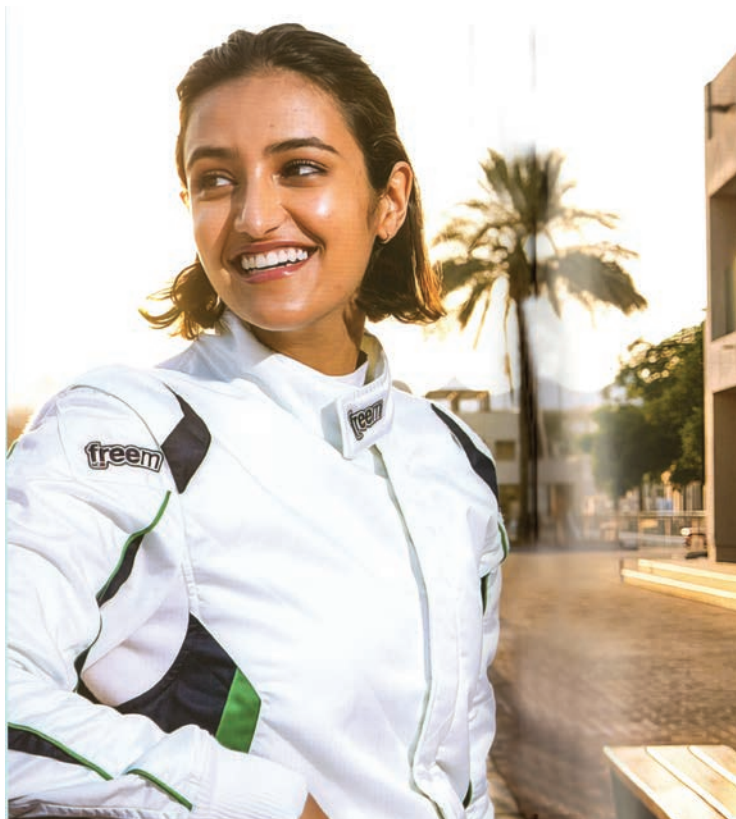
TRAVELLING ON

Launch your explorations of Saudi Arabia's fabulous tourist attractions with a round of superb experiences in national capital Riyadh. This bustling hub of hectic activity is packed with wonderful galleries, intriguing souqs, cafes, malls and scores of incredible heritage sites.

Road journeys along the coastal expanses of the Red Sea offer some of the most eloquent experiences of travel in the Kingdom. This Hop-on-Hop-off road safari is great for visiting seaside towns, snorkelling and dive sites, water sport hubs and coastal restaurants. If your fancy wills there are fishing hot spots as well that you can check out.

The underwater landmarks of Saudi include Abu Galawa, to witness the unexplored Galawa reefs. Here you can see schools of Barracuda and even have the odd encounter with hammerhead or tiger sharks. As you set off exploring the developments on the coast off Neom, you are bound to hear all about incredible scuba diving sites, amongst them of a half-submerged wreck that begs to be explored up-close.

Saudi Arabia has hosted the Diriyah ePrix, the PGA European Tour, the WWE Crown Jewel, the Clash on the Dunes Boxing Heavyweight Title Fight, the Saudi Cup Horse Race, and the Saudi Formula 1 Grand Prix!



(Above row): Reema Juffali the first Saudi woman racing driver in the Kingdom. Vision 2030 has brought sports and recreation to the mainstream including the Dakar Rally, Formula 1 Grand Prix, Extreme E (five-stage Saudi Tour cycling race) and the Saudi international golf tournament

Go camping under the stars at Moon Mountain an hour's drive north of Jeddah. Get blown away by its unique otherworldly landscape with its unparalleled views of the starry night skies. In Taif, the Al Sharif Museum is worth exploring for its treasure trove of incredible antiques and artifacts - gathered by its owner for over 30 years. Travel to Taif in spring when roses become centrestage in an explosion of festivities. Farms in Taif and Al Baha are home to over 200,000 pomegranate trees, producing 30,000 tons of the flavourful fruit every year. Marvel at the unique architecture at Al Balad with its stunning and brightly coloured buildings which were constructed by using coral limestone wrested from the Red Sea.

The Riviera of the Middle East, Amaala, is an ultra-luxury tourism destination located in the north-western coast of Saudi Arabia. Focused on art, wellness, and lifestyle, Amaala will be a destination for the connoisseurs of fine living, targeting the world's top 2.5 million ultra-high net worth travellers.



Saudi Arabia opened its doors to tourism in September 2019. The Kingdom hosts six UNESCO World Heritage sites. (Above): AlUla is the cornerstone of the Saudi tourism portfolio of ancient heritage sites

Safe and Smooth Hajj 2022

Singapore Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli led the first Hajj for Singapore pilgrims post-COVID pandemic in two years and talks about the close cooperation between Singapore and Saudi Arabia



Minister Masagos (centre) and Ambassador Abdullah AlMadhi (third from right) speaking with representatives of the Singapore Pilgrims' Affairs Office before departure for the Hajj from Changi Airport on 3rd July 2022 (Photo: MUIS)

Minister, you visited Saudi Arabia recently while heading the Hajj delegation, please share your experience.

This year marks the first Hajj for international pilgrims after a two-year suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a great honour for me to lead Singapore's Hajj delegation.

I had a fulfilling spiritual journey alongside our pilgrims in the Holy Land.

I am grateful that this Hajj season, which welcomed around one million pilgrims including international pilgrims, has been successful with no recorded large-scale accidents, infections or disease outbreak. Alhamdulillah, all Singaporean pilgrims were able to safely complete performing the fifth pillar of Islam. I thank the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), the Saudi authorities and our partners and medical volunteers for enabling a smooth, safe and successful experience for our pilgrims.

To ensure safety, security and smooth movement during the pilgrimage, how did Singapore and Saudi Arabia collaborate?

Singapore worked closely with the Saudi authorities to receive timely information and



Minister for Social and Family Development, Second Minister for Health & Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs Mr Masagos Zulkifli

directives on the health and safety measures for important aspects of the Hajj, such as the schedules for stoning rituals and Tawaf Wada. This enabled our pilgrim office and Hajj travel agencies to prepare and guide our pilgrims. We also shared our pilgrims' movements with the Saudi authorities to ensure smooth movements within the holy sites.

This year Singapore was allocated full quota for the Hajj. What was the number of pilgrims who went and how was their overall experience like? How was technology helpful in facilitating travel?

We are very grateful that the Saudi authorities granted Singapore with the pre-COVID quota of 900 Hajj places. However, 890 pilgrims eventually went for the Hajj, as the remaining 10 did not clear their pre-departure PCR COVID-19 test, as required for all Hajj pilgrims.

Singaporean pilgrims expressed their deep appreciation towards the Saudi Government and were very satisfied with the services and facilities provided by the Saudi authorities. Our Hajj agencies found the use of the Saudi e-Hajj portal system convenient and useful in making seamless payments for the accommodation, transport and meals contracts, including the Masyair (massive movement of pilgrims) services packages for Singaporean pilgrims.

We would also like to commend the Saudi Immigration and Custom officers for providing our pilgrims with a fast and pleasant arrival experience at the King Abdulaziz International Airport Terminal 1. Through the implementation of the Hajj e-Visa, Singaporean pilgrims were able to clear the immigration and customs checks within an hour of arrival.

How was your meeting with Saudi Hajj and Umrah Minister Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiah?

