



Ministry of Hajj and Umrah  
honors outstanding employees

King Salman's two years of accomplishments

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

# عامان

من الانجاز في مختلف  
مسارات العمل التنموي

«هدفنا الأول أن تكون  
بلادنا نموذجاً ناجحاً  
ورائداً في العالم  
على كافة الأصعدة  
وسأعمل معكم على  
تحقيق ذلك»

خادم الحرمين الشريفين



مؤسسة مطوحي حجاج جنوب آسيا  
Muttawiffy Hujja South Asia Est.



# We pledge allegiance to our King

**C**itizens in the Kingdom celebrated on Rabi Al-Thani 03 the passing of two years since allegiance was pledged to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the King of wisdom, determination, and resolve, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, God protect him.

Everyone has been diligent to make this a blessed occasion and an opportunity to recall the efforts put forth by our benevolent king to serve his bountiful country, his gracious people, and his Islamic community. All recall his accomplishments in various sectors during these two years since he ascended to the throne, all for the sake of a stronger present and a brighter future.

This national event was also an opportunity for the people both to renew their allegiance to their leaders and express their trust in them.

Fortunately this period has witnessed a number of royal decrees for the benefit of this country and its citizens. The fiscal budget is one among them which emphasized the strength of the Saudi economy and gave priority to various development projects that serve the citizens directly.

The budget is in compliance with Vision 2030 which was launched in April, and the other comprehensive national transformation programs that will allow the private sector to lead the national economy in coming years.

We at the South Asia Pilgrims Mutawiffs Establishment pledge our allegiance to our leaders, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud; HRH Prince Muhammad Bin Naif Bin Abdulaziz, the Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister and President of the Council of Political and Security

Affairs and Chairman Supreme Hajj Committee, and HRH Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, Deputy Crown Prince, Minister of Defense and President Council of Economic and Development Affairs, God protect them all.

We commit ourselves to provide best services to the pilgrims and strive to implement Vision 2030. This vision seeks to open new horizons and guarantees a quantum leap in how services are provided to guests of God's sacred house according to the plans and strategies laid down by our leaders, and direct, constant, caring supervision from Prince Khaled Al-Faisal Bin Abdulaziz, Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Governor of Makkah region, and President, Central Hajj Committee, as well as HE Dr. Muhammad Saleh Bin Tahir Benten, Minister of Hajj and Umrah, and his ministerial team.

South Asia Pilgrims Mutawiffs Establishment from the beginning of the current Hirji year has continued to serve the pilgrims in the best possible manner, similar to our accomplishments during last Haj season. We strive to improve our services with innovations this year - God willing - by concentrating on planning detailed operations, all possible preparations, and equipping all those serving the pilgrims through training, especially our promising youths. Our efforts reflect the eagerness of our leaders to serve the pilgrims with utmost care so that they perform the rituals with maximum comfort and ease.

I sincerely pray to Allah SWT to preserve this country; bless it and its diligent leaders with stability and security; allow this time of good and giving to continue; and save this and every Muslim country from all evil plots.



**Dr. Ra'fat Ismail Badr**

Chairman of The Board of Directors  
South Asia Pilgrims  
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## King Salman's two years of accomplishments

**S**audi citizens are celebrating second anniversary of pledging allegiance to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud - may Allah protect him. During the last two years, King Salman has achieved immense progress for the Kingdom at various levels, both internally and externally.

*Prepared by: editorial board*

On Rabi Al-Awwal 03, 1436 AH (January 23, 2015) citizens pledged allegiance to the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques King Salman after more than two-and-a-half years of service as crown prince and deputy prime minister. He was appointed to the said post on June 18, 2012 by a royal decree. It was in addition to being the defense minister, a post he held since November 05, 2011. Ear-

lier, King Salman served as Governor of Riyadh for more than 50 years.

Ahellah highlights the King's achievements during the last two years of his reign.

### Vision 2030

The Kingdom's Vision 2030, announced in April 2016, is one of the most prominent achievements. It was prepared by the Board of Economic Affairs and



## The Kingdom celebrates two years of King Salman's reign



Development, headed by His Royal Highness Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. It's a three-fold vision containing prosperous economy; a dynamic society, and an ambitious nation.

Vision 2030 aims to reduce dependence on oil and ensure sustainable development. The Kingdom is characterized by an abundance of renewable energy alternatives, generous deposits of gold, phosphates, uranium, etc. But the most important of all is the competent people – in particular the youth - who are the real wealth of the country.

In order to achieve a prosperous economy Vision 2030 was launched which aims at raising the non-oil exports from 16% to at least 50% of the total non-oil GDP, and increase Kingdom's logistics servic-

es index from rank 49 to 25 worldwide and number one regionally.

Vision 2030 also aims at raising FDI percentage of GDP from 3.8% to the global average of 5.7%, moving from place 25 in the Global Competitiveness Index to the top ten.

The vision includes raising the proportion of women's participation in the labor market from 22% to 30%, and increase the contribution of small and medium enterprises in the GDP from 20% to 35%. This will lower the unemployment rate from 11.6% to 7%.

Vision 2030 aims at increasing the number of pilgrims from eight million to 30 million. It also aims

to raise the contribution of the non-profit sector in the gross domestic product from less than 1% to 5%, and raise the proportion of household savings of their total income from 6% to 10%.

### Attending summit

To tackle the serious challenges facing the region, the Kingdom has begun addressing these issues through collaborative work with the GCC. King Salman participated in the 37th GCC summit hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain on December 6-7, 2016. In his speech the king urged measures on several regional issues and in particular world action to end bloodbath in Yemen and Syria.



In this regard King Salam also embarked on state visits to leaders in neighbouring UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait

On the occasion, King Salman wrote on his Twitter account: “The Gulf Arab states and their peoples have my greatest of consideration and respect. What I have seen during my visits highlights the reality of the strong relationship between our peoples and the strength of our unified bonds.

### Shoura Council

On December 14, 2016, King Salman opened the first year of the Shoura Council’s seventh session at its headquarters in Riyadh. Speaking on the oc-

casional, he said: “We thank God and commence work for first year of the Shoura Council’s seventh session, asking God Almighty to guide us to serve our faith, country, and our citizens. We thank the Shoura Council work and its efforts, and wish its members every success.”

### Saudi-China ties

In January, 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the Kingdom. During the Chinese leader’s visit, the two countries inked 14 industrial and energy agreements. During his meeting with Saudi leadership, the Chinese leader discussed bilateral relations and enhance “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.” The

**Vision 2030  
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formation of a joint high-level commission to speed up the partnership was agreed to as well.

### Operation Northern Thunder

On March 10, 2016 AD, “North Thunder” exercises concluded. This event hosted by the Kingdom was the largest Arabic Islamic military drill in Kingdom’s Hafr Al Batin area. 20 Islamic and Arab states participated in the drill. This exercise was performed to raise the technical and combat efficiency of the troops.

### Events-filled month

April 2016 was filled with important events. On the second of the month the Kingdom announced its intention to establish the largest sovereign wealth fund worth \$2 trillion.

On April 14, Saudi-Turkish relations witnessed a quantum leap. A “Strategic

## **Operations Decisive Storm and Restoring Hope aim to support Yemen against the putsch**

Coordinating Council” was formed between the two countries, ensuring greater understanding in the political and economic fields.

On April 20, US President Barack Obama visited the Kingdom to strengthen anti-terrorism efforts, and discuss the bloody conflicts in Yemen and Syria. Obama met with the Custodian of Two Holy Mosques and other officials in the Kingdom.

April 27 witnessed the signing of a milestone agreement in Riyadh between the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman and King Abdullah II of Jordan to create a Saudi-Jordanian Saudi Coordination Council to strengthen ties between the two countries in various sectors.

In May 2016, the Saudi Development Fund placed \$60 million in the Palestinian Financial Ministry’s ac-



count to support Palestinian brothers. In the same month, an agreement was signed to create a coordination council between the Kingdom and the UAE.

### **State restructuring**

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has been keen to serve the people of the Kingdom and the country. To achieve a quantum leap in the state apparatus and various sectors, he issued various royal decrees on January 29, 2015, mainly among them, to reshuffle the cabinet, abolish a number of committees and councils, and the establishment of a bicameral council linked to the Council of Ministers, named as the “Council of Political

and Security Affairs” to be chaired by HRH Prince Mohammed Bin Naif Bin Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. Also created was the “Council of Economic Affairs and Development” headed by HRH Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Crown Prince, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

The royal decrees also included integration of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education in one ministry to be called the Ministry of Education. In addition, King Salman ordered that charities, professional associations, and each specialized literary and sports clubs





## Strategic partnerships creating stronger ties between the Kingdom, China, and Turkey

would be supported with grants of SR10 million.

Lastly, an order was issued for the adoption of SR20 billion to provide electricity and water services schemes.