“The Saudi Ministry has done exceptionally well in welcoming international pilgrims after a two-year suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the need to prioritise pilgrims’ health, safety and security, the Ministry had leveraged technology and manpower resources to manage the crowd at the holy sites”



At Mudzdalifah, where pilgrims spend the night at the open area (Photo: MUIS)



Minister Masagos also met Saudi Arabia's Hajj and Umrah Minister, Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiah on 7th July 2022 - “In essence, we are committed to bring our bilateral ties to a higher level beyond cooperation in the field of the Hajj and Umrah” (Photo: MCI)

I am grateful that Dr Tawfiq Al Rabiah had set aside time to meet me despite his hectic schedule. I took the opportunity to convey our deepest appreciation to him and the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah for the excellent service rendered to our pilgrims. We also had a very good discussion on bilateral issues and I had reiterated our commitment to bring our bilateral ties to a higher level beyond cooperation in the field of the Hajj and Umrah.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah had announced a quota of one million (850,000) pilgrims this year, which looks like a mammoth task. Based on your first-hand observation, how do they manage?

The Ministry has done exceptionally well in welcoming international pilgrims after a two-year suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the need to prioritise pilgrims’ health, safety and security, the Ministry had leveraged technology and manpower resources to manage the crowd at the holy sites. This includes deploying female officers to manage the Muslimah areas.

I would also like to commend the excellent coordination between the different government agencies, including the Ministry of Health, which provided a pleasant Hajj experience for all pilgrims.



A reflective moment during wukuf at the plains of Arafah (Photo: MCI)



Minister Masagos with pilgrims from one of the Hajj services consortium (Photo: MUIS and MCI)

On the bilateral front what are the areas in which Saudi Arabia and Singapore can further collaborate to strengthen ties and create more opportunities?

Saudi Arabia and Singapore have enjoyed warm ties and close cooperation across a range of sectors such as trade and investment and education since establishing diplomatic relations in 1977. The strong momentum of high-level exchanges is testament to the importance both sides attach to the bilateral relationship. Following President Halimah Yacob's State Visit to Saudi Arabia in November 2019, where the Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee (SSJC) was conceived, Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry, Dr Tan See Leng visited Saudi Arabia in December 2021 to co-chair the inaugural SSJC meeting with Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistic Services Saleh Bin Nasser Al Jasser.

The Saudi-Singapore relationship is anchored by strong economic cooperation, which both sides seek to enhance through the SSJC. There is a strong Singapore business presence in Saudi Arabia and vice versa, and we continue to encourage our companies to pursue the opportunities that Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 brings to the table. Officials from both sides are also exploring new collaborations in sectors including sustainability, smart cities, smart logistics, aviation, human capital development, tourism, and port development. I am sure we will have good news to announce when the next SSJC meeting takes place in Singapore later this year.

Saudi Arabia has also opened up for tourism, art and cultural exchanges, how do you think Singaporeans can be part of these new experiences and opportunities?

Apart from the Hajj and Umrah for the Muslim community, Saudi Arabia remains

an untapped tourism destination for many Singaporeans. With the launch of Saudi Arabia's tourist visa scheme in September 2019, Singaporean tourists can experience first-hand Saudi Arabia's rich heritage, history, and natural wonders, from Historic Jeddah and the ancient sites of Al Ula and At Turaif at Diriyah, to the vibrant marine life in the Red Sea and majestic highlands in Asir. I hope more Singaporeans will visit Saudi Arabia and the Middle East in general in the years to come.

Singapore attracts a lot of tourists from all over the world, but not as many from the Kingdom. What would your message be to Saudi's to invite them to Singapore?

With direct flights from Saudi Arabia to Singapore serviced by Saudia Airlines and Scoot, travel between our two countries has never been easier. Tourism in Singapore caters to travellers with a variety of interests. There is always something for you to do, whether you are a solo traveller, a group of friends, a couple on your honeymoon, or a family with children. Nature lovers will enjoy our award-winning Singapore Zoo and the Singapore Botanic Gardens, which was recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2015. Those seeking more excitement can explore Singapore's numerous offshore islands, hiking and biking trails, and Universal Studios Singapore. Shoppers will enjoy our iconic shopping belt along Orchard Road, as well as malls and shophouses in the heartlands. Singapore also offers a wide range of restaurants and hawker stalls serving delicious halal food for our guests from the Kingdom!

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 has made many headlines since its launch. How can we encourage Singapore companies to be part of these opportunities?

As part of its Vision 2030 transformation, Saudi Arabia is expending efforts to attract

foreign investments in various sectors including tourism, infrastructure, logistics, ICT, as well as oil and gas, and I understand there is healthy interest from Singapore companies that are already established in Saudi Arabia, and from those who have not ventured out to the Middle East yet. Meanwhile, development projects related to Vision 2030 can also give rise to partnership opportunities with Saudi companies in fields which Singapore companies have strong expertise in, such as urban planning, smart cities, transportation, logistics, and sustainability. I would encourage our friends from the business community in Saudi Arabia to visit Singapore and meet their peers here to profile these opportunities and make face-to-face connections now that international travel has resumed. It's the best way to deepen collaboration as Saudi Arabia pushes to make Vision 2030 a success.

What would you like the people of Saudi Arabia to know about Singapore?

While Singapore is one of the world's smallest countries, there is plenty to see and experience for visitors of all ages. While a young nation, we have a rich multi-cultural history stretching back hundreds of years as an entrepot. In fact, many Arab travellers from Hadhramaut in the past, chose to settle down in Singapore. It is also a great place to live, work and play. Many MNCs, including in growing sectors such as technology and finance have set up their regional headquarters here. As a hub, we serve as a convenient base for those who wish to travel within Southeast Asia, whether for leisure or business. Singapore also boasts world-class education and welcomes students from all around the world, including Saudi Arabia. Singaporeans are friendly, welcoming, and most importantly, love eating with others! We look forward to welcoming new and repeat guests from Saudi Arabia!

Hajj 2022: Move to Normalcy

Singapore's Muslim travel agents are already geared up for increase in hajj and umrah travel packages from this year onwards. Ustaz TM Fouzy, the President of the Singapore Muslim Travel Agents Association (AMTAS) talks about this year's Hajj, latest developments and the experience of Hajj 2022



(Above photos): The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) pre-departure Hajj briefing for pilgrims. (Inset): In attendance were (seated from left to right) Ustaz TM Fouzy President of AMTAS, Ambassador Abdullah Mohammed Al Madhi, Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli and Mr Kadir Maideen CEO of MUIS (Right): Newly launched the PilgrimSG app for emergency assistance and alerts etc.

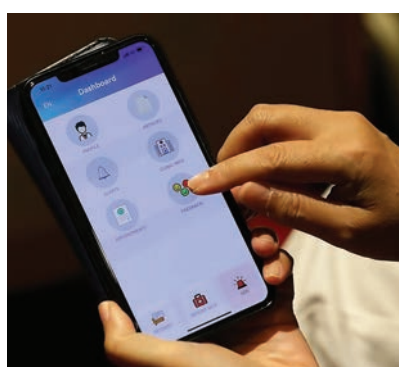
Last year, because there were many strictures on international travel the Hajj was dominated by domestic pilgrims, comprising residents and Saudi nationals. It saw 60,000 domestic participants, as against the 2019 (pre-pandemic) 2.5 million.

The good news is that now things are returning to normal with travel restrictions continuing to be lifted world-wide. After being interrupted for two years the Hajj pilgrimage is now open to both overseas and domestic devotees.

Conditions Apply - Age and Testing

Guidelines announced by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah reveal that only devotees under the age of 65 can participate in the Hajj this year, subject to having been inoculated with the basic doses of vaccines approved in the Kingdom.

All pilgrims to Makkah must present a negative PCR test taken no more than 72 hours prior to their



arrival in the Kingdom. Foreign pilgrims who have been fully vaccinated with vaccines approved in Saudi Arabia don't need to be quarantined. However, travellers arriving on visit visas (this includes pilgrims) must have medical insurance to cover any COVID-19 related treatment costs during

their stay.

Registering for Hajj

As of June 2021, women of all ages can now perform Hajj without a male guardian as long as they register as a group with other women. One of the best ways recommended for Singaporeans here to perform the Hajj and Umrah is to approach the 33 members of AMTAS, the Association of Muslim Travel Agents of Singapore. According to AMTAS President Ustaz TM Fouzy TM Jumat, (pictured left) "Already our members have seen a large increase in the number of umrah packages being booked till the end of this year estimated around 8,000 bookings have been received so there are signs that it is getting back to normal." While one can apply for an online visa to go to Saudi Arabia to go for umrah, for example, there are benefits to using the services of AMTAS travel agents. Ustaz Fouzy said this usually concerns assistance and guidance especially for first-timers once they reach there and what to do if something unexpected occurs such as illness or problems with accommodation, transfers etc. This is part and parcel of the travel agent's responsibility



to look after such matters; so there is peace of mind." AMTAS works together with the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) in matters related to Hajj and cooperate to provide the best possible experience for the pilgrim. There are many agents, who render these services; a good example is Ustaz Fouzy, who has served for 16 years as the Association President and has much experience organising such trips, "We are able to provide feedback and share our experience on the ground during the pilgrimages," he said.

New Developments


This year saw some new developments introduced in the Hajj, for example, booking a time period through a smart handphone prior to entering the Great Mosque in Mecca to perform umrah. He said this has helped greatly reduce the congestion in the mosque. It also means one now has bring along a smartphone to book the period. But there is now less rush and one feels safer.

On the whole members of AMTAS have found that many areas have been improved during this year's Hajj. For one, they were especially impressed with the speed of clearance through the airport's custom and immigration counters straight on to the bus transfer. The AMTAS President said, "On behalf of AMTAS we would like to thank the Saudi government and Hajj authorities for the smooth handling and operations of the pilgrimage which this year was completed without any major problems."

For more information on AMTAS visit www.amtas.sg

*Congratulations to the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
on the occasion of the
92nd Independence Day*

From EXCO and All Members



الاتحاد شركات السياحة للمسلمين في سنغافورة
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200 Jalan Sultan, #02-16 Textile Centre Singapore 199018
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**SALUTATIONS TO
THE PEOPLE AND THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
ON THEIR 92ND NATIONAL DAY**



Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli
with Singapore pilgrims during Hajj 2022



Shahidah
Saudi Tourism






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KSA and Singapore Connections Continue to Grow

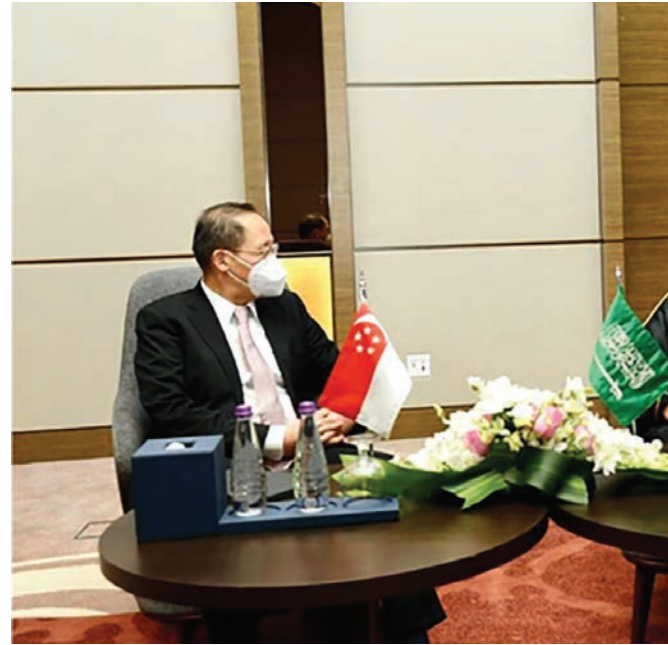
The growing cooperation and collaborations between Saudi Arabia and Singapore aided by the services of Enterprise Singapore continue to shore up the ties between the two nations

BACKGROUND

As economies across the globe continue to stay in a state of flux, Asia has responded by emerging as the world's current growth engine. At the heart of this stands Singapore, the gateway to this arena of opportunities and galloping growth.

Now more than ever, companies need to be agile and integrate capability building, innovation, and internationalisation in their strategies to prepare their businesses for the future. In 2018, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore and SPRING came together as a single agency to form Enterprise Singapore. Building on the established capabilities and networks of IE Singapore and SPRING, Enterprise Singapore will seek to deepen its knowledge of industries' and companies' needs, expand its networks within Singapore and overseas, as well as develop a more streamlined and comprehensive suite of assistance programmes to enable enterprise growth.

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development. It works with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise. Enterprise Singapore also supports the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups, and build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.



RIYADH CALLING

In 2009, Enterprise Singapore set up its overseas centre in Riyadh to capitalise on this market of growing business opportunities. Its team in Saudi Arabia is led by a Regional Director (presently Mr. Zuraimi Naharudin) and a business development manager. The office is located in the Singapore Embassy in Riyadh, and also serves as the commercial section and trade office of the Embassy.

- Enterprise Singapore offers advice to Singapore companies seeking to do business in Saudi Arabia, whether to establish sales, investment, operations or partnerships. It can provide Singapore companies with relevant information, programmes and contacts to assist in market entry.
- For parties from Saudi Arabia, Enterprise Singapore serves as a point of contact to Singapore for commercial matters. Through Enterprise Singapore, Saudi partners can learn about the opportunities to work with Singapore counterparts in matters of trade, startup and innovation, and quality and standards.
- Enterprise Singapore also collaborates with partners to facilitate exchanges between Singapore businesses and Saudi Arabia, through events, media features, meetings and visits from both sides.

PROACTIVE ROLE

Over the past year, Enterprise Singapore has arranged several activities to facilitate Saudi-Singapore cooperation, support the promotion of Singapore brands in Saudi Arabia, and assist Singapore companies' securing of projects and first-time entry in Saudi Arabia.



(Top row from left): Singapore Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr. Tan See Leng with Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistic Services Mr. Saleh Al Jasser; Singapore booth at the ASEAN Food Festival launch event in Riyadh. (Above): ASEAN Food Festival launch at LULU Hypermarket, attended by representatives of ASEAN Embassies in Riyadh including Singapore's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Mr. Wong Chow Ming

One of Enterprise Singapore's significant activities was facilitating Saudi-Singapore cooperation through the Saudi-Singapore Joint Commission (SSJC). Co-chaired by Singapore's Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr. Tan See Leng and Saudi Arabia's Minister of Transport and Logistic Services Mr. Saleh Bin Nasser Al-Jasser, the inaugural SSJC ministerial meeting was convened in December 2021. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to identify various areas of potential collaboration, including ports development, aviation, smart logistics, sustainability, and smart cities, digital, innovation and green economies, as well as tourism and hospitality training.

BRAND SINGAPORE SHOWCASED AT SAUDI ASEAN FOOD FESTIVAL

The ASEAN Food Festival proved to be a very useful platform for introducing Singapore brands to Saudi Arabia. Organised by Enterprise Singapore and LULU Hypermarket in Saudi Arabia, the festival showcased and promoted food products from Singapore and other parts of the ASEAN region. It was a great vehicle also for showcasing the amazing diversity of the culinary culture of the ASEAN region.

Held from 4-10 August 2021, the festival witnessed 18 LULU Hypermarket stores all over Saudi Arabia featuring booths with

Singapore food products and promotional material on Singapore culture and tourism. This initiative was given greater weightage with the collaboration between the embassies of the ASEAN countries based in Riyadh; it was led by Singapore as the chair of the ASEAN Regional Committee. Amongst the Singapore food brands which had the spotlight on them for the KSA market during the food festival were the likes of Uncle Saba's Poppadoms, KOKA instant noodles, and Fortune Tofu products. Enterprise Singapore continues to work with partners such as Lulu Hypermarkets in Saudi Arabia to introduce more Singapore food products into the Kingdom.