### Decisive Storm and Restoring Hope

As an extension of his pragmatic and resolute personality, quick to make decisions in the public interest, the King declared in March 2015 the launch of “Decisive Storm” along with the leadership of the Arab coalition forces to support the brotherly Yemeni people and their legitimate rulers against militias, rebels and supporters of Iran-backed Ali Abdullah Saleh.

This was followed by the

launch of the “Restoring Hope” operation against the rebels April 21, 2015.

### Global Conference

On March 11, 2015, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, opened the second International Conference on the History of King Abdul Aziz - may God have mercy on him - organized by Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh. He also inaugurated the opening of several completed university projects including educational buildings in the University camp us in Riyadh as well as in each of the university’s branches around the Kingdom. Additionally, service and technology projects were opened in three

areas of housing faculty, as well as multi-level parking structures for students and infrastructure projects for communications and electronic systems. These projects cost a total of around three billion and two hundred and thirty-five million riyals.

The King also laid the foundation stone for a number of university projects relating to electronic, educational, support and technology services in Riyadh and the university’s branches and institutes in the various regions of the Kingdom. These projects cost a total of eight billion five hundred and ninety million riyals.

He also inaugurated the Museum of the History of Science and Technology in Islam, which was established by the University in collaboration with the Institute of History of the Arab

## Establishment of Council for Economic and Development Affairs & Council for Political and Security Affairs

and Islamic Sciences at the University of Frankfurt in Germany.

### King Fahd Exhibition

On March 13, King Salman opened the History of King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Exhibition titled "Fahd ... the spirit of leadership," organized by the sons and grandsons of King Fahd, in collaboration with the King Abdulaziz Foundation. The exhibition was held at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center.

He also inaugurated the development of the Bujairi Quarter in Riyadh as part of the historic Diriya area. The historical quarter is being developed by the The Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA), the government body responsible for the Historical Addiriyah Development Program. Bujairi is gateway to Diriya. An engraved plate carried by a group of children was placed at this site.



On May 13, 2015 he laid the foundation stone of the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action headquarters. This center will unify Kingdom's humanitarian and relief works. He announced the allocation of SR one billion for relief and humanitar-

ian work, in addition to the previously announced SR one billion as humanitarian relief for the distressed Yemeni people

### Inspection of Grand Mosque

King Salam also visited the Grand Mosque in





### Madina Airport

King Salman has sponsored various development projects to serve the nation and the people. One of the most important projects was the opening of the new Prince Mohammed Bin Abdul Aziz International Airport in Madinah. The airport has a capacity to serve 8 million passengers annually in the first phase, which will increase to 18 million passengers a year in the second phase, and during the third phase of the plan the airport will provide more than double the traffic capacity, serving more than 40 million passengers annually.

He also opened five projects within the third Saudi expansion of the Grand Mosque in Makkah including the expansion of the mosque, squares, tunnels and building services inside the first ring road.

### Educational Missions

During his visit to the United States in September 2015, King Salman ordered to support the Saudi students studying in the US at their own through scholarship program if those students fulfilled the scholarship conditions. He also assured them treatment chronic diseases.

Makkah and inspected the third phase of a project to increase the capacity of the mosque. He was briefed with illustrative diagrams and paintings showing the various stages of implementation of the project to expand the Grand Mosque as well as what has been accomplished so far.

In the holy month of Ramadan 1436 (June 2015), under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the foundation stone was laid for the “The Best of Makkah.” This philanthropic venture will benefit the Disabled Children’s Association.

In Madina the King was briefed on the Prophet’s

Mosque expansion projects. The briefing included illustrations and plans on related projects, expansion of the Prophet’s Mosque and the roads which connect the Holy Mosque to the Quba Mosque. Additionally, presentation on the expansion of the Quba Mosque and a project entitled Dar Al-Hijrah which will include a transport network and crowd control projects was made. He then presided over the Naif Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud International Award of the Prophet’s Sunnah and contemporary Islamic studies ceremony. This award was founded by the deceased Crown Prince, God have mercy on him, to serve the sciences of Hadith.



## Prince Khaled Al-Faisal opens workshop on “Designing a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Hajj season 1438H”

**U**nder the slogan of “Designing a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Hajj Season 1438 H” Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, Governor of Makkah & Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and president of the Central Hajj Committee, inaugurated the second annual Hajj Services Workshop for Hajj Season on Rabi Al-Awwal 5.