ONE WORLD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (OWIS)

In 2021, Enterprise Singapore facilitated the introduction of OWIS, an international school from Singapore, to the Royal Commission of Riyadh City (RCRC) for the setup of their school in KSA. The first campus came up in September 2022 in Riyadh (*see page 32 for full story*). OWIS' setup comes under RCRC's International Schools Attraction Programme, an initiative which seeks to bring international schools in with partnership with the Ministry of Investment and the Ministry of Education. OWIS' setup in Saudi Arabia adds to the growing number of quality schools in Saudi Arabia, and the growing reach of OWIS globally, with the potential for more to follow.



(Above from left): Signing ceremony for Saudi Global Ports' award of concession to operate Riyadh Dry Port Ecosystem. Signing ceremony for opening of One World International School campus in Riyadh

UPCOMING EVENTS

Some of the upcoming activities for the year 2022 include the second SSJC Ministerial meeting to be held in Singapore, and activities with partners such as Saudi Ministry of Investments to promote the opportunities and facilitate networking in sectors such as tourism and education.

ENTERPRISE SINGAPORE ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT OF KSA

Saudi Arabia is a major trading partner of Singapore (second largest economic partner in the Middle East and within the Gulf Cooperation Council). Singapore-based firms are also among the most active Asian investors in Saudi Arabia, and Singapore's expertise in oil and gas has long provided a connection between the two countries. Saudi Arabia's manufacturing sector has constantly expanded since 1976 to produce a wide range of products, from fertilisers to rolled steel and plastic products.

Additionally, the Saudi government continues to support varied manufacturing businesses, as well as the effort to move away from oil dependence. It is worthy for Singaporean businesses to note there are numerous opportunities to tap into apart from those in oil & gas in Saudi Arabia, given the fact that the KSA government is keen to increase their non-oil revenues exponentially by 2030. Sectors of focus are primarily **education, infrastructure** and **tourism**.

Singapore has strengths in transport and logistics, smart cities, digital services, as well as tourism and hospitality training.

For example, Singapore's strength and expertise in port management saw Saudi Global Ports (SGP) awarded the concession to develop and operate the Riyadh Dry Port (RDP) Ecosystem, comprising three facilities in Riyadh and Dammam (*see page 30 for the full story*). SGP is the container terminal operator of King Abdul Aziz Port Dammam (Dammam Seaport) and is a joint venture between PSA International and the Public Investment Fund (PIF), Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund.

These are all areas of growth in Saudi Arabia. Singaporean firms should tap the growing demand and receptiveness of Saudi Arabia driven by Vision 2030 to participate in projects, offer expertise and solutions.

KSA BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

There has been a significant improvement in the business working environment in the Kingdom, with the government implementing policies and reforms to increase the ease of doing business for foreign companies. The drive to attract foreign investments has continued to grow and consequently, processes have been streamlined and digitalised and the social environment also improved. For instance, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Investment has made it easier to issue an investor license and added new developments to increase the vibrancy of the country.

Enterprise Singapore has identified sectors such as tourism, transport and logistics, infrastructure development, oil and gas, education, etc which certainly deserve the attention of Singaporean business investors. As Saudi Arabia builds up capabilities to transform itself into a regional headquarter hub and continues embarking on the mega projects and new developments, opportunities will also emerge for Singapore companies that are in the fields of education: K-12 (primary to secondary school education), TVET (technical and vocational education and training), tourism (entertainment service providers, hospitality players, tourism tech), transport and logistics (air, maritime and land cargo and passenger services), etc. Saudi Arabia is also witnessing the steady growth of its startup ecosystem and venture scene, so here too there are new opportunities for startups with deep tech capabilities.

For more information

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Olam Group Enters Strategic Partnership with SALIC

SALIC (the Saudi Agricultural and Livestock Investment Company) has gone into a strategic partnership with Olam for KSA to further progress its food security and have access to the large and high-growth Middle East market.



“Olam’s partnership with SALIC, a strategic, global investor, will position us for even stronger growth as we realise synergies across our complementary strengths. SALIC’s investment into Olam Agri attests to its consistently strong financial performance and robust growth outlook, following a record year in 2021. It marks yet another key milestone in Olam’s Re-organisation journey; together with the ongoing IPO plans of OFI, this secondary placement for Olam Agri would lead to an immediate unlocking of value for our shareholders, set a benchmark valuation for the future IPO and demerger of Olam Agri, and right-size our balance sheet and reduce gearing at the Group level”

- Sunny Verghese,
Olam Group Limited's
Co-Founder and Group CEO

Singapore-headquartered Olam Group Limited announced in March 2022 that its wholly-owned subsidiary, Olam Holdings Pte. Ltd. has entered into definitive agreement for a strategic partnership with the Saudi Agriculture and Livestock Investment Company (SALIC) with the sale of an estimated 35.4% substantial minority stake in Olam Agri Holdings Pte. Ltd. (Olam Agri) to SALIC for a consideration of US\$1.24 billion (S\$1.7 billion).

Olam Agri is one of the three operating groups formed in early 2020 following the announcement of the Re-organisation of the Group to unlock and maximise its long-term value. It is a market leading, differentiated food, feed and fibre agri-business with a global origination footprint, processing capabilities and deep understanding of market needs built over 33 years. With a strong presence in high-growth emerging markets and products across grains & oilseeds, animal feed and protein, rice, edible oils, specialty grains & seeds, cotton, wood products, rubber and commodity financial services, Olam Agri is at the heart of global food and agri-trade flows with more than 40 million MT in volume traded.

SALIC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), aims to achieve food security for the KSA through investments in both domestic and international opportunities.

Benchmark Valuation for Olam Agri

The transaction crystallises a benchmark valuation for Olam Agri, and creates a strong shareholder base for a potential future listing and demerger of the company. It implies an equity valuation of US\$3.5 billion for Olam Agri. SALIC, through this partnership and investment, underscores and validates Olam Agri's future prospects. The transaction not only enables SALIC to help the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to further progress their food security agenda, it also provides Olam Agri significant access to the large and high-growth Middle East market.

Singapore-headquartered Olam will retain a 64.6% holding in the unit following the sale. As stated by Olam the proceeds from the sale will be used to improve the firm's capital structure and reduce leverage.



“SALIC’s investment in Olam Agri is aligned with its strategy and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 objective for food security. SALIC’s key strategic objective is to contribute to global and domestic food security through long-term strategic investments in the local and international markets.”

Sulaiman AlRumaih
SALIC's Group CEO

SGP Capitalises on Opportunities in Saudi Arabia's Maritime Sector

Saudi Global Ports (SGP) is contributing to Saudi Arabia's "National Strategy for Transport and Logistics" unveiled by H.R.H. the Crown Prince. It is aimed at developing a strong maritime sector that will position KSA as a global logistics hub across three continents



الشركة السعودية العالمية للموانئ
SAUDI GLOBAL PORTS CO.
A Member of the PSA Group

Singapore's PSA International (PSA), the partner of choice in the global supply chain, is a leading port group and trusted partner to cargo stakeholders. Backed by massive expertise and experiences from its global pursuits PSA has been active in enriching the quality of its collaborations with its line-up of customers and partners to deliver world-class port services alongside, develop innovative cargo solutions and co-create an Internet of Logistics.

With flagship operations in Singapore and Antwerp, PSA's global network encompasses more than 60 deepsea, rail and inland terminals, as well as affiliated businesses in distriparks, warehouses and marine services over 50 locations in 26 countries around the world.

Amongst PSA's most important collaborations has been the one with Saudi Global Ports (SGP). SGP is a joint venture between the Public Investment Fund (PIF), Al Blagha Group and PSA International. It operates the First and Second Container Terminals in King Abdul Aziz Port Dammam on the Arabian Gulf coast of KSA. This deep-water port is equipped with excellent railway and road hinterland networks that serves the major provincial cities in the Eastern and Central Provinces of Saudi Arabia.

CONCESSION AWARDED TO DEVELOP AND OPERATE THE RIYADH DRY PORT ECOSYSTEM

Saudi Global Ports has recently been awarded a concession by Saudi Railway Company ("SAR") to develop and operate the Riyadh Dry Port Ecosystem ("RDP"), comprising three facilities in Riyadh and Dammam, following a public private partnership tender process under the authority of the Kingdom's Privatization Supervisory Committee. The RDP concession agreement was signed during the inaugural Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee held in Riyadh on 07 December 2021.

SGP will develop and operate RDP and Dammam Seaport as an integrated system, to improve logistics network flow



efficiencies and reduce logistics costs in the Kingdom. It will also be collaborating with SAR and various stakeholders to provide multimodal and cargo solutions for market needs, and grow RDP's rail freight activities. Mr. Wan Chee Foong, PSA's Regional CEO of Middle East South Asia and Head of Group Business Development, said, "We thank Saudi Railway Company for their trust and confidence in Saudi Global Ports. As a leading global port operator and partner to cargo stakeholders, PSA strives to provide innovative digital and cargo solutions to businesses and governments around the world. We will continue to work closely alongside Saudi Global Ports and Saudi Railway Company with a common vision to transform Riyadh Dry Port into a resilient and sustainable supply chain ecosystem, to benefit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and beyond."

SGP UPGRADING CONTAINER TERMINALS AT DAMMAM

On 13 July 2021, Saudi Global Ports ("SGP") commenced the first phase of its upgrading and development programme at First and Second Container Terminals in King Abdulaziz Port Dammam. SGP's CEO Mr Edward Tah said: "We are taking progressive steps towards transforming Dammam into a leading international container port, equipped with digital and smart capabilities,



and continue to contribute towards Mawani and the Kingdom's plans for a transformational transport and logistics sector."



SGP FORMALLY ASSUMES OPERATORSHIP OF RIYADH DRY PORT

On 14th March 2022 SGP formally assumed the operatorship of the Riyadh Dry Port (RDP) Ecosystem under a new entity “SGP Riyadh”. The successful takeover was completed in under four months following the signing of a 10-year concession agreement between Saudi Railway Company (SAR) and SGP on 7th December 2021. Mr Wan Chee Foong, Regional CEO of Middle East South Asia, PSA International, said, “We would like to thank our partners, the Public Investment Fund (PIF), SAR, and the Kingdom for their support and trust throughout this journey. The integration of RDP and Dammam Port is timely as the demand for more resilient and sustainable supply chain ecosystems increases. PSA is committed to working alongside our partners towards the Kingdom’s vision to build an efficient logistics hub for the region and beyond.”

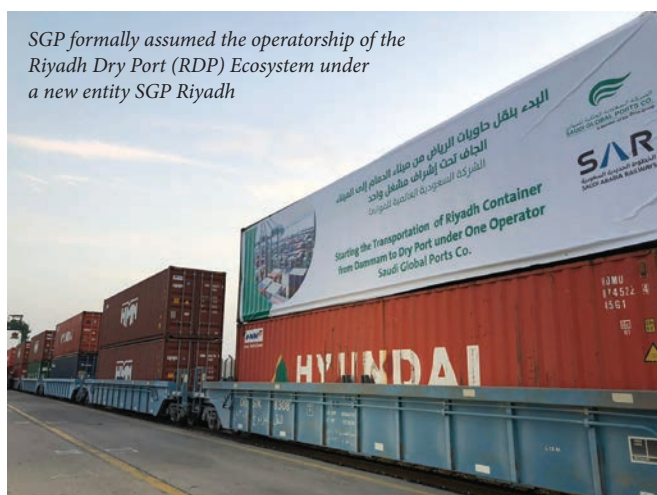


SGP AWARDS CONTRACT FOR FUTURE-READY QUAY CRANES

Saudi Global Ports held a virtual signing ceremony on 30 June 2022 to formalise the contract for three new future ready quay cranes (“QCs”) with Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industries Company Saudi Global Ports (“SGP”) and Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industries Company (“ZPMC”). Regional CEO of Middle East and South Asia and Head of Group Business Development of PSA International Mr Wan Chee Foong, was amongst the witnesses to the signing of the contract. These QCs will have a minimum outreach of 25 rows, with the possibility to extend further – readying SGP to handle larger next-generation vessels with high productivity, ease and efficiency. Mr Wan Chee Foong said, “PSA is pleased to have worked alongside Saudi Global Ports to develop the optimal design and specifications of the quay cranes and support the rigorous evaluation process. PSA’s commitment to the transformation

(Top row from left): Announcement of SGP’s award of concession to operate Riyadh Dry Port Ecosystem on 15th Dec 2021. Ready for expansion - virtual signing ceremony for acquisition of three new future-ready quay cranes with contracts signed by SGP’s Chairman, Mr Abdulla Zamil and SGP’s CEO Mr Edward Tah
(Photo: transportandlogisticsme.com)

of King Abdulaziz Port into a leading port with long-term sustainability, automation, digitisation and integrated supply chain goals will ensure Saudi Global Ports remains relevant and future-ready, realising the Kingdom’s plans to become a global logistics hub.



SGP formally assumed the operatorship of the Riyadh Dry Port (RDP) Ecosystem under a new entity SGP Riyadh

OWIS Opens First School Campus in Saudi Arabia

In May 2022 the Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC) announced the opening of the first campus of Singapore-based Global Schools Foundation's (GSF) One World International School (OWIS) in Riyadh. In September 2022 Singapore Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan launched the 22,796 sq m campus in an official opening ceremony



The new school is the product of the RCRC International Schools Attraction Programme, an initiative to bring international schools to the Saudi capital in partnership with the Kingdom's Ministry of Investment and the Ministry of Education.

RCRC's Head of Education Mr Mazen Tammar said: "Attracting prestigious global institutions such as the OWIS is a big part of how Riyadh is creating a world-class education ecosystem. This is a significant milestone in improving educational opportunities for all Riyadh residents."

Mr Atul Temurnikar, Chairman of the GSF, said: "OWIS believes in an all-inclusive education to help the next generation blossom into young adults with a global outlook. The school also adapted its education to meet the needs of the changing times. The Riyadh campus will reflect the OWIS's inherent philosophy of commitment to quality education. It will also give students the right foundation to propel them to international success in the future." (See accompanying interview)

Minister Balakrishnan and guests were taken on a tour of the campus and spent time with students. The Minister said: "In this time of great transformation all over the world, including in Saudi Arabia, it is essential that we prepare our children to have open minds, open hearts and exposure to diversity. I think this is where the Global Schools Foundation focuses on ensuring that every child is exposed to the diversity that the world represents."

The school offers comprehensive and holistic educational programmes that include arts, sports, music, and languages. OWIS provides personalized teaching for various stages of development including International Baccalaureate (IB), Primary Years Programme (PYP) and an American curriculum based on Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

The school offers modern, state-of-the-art infrastructure within a digital environment, designed to impart 21st century learning abilities to make students inquisitive explorers, able to apply their education in real world experiences. The range of programs offered include coding, robotics, design and technology, and STEM-related studies, it stated.

OWIS students in Riyadh will gain exposure to peers, experts, and faculty from the GSF's global education network through interschool, inter-campus and international activities to support in building strong student portfolios and global mindsets. GSF's educational offering is underpinned by value-driven programs that build emotional intelligence, encourage awareness, and equip students with the ability to flourish in culturally diverse environments.