Jeddah - “Al-Ahella”

In his opening speech he said that help from Allah, purity of intentions and will to extend excellent services to the pilgrims were the reasons that helped us succeed in having a successful Haj season. He prayed Allah to help and bless all with strength to serve the pilgrims in the forthcoming Haj season. He stated that last year’s Hajj services were impeccable and exemplary and thanked all those who were involved.

### King Salman’s assurance

Prince Khaled said: “I’m not exaggerating when I express my sincere gratitude and respects to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud (May Allah SWT bless him) for the importance he attaches to Hajj and Umrah.” He added: “Last year during his visit to the Holy Mosque King Salman assured that God willing we will provide whatever this sacred mosque needs.”

The Governor of Makkah pointed out that the King has requested the study analyzing the priorities needed in improving the Holy sites be completed promptly and delivered to him.

Prince Khaled expressed his ap-



preciation for the efforts being put forth by the government and private agencies and all those men and women serving the Guests of the Most Merciful, saying: I sincerely appreciate your efforts and thank you all and am proud of your services in this sector.”

### Factors for success

Speaking about the factors for a successful 1437H Hajj Season, Prince Khaled first thanked Allah and said: “When our intentions were pure and our services were top-class, Hajj was successful.” He added: “The level we have reached – with God’s help – resulted from the foundations laid by our forefathers. We have become the most equipped nation to manage and oversee the throngs of people who have been coming to perform Hajj from the time of Abraham – peace be upon him – till the modern times.” He stressed on the necessity of Makkah, Madina, the holy sites, Jeddah, and Taif as modern Islamic cities with a Saudi identity.

He concluded: “Whoever does not have the ability to realize this dream with us should relinquish his responsibilities and leave them for other to assume.”

### Workshop

Prince Khaled then honored the agencies which participated in the Hajj services and opened the workshop. 130 experts from 45 different private and government agencies that provide Hajj services participated and discussed the mechanisms and methods for providing best services to the Guests of the Most Merciful. He stressed that these services should embody best practices to realize the objectives set



by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosque’s government, seeking to improve every aspect of pilgrims’ services and providing them with safety and security from the start of their spiritual journey until they return to their home countries.

### Ideas and solutions

Continuing the discussion, Dr. Hesham Al-Falih, Advisor to the Governor of Makkah and President of the Hajj preparation committee indicated that the workshop discussed many new issues and points pertaining to the work schedule for

Hajj, such as housing services, food services, transportation, general amenities, reception and tourist guides, and the services from government and private agencies (both supervisory or service based).

He noted that the workshop has opened the door for new ideas and solutions in developing the holy sites, with discussions on these issues taking place between all concerned parties to reach mutually beneficial solutions that meet the Kingdom’s vision as well the serve the expected increase in numbers.



## Ministry of Hajj and Umrah honors outstanding employees



**T**he Ministry of Hajj and Umrah organized a ceremony on the evening of Safar 02, 1437 AH corresponding to November 02, 2016 at the Ministry's premises to honor outstanding employees .

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Makkah - "Al-Ahella"

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His Excellency, the Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr. Muhammad Saleh Bin Tahir Benten; deputy ministers of Hajj and Umrah, general managers of the ministry's branches and offices, presidents and delegates from the various Tawafah offices attended the function.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Benten clarified that the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah started preparations several months ago to receive Umrah pilgrims and that the Ministry has assumed immense responsibilities by providing services and facilities to those performing Umrah.

His Excellency highlighted the Saudi leadership's gratitude to all employees in the Hajj sector for their efforts during the 1437H Hajj season. The Hajj season ended successfully and those involved in this noble service achieved great success for their dedicated services. He thanked Allah for the great accomplishment which was only to earn His Mercy and serve His guests.

### Immense efforts

A short film on the immense efforts to serve the pilgrims in



the best possible way by the government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, was part of the ceremony. The film highlighted the services being provided to the pilgrims by the Ministry of Haj & Umrah during the Haj season. At the forefront of the service is tracking lost pilgrims in Makkah, Madina and holy sites

A committee was also formed to accept suggestions and complaints.

The ceremony concluded with honoring those who extended exemplary service to the guest of Allah. Dr. Ra'fat Ismail Badr, Chairman of the Board of Directors, South Asia Pilgrims Muta-wiffs Establishment was among those who were honored.



# Dignitaries hail South Asia Pilgrims Mutawwifs

## Establishment's services to pilgrims

**S**outh Asia Pilgrims Mutawwifs Establishment recently received a number of letters of thanks from many dignitaries who expressed their appreciation for the Establishment's efforts in serving the pilgrims. The dignitaries also praised Ahella magazine for its outstanding performance in highlighting the Establishment's activities in conjunction with government efforts to serve the pilgrims.