Distinguished as one of the best education systems in the world by the OECD, Singapore's education system has been placed in the top five positions of



(Top row): Dr. Balakrishnan officially launched the campus in the presence of special guests Ambassador Wong Chow Ming, Mr. Mazen Ahmed Tammar, Sr Advisor to CEO of RCRC, GSF chairman and co-founder Mr. Atul Temurnikar and others
(Above): The 'Campus Heart' layout of the 22,796 sq m grounds

educational surveys by both the Program for International Schools Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

More about GSF

GSF is acknowledged as one of the world's most awarded network of schools by the World Book of Records, London UK and Switzerland in 2021, GSF has received more than 350 international awards in educational excellence, health and safety, social and emotional learning, and organisational excellence from the world's leading award bodies.



Interview: Mr Atul Temurnikar Chairman of the GSF



What made you finally decide on opening the campus in KSA? Under H.R.H. Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister, is embarking on a one-of-its-kind mission in the world, to transform KSA into a first world nation in the next two decades. In order to achieve this, educating the next generation of Saudi citizens will be an extremely critical factor, which will ensure that skills and talent development happens on a world-class level.

Therefore it is a natural choice for us to open our first school in Saudi Arabia which will provide Singapore standard of international schools and education. GSF (Singapore) and its OWIS were invited by the Royal Commission of Riyadh City (RCRC) to establish a top international school in the capital. RCRC's members are appointed by order of the Prime Minister.

Please share your experience of setting up the business here. We had a completely

outstanding experience establishing our school in the KSA. In 2019, members of the Saudi ministerial delegations visited GSF headquarters in Singapore, and visited our Global Indian International School which, incidentally, is the world's largest SMART Campus. Impressed with what they heard and what they saw, their decision was unanimous to ask GSF to establish schools in Saudi.

In December 2021, we were invited by RCRC to sign the agreement to establish the school, and the signing ceremony was carried out in the presence of H.E. Mr Tan See Leng, Minister for Trade and Industry, Republic of Singapore, and H.E. Mr Fahd Abdulmohsan Alrasheed, CEO of RCRC. RCRC facilitated in seeking all the regulatory approvals, which came in a fast-track mode. Enterprise Singapore, which is an arm of the Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, nurtured and assisted in GSF establishing this school in Saudi Arabia. The OWIS school was officially opened on 5th September 2022 by H.E. Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore, and in the presence of Mr Mazen Tammar, Senior executive adviser to the RCRC CEO.

Have you any advice for Singapore companies about doing business in the KSA and the Kingdom's potential growth in the general sectors as well as in the education sector? Saudi Arabia offers significant opportunities to Singapore companies, specially in infrastructure, services, design and construction, and this

is an area where Singapore companies have great expertise in providing world class products and services. Some government-linked companies like PSA International, SATS Catering have already made in-roads into Saudi, and now it's time for the private sector to take note of this opportunity.

Can you share what are the new learning methodologies/systems from Singapore has OWIS brought to Saudi Arabia?

OWIS is one of the fastest growing international schools from Southeast Asia. With multiculturalism at its core, the school is an inclusive community with a genuinely international atmosphere where students from more than 70 nationalities thrive under the guidance of teachers from various backgrounds. The other thing about OWIS is its philosophy of Kindness. The school is inclusive and multicultural which allows children to experience other cultures and make friends from different backgrounds. Kindness and international mindedness are an integral part of our teaching practice and daily school life. With kindness at the core of our school's culture, your child becomes part of a kind and truly international community where diversity and inclusivity are celebrated.

The school takes a personalised learning approach that guarantees each student is recognised for their own talents and abilities. The idea is to encourage children to develop a sense of responsibility, self-confidence and independence from a young age; and graduate into the world with academic, emotional as well as social intelligence.

ARAMCO Singapore: Committed to Conserve and Promote Singapore's Marine Biodiversity

Ms Marwa Al-Khuzaim, Managing Director of Aramco Asia Singapore: "Sustainability is a driver of Aramco's strategy and an emphasis of Aramco's strategic goals for decades. The company engages in a range of sustainability initiatives and programs that support the communities and the environment in which we operate."



Ms. Marwa Al-Khuzaim (2nd from left), Managing Director, Aramco Asia Singapore, sharing with Singapore President Halimah Yacob (right) about Aramco's support for the CoralAID Mineral Accretion units trial.

Aramco Asia Singapore (Aramco Singapore) has teamed up with the National Parks Board (NParks) to protect and enhance Singapore's marine biodiversity by supporting two initiatives - the trial application of CoralAID Mineral Accretion (CAMA) units, and a Marine Biology and Conservation Educational Programme.

Coral reefs are invaluable sources of ecological and economic richness. These ecosystems serve as nurseries for numerous marine species and act as natural barriers against coastal erosion. In Singapore, coral reefs support an ecosystem inhabited by rare and endangered species of seahorses, clams, sponges and other marine life.

As part of Aramco's contribution of US\$196,000 to the Garden City Fund, the two initiatives aim to establish the CAMA units in Singapore's waters to enhance coral growth, and educate students and the general public about the importance of protecting and conserving marine biodiversity.

New Technology in Singapore to Boost Coral Growth and Enhance Marine Biodiversity

The CoralAID Mineral Accretion (CAMA) units, a new NParks initiative under the "Plant-A-Coral, Seed-A-Reef" programme, will trial the use of mineral accretion technology in the reef enhancement units. This is the first time such technology is being used in Singapore, whereby corals are subjected to low-voltage electricity to stimulate their growth.

Ms Marwa Al-Khuzaim, Managing Director, Aramco Asia Singapore said: "At Aramco, we strongly believe in protecting and preserving the natural environment while delivering our business promise to provide the energy products the world needs. In Saudi Arabia, Aramco has actively promoted the growth of marine life in the Gulf with artificial reefs and we are very pleased to support the Singapore NParks' efforts in conserving and promoting marine biodiversity in Singapore's waters."



Aramco's support to enhance Singapore's marine biodiversity was announced at the NParks' Festival of Biodiversity on 25 September 2021 where Singapore President Halimah Yacob (middle) was the Guest-of-Honor. In attendance were Mr. Desmond Lee (right), Minister for National Development and Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration; Ms. Marwa Al-Khuzaim (second from left), Managing Director, Aramco Asia Singapore and Dr. Karenne Tun (second from right), Director, National Biodiversity Centre, NParks. Photo: National Parks Board

New Educational Programme to Empower Community to Take Action Towards Marine Conservation

Running from 2021 to 2022, the programme educates students and the general public about local marine biology and marine conservation efforts. This programme aims to empower more individuals to take action towards marine conservation by raising their awareness and appreciation for Singapore's diverse marine biodiversity, as well as other sustainability and conservation issues. A variety of educational resources and programmes, such as activity books, videos and educational workshops, will be designed for different age groups.

"Aramco advocates a culture that prioritises understanding of ecological habitats and promotes their protection. Engaging communities is an integral part of Aramco's environmental stewardship and we are proud to collaborate with NParks in raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity protection to schools and the general public in Singapore," added Ms Marwa Al-Khuzaim.

"Climate change is anticipated to drive increases in surface temperatures, which

will negatively impact corals and marine biodiversity. Therefore, such collaborations with organisations like Aramco to support research, outreach and education are timely. Together, we can co-develop solutions to better equip ourselves to meet these challenges and to ensure resilience and conservation of our marine biodiversity for future generations," said Professor Leo Tan, Chairman, Garden City Fund.

Aramco Employees Volunteering

As part of the "Plant-A-Coral, Seed-A-Reef" programme, employees from Aramco Singapore performed coral nursery maintenance work at the Marine Park Outreach. Aramco employees will also participate in future volunteering activities.

Aramco has a long history of protecting marine biodiversity globally, including its collaborations with King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology to conduct long-term multi-disciplinary marine research on the Red Sea; establish artificial reefs in Saudi Arabia; and improve the health and resilience of coral reefs in the United States and Japan.



To support Singapore's marine biodiversity efforts, Aramco Singapore employees volunteered to perform coral nursery maintenance work at the Marine Park Outreach on 8 September 2021.

"Aramco advocates a culture that prioritises understanding of ecological habitats and promotes their protection. ...and we are proud to collaborate with NParks in raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity protection"



Aramco Volunteers Collected 41kg of Marine Litter at Bendera Bay on St. John's Island

Marine litter is one of the most common pollution issues plaguing seas and oceans globally. Besides harming marine health and species, marine litter also get washed up onshore, causing further environmental, economic, safety, and health concerns.

In Singapore, the government collects on average 4,500 tonnes of marine debris each year. The Northeast Monsoon Season from December to early-March, as well as the Southwest Monsoon Season from June to September, bring in large volumes of marine litter onto Singapore's shores, including at Bendera Bay on St John's Island. A subtidal lagoon with a sandy habitat harboring coral, seagrass and other marine animals, Bendera Bay is an important location for research, educational activities on marine biodiversity and heritage.

To protect the marine biodiversity on local shores, Aramco employees in Singapore participated in a coastal cleanup organized by the National Parks Board (NParks) at Bendera Bay on 26 March 2022. Aramco employees also attended a virtual workshop the day before to understand the importance of marine biodiversity as well as the impact of marine litter to the environment.

“By participating in the coastal clean-up, we hope to make Singapore beaches a cleaner and safer place for wildlife and for the local community. We also hope that through this activity, our employees will have a deeper appreciation for marine biodiversity while helping keep our beaches clean”



(Top): Aramco staff putting words into action promoting a healthy coastal environment. (Above row from left): Marwa Al-Khuzaimi, Managing Director, Aramco Singapore and Aramco employees conducted a coastal cleanup at Bendera Bay, St. John's Island on 26 March where they collected 41kg of marine litter

Marwa Al-Khuzaimi, Managing Director of Aramco Singapore said, “Sustainability is a driver of Aramco’s strategy and an emphasis of Aramco’s strategic goals for decades. The company engages in a range of sustainability initiatives and programs that support the communities and the environment in which we operate. Aramco’s sustainability initiatives in Singapore not only align with our efforts globally, they are also in line with the NParks’ strategies to build climate resilience through the City in Nature vision, a key pillar of the Singapore Green Plan 2030.”

“By participating in the coastal clean-up, we hope to make Singapore beaches a cleaner and safer place for wildlife and for the local community. We also hope that through this activity, our employees will have a deeper appreciation for marine biodiversity while helping keep our beaches clean,” added Ms Al-Khuzaimi.

Jeffrey Tan, Quality Engineer at Aramco and participant of both the educational

workshop and the coastal cleanup said, “It was eye-opening to learn that the breakdown of our disposed wastes into microscopic level will feed the fishes and come back to us and our future generations via the food chain. The coastal clean-up is a good reminder for us to do our part in our daily lives by being mindful of what we use and how we dispose of these items after use.”

From NParks, Dr. Karenne Tun, Director of the Coastal and Marine National Biodiversity Centre, said “NParks’ conservation, education and outreach programs involve the efforts and support of various stakeholders, including companies, interest groups and members of the public. Everyone can contribute to the conservation of our marine ecosystem. Companies can help to raise awareness of the importance of our marine ecosystem and participate in our programs, such as the coastal clean-up. They could also support the programs by donations through NParks registered charity, Garden City Fund.”

Aramco and PTT Deepen Energy Cooperation in Thailand



(From left to right): Mr. Disathat Panyarachun, Senior Executive Vice President, International Trading Business Unit, PTT, Mr. Auttapol Rerkpiboon, President & Chief Executive Officer, PTT, with Mr. Ibrahim Al-Buainain, Vice President of Sales, Trading & Supply Planning, Saudi Aramco.

Saudi Arabian Oil Company (“Aramco”) is exploring further collaboration with Thailand’s national oil company PTT, as it expands its downstream presence in Asia. The two companies signed a memorandum of understanding at a ceremony in Bangkok on 11 May 2022.

The companies aim to strengthen cooperation across crude oil sourcing and the marketing of refining and petrochemical products as well as liquefied natural gas (LNG). Other potential areas of activity include blue and green hydrogen and various clean energy initiatives.

Ibrahim Al-Buainain, Saudi Aramco Vice President, Sales, Trading and Supply Planning, said: “Today represents an important step forward as we deepen and broaden this relationship to achieve greater cooperation across a wide range of activities, from sourcing

“(This) represents an important step forward as we deepen and broaden this relationship to achieve greater cooperation across a wide range of activities, from sourcing crude oil and marketing refining and petrochemical products and LNG, to exploring blue and green hydrogen and progressing other clean energy initiatives”

crude oil and marketing refining and petrochemical products and LNG, to exploring blue and green hydrogen and progressing other clean energy initiatives.”

Auttapol Rerkpiboon, PTT President & Chief Executive Officer, said: “Today

marks a significant milestone for PTT and Aramco as we look to the future and extend our collaboration beyond conventional energy. It also reflects our ongoing commitment to security of supply as we embrace the energy transition.”

Disathat Panyarachun, PTT Senior Executive Vice President, International Trading Business Unit, said: “PTT and Aramco have built strong ties around the supply and trading of crude oil and other products. Extending our collaboration across the value chain to include emerging decarbonization initiatives is a great opportunity to strengthen our relationship and foster further business growth.” Mr Panyarachun also added: “This also aligns with our ‘green and clean’ strategy which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as part of PTT’s ‘Powering Life with Future Energy and Beyond’ corporate vision.”

Saudi Arabia History Revisited

Time Travel at Hegra

Visitors to Saudi Arabia will now be able look upon the ancient archaeological site – Hegra – undisturbed for almost 2,000 years, as the Kingdom opens up its historical sites to tourists from around the world



The carved rock cave tombs of Hegra aka as Madain Salih or Al-Hijr archaeological site

Unleash the time traveller in you as you gaze upon some of the most remarkable sites that document the past history and cultural richness of the Kingdom. Located near the north-western town of Al-Ula, Hegra/Al Hijr is a superb landmark site which was the first World Heritage property to be inscribed in Saudi Arabia by UNESCO. What's important about Hegra is that it's the largest conserved site of the civilization of the Nabataeans, south of Petra in Jordan. The Nabataeans were an ancient Arab people who inhabited northern Arabia and the southern Levant.

The only remnants of that city they built, which prospered until the 3rd century CE, are this collection of rock-cut tombs and relics. Visitors can gaze upon the marvellous complex of Hegra which dates back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries BCE and the pre-Islamic period, and particularly in the 1st century CE. Points of interest not to be missed are its well-preserved monumental tombs with their decorative facades. Also to be found here are around 50 inscriptions dating to the pre-Nabataean period and several cave drawings.

An excellent window to the Nabataean civilization Al-Hijr comprises 111 monumental tombs, directly cut into the rose-coloured sandstone, 94 of which are decorated, and water wells. Not only is the site an outstanding example of the Nabataeans' architectural accomplishment, it also documents the development of Nabataean agricultural techniques using a large number of artificial wells in rocky ground. These wells are still being used today. The findings of Hegra or Madain Saleh, as it is also known as, are a

documentation of its important setting on the international caravan trade between the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean world and Asia during late Antiquity. It also showcases the cultural exchanges in architecture, decoration, language use and the caravan trade of the time. Though Hegra was subjugated by the Romans, it prospered till the 3rd century CE. One can hire a private taxi from Madinah city, or Riyadh, to the Al Hijr Archaeological Site also referred to as 'The Capital of Monuments'



Take a stroll down Al Ula Old Town Market Rd to shop from local artisans, traditional crafts and cafes

The Rise and Rise of the Red Sea Diversions

The allure of pristine beaches and underwater adventures are making Saudi Arabia's coastal expanses a huge draw for marine enthusiasts

Spread over an expanse of 2.25 million sq km, much of which is desert land, Saudi Arabia, is one of the hottest countries in the world. The cooling environs of its mountains to the southwest offer another perspective altogether of Saudi Arabia's natural beauty and cultural diversity.