Sheikh Saleh Bin Abdul Aziz Ibn Muhammad Al-Sheikh



Prepared by: Editorial Board

### Praise worthy services

His Excellency Sheikh Saleh Bin Abdul Aziz Ibn Muhammad Al-Sheikh, the Minister of Islamic Affairs, Call and Guidance, wrote on 16.01.1438H to Dr. Ra'fat Ismail Badr, Chairman of The Board of Directors, South Asia Pilgrims Mutsawiffs Establishment, saying: "I have received with great pleasure your letter No. 1481 dated 07.12.1437H, along with a copy of issue 31 (11th year) of

the Ahella magazine for the month of Dhu Al-Hijjah 1437 AH. I extend my thanks to you and pray Allah to bless you with His mercy and reward you amply for your services to the pilgrims."

### Ahella – a gift

Dr. Abdul Fattah Bin Sulaiman Mashat, Dean of Administration and Registration, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah in his letter to Dr. Ra'fat said: "Thank you for your letter No.1481dated 07.12. 1437 containing a copy of issue 31 of the Ahellah, a cultural quarterly magazine issued by the



South Asia Pilgrims Mutawwifs Establishment for the month of Dhu al-Hijjah1437 AH as a gift. Your efforts in serving the pilgrims are praise worthy. I pray for your success and May Allah bless you with rewards."



Dr. Abdul Fattah Bin Sulaiman Mashat



Mr. Maher Bin Saleh Jamal



**Commendable efforts**

Mr. Maher Bin Saleh Jamal, Chairman of the Makkah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in his letter to Dr. Ra'fat Badr said: "We at the Makkah Chamber of Commerce & Industry, present our compliments and apprecia-

tion to you for your letter No. 1481 dated 07.12.1437 along your gift of issue No.31 of Ahella magazine. Your efforts are commendable and the magazine sheds light on South Asia Pilgrims Mutawifs Establishment's professional services to the pil-

grims. The magazine is a cultural documentation and creates awareness. It is my pleasure to present to you the latest issue of the Journal of Makkah Chamber of Commerce. Please accept my sincere thanks and appreciation."



# Minister of Hajj and Umrah opens the Tawafa Workshop

**H**E Dr. Muhammad Saleh Bin Taher Benten, Minister of Hajj and Umrah, opened the “Future visit for improving Tawaf services” workshop on Muharram 28. The workshop was attended by the ministry’s officials, heads of the Tawafa Associations and their managers.

Makkah – **Al-Ahella**



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The ministry’s objective behind the workshop was to study advanced programs to improve the general performance and service to the pilgrims. This will be accomplished by raising the general serving proficiency of Tawafa associations, improving services, and providing greater care to the maximum number of pilgrims possible.

## Serving pilgrims

At the outset, Dr. Benten highlighted the importance and care the government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud attaches to serving the pilgrims with quality services and enable them to perform the rituals with utmost comfort and ease.

He pointed out that such workshops are an extension of the Kingdom’s Vision2030 and the National Transformation Program

2020. All associations connected with Hajj and Umrah services put in tremendous effort to develop and plan strategies to satisfactorily serve the pilgrims.

Dr. Benten hailed the efforts of the leaders and employees of the Tawafa associations in serving the pilgrims throughout the year as an established practice and duty. He emphasized that the Hajj and Umrah sector is witnessing unprecedented developments. The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah works to apply a new methodology based on technologies that improves performance, increases transparency, and applies quality standards.

He concluded by stating the ministry is preparing to move from Hajj services to Hospitality industry, and from seasonal to a culture of annual work.

## Working papers

A number of working papers were read. Notably among them were “Issuance of Capital Shares for Tawafah Agencies” by Dr. Muhammad Feda Aldin Bahjat, a legal accountant and managerial consultant; “Inheritance of Tawafah Agency Shares” by Abdul Wahid B. Burhan Saif Aldin, President of the Supreme Council for Tawafah Agencies; “A Balanced Alternative to Capitalizing Tawafah Organizations” by Dr. Fayez Jammal, member of the Tawafah organizations for Arab countries, and finally “A Comprehensive Project for the Development of Tawafa Associations” by Dr. Tariq Kuçic, member of the Tawafah organizations for Turkish pilgrims and European, American, and Australian Muslims

Discussion among participants and Dr. Benten was concluding part of the workshop.