There is no denying how this little known country, from a traveller's view point, continues to excite our sensibilities as a land of mystery and magic. It's possible that its being largely closed for tourism has a lot to do with our curiosity about the land, the people and its traditions and customs.

With many areas now open to tourism there's much excitement over travelling to its gorgeous beaches. There's a growing interest in the massive development launched along the 3,400 km long coastal belt, where the highest point is Jabal Sawda, 3,015 m (9,892 ft) and the lowest—the Persian Gulf, Red Sea 0 m (0 ft). The allurements of virgin beaches and rich underwater adventures to indulge in on the coastal region is gaining footfalls each year from marine enthusiasts from home and abroad.

Coastal Charms

Hugging the shorelines of the Red Sea in the west and the Arabia Gulf in the east, Saudi Arabia's coastal belt is becoming a magnet for travellers seeking the charms of uncrowded virgin beaches. Predictably, with the focus on tourism of the Kingdom's Vision 2030, Saudi beach areas continue to get transformed as luxury resort destinations with world-class tourist attractions. It's interesting to note that Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) a couple of years back even

The Red Sea coast, famous for its coral reefs, offers superb all-year-round beach thrills. Don't forget to pack your scuba gear as you head for the coastal town of Jeddah, 'the Bride of the Red Sea', that's awash with beach resorts

launched the "Summer of Saudi Arabia" season titled "Tanaffus", with the aim to boost domestic tourism and tap the massive potential of major tourist destinations such as coastal cities and regions like the Eastern Province, Jeddah, Tabuk, Yanbu, Rabigh and Umluj along the coastlines. Prime spots for these developmental works, for example in the coral rich Red Sea belt, are the NEOM, Amaala, and the Red Sea projects.

The Red Sea coast, famous for its coral reefs, offers superb all-year-round beach thrills. Don't forget to pack your scuba gear as you head for the coastal town of Jeddah, 'the Bride of the Red Sea', where you can go scuba diving. Awash with beach resorts it is also an excellent base for the nearby tourist attractions.

Jeddah

Marked by a host of exciting diving sites that offer access to incredible aquatic life and numerous wrecks and reefs, Jeddah welcomes throngs of visitors to explore the rich marine life. It's a huge fun place for

everyone, from beginners to experts, joining the snorkelling boat trips on offer.

The choice of diving sites includes those such as Miss Marie Wreck, Boiler Wreck, The Farasan Banks, Cable Wreck and Jabal Al Lith. Expert divers from around the world love the challenges offered by the Ann Ann Wreck. Scuba aside, visitors can also sign up for a recreational luxury cruise, where over 3-4 days one can enjoy fine dining, entertaining shows and stops at virgin sand beaches with water sports thrown in as added incentive. And even dolphin sightings are not uncommon!

Yanbu

While cruising the azure waters of the Red Sea, a fabulous stopover, is Ras Al Abyad in Yanbu, 'the Pearl of the Red Sea', where you'll discover an all-female beach along with the line-up of family beaches. Another popular stop is Sindalah Island, where you can enjoy a spa treatment; they have private cabanas on the beach.

Umluj

Travellers visiting the northern region of Tabuk, the beaches of Haql, on the northwestern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, and Umluj are bound to be mesmerised the vast swathes of virgin white sands. At Umluj 'the Maldives of Saudi Arabia' there are exceptional snorkelling experiences to be enjoyed, amongst the fabulous coral reefs that abound here.

The serenity and splendour of the beaches of Al-Khobar, Qatif, Ras Tanura, and Jubail is a huge draw to indulge your marine mania.

Saudi Arabia: Sustainability Matters

The Kingdom has progressively pursued its core agenda of 'going green' in a big way with many new initiatives driving the course of its goal to implement sustainable solutions

Saudi Arabia has achieved most of the 17 goals for comprehensive sustainable development of the UN, thus surpassing the achievements of the UN Agenda 2030. This was announced by Abdullah Al-Marwani, assistant undersecretary for Planning and National Policies at Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Economy and Planning during the Second Forum of Economic and Social Council on financing for development. He ascribed this success to the structural reforms adopted by the government of King Salman on many development levels including social, financial, administration and productive, as reported by Arab News.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), through the 2030 Vision and the 2020 National Transformation Program (NTP) seeks to speed up its sustainability agenda. The National Transformation Program (NTP) 2020 was tasked to achieve the UN objectives by encouraging and creating more investment initiatives in human capital, infrastructure, education, health and alternative energy to diversify the economic base, and promote social gains from comprehensive development that extends protection and preservation of the environment and even endangered species of wildlife.



Saudi Arabia G20 Presidency saw the launch of The Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats which targets a 50% reduction in degraded land by 2040

Today Saudi Arabia is ranked first globally on the Species Protection Index. The Kingdom was also ranked first in the 'Tree Cover Loss' index and 'Wetland Loss' index, even as work grows apace to establish a climate change centre in the Kingdom.

The Vision 2030 agenda seeks to address environmental issues, implement sustainable solutions and the quality of life for its citizenry.

The Saudi government's agenda for sustainable development has been lent wings by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques HRH King Salman bin Abdulaziz, who shared these views on the subject: "We are part of this world and we live the problems and challenges it is facing. We all share this responsibility and we will contribute, God willing, actively to the development of solutions to many of the world's pressing issues, including the issues of the environment and sustainable development. We will continue

in this regard to work with international organizations, institutions and partners."

This view has been complimented by HRH Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud who said: "In order to preserve the unique environmental character of the region, environmental sustainability laws and mechanisms will be developed. Natural resources will be conserved in accordance with the best practices and standards in place globally."

The Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture has launched 17 initiatives to protect the environment, apart from developing meteorological services as part of the 2020 National Transformation Program. Key factors that also continue to drive the Saudi sustainability agenda are:

- Investing in and developing Saudi Arabia's renewable energy sector
- Reducing domestic energy consumption
- Promoting the Circular Carbon Economy and developing a hydrogen sector
- An ambitious Afforestation Programme

In March 2021 the Crown Prince announced the Saudi Green Initiative (SGI) and the Middle East Green Initiative which were welcomed enthusiastically. The initiative is aimed at reducing carbon emissions by 60 percent, increasing 50 percent of its energy capacity from renewables by 2030, and planting 50 billion trees in the Middle East.

In a whole-of-society approach, SGI works with entities and organizations across the Kingdom to amplify their existing climate actions and create opportunities for new initiatives. SGI also bridges the gap between public and private sustainability efforts, identifying opportunities for collaboration and innovation

Saudi Green Initiative Targets

50%

Renewables in energy mix by 2030

4%

Reduce carbon emissions by 4% of global contributions

10bn

Trees to be planted across the Kingdom

30%

of Saudi Arabia designated as protected land

Net Zero

Carbon emissions by 2060

US\$187bn

1st package of investment to develop Green Economy

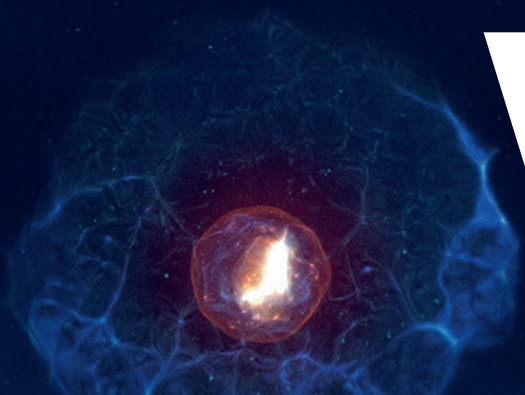
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