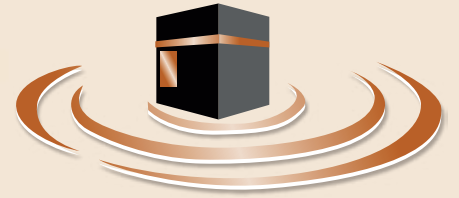


# Al-Ahella



Quarterly Magazine for Culture and Information published by Mutawiffy Hujjaj South Asia Establishment

Vol. 14 - Issue 39 - Ramadan 1440H



**MBS reviews 3rd Expansion works at Grand Mosque**

**The “Asal Alhikaya” Festival revives Al-Ahilla’s commercial activities**

## **King Salman attends ‘Summit of Determination and Solidarity’**



# مَبَارَكُ أَمَّضَانُ

بمناسبة قدوم شهر رمضان المبارك  
يتشرف رئيس ونائباً وأعضاء مجلس إدارة  
مؤسسة مطوفى حجاج دول جنوب آسيا  
بتقديم خالص التهاني وأصدق التبريكات إلى  
رؤساء مكاتب الخدمة الميدانية ومساهمي  
ومساهمات المؤسسة وكافة منسوبيها

كل عام وانتم بخير

## Excellent services for the pilgrims

***The world leaders paid special tributes to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz, and HRH Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense for their balanced political vision and thoughts that contributed to the promotion and consolidation of international peace.***

The visit of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to Tunisia and his chairmanship of the Arab Summit, as well as the visits of the Crown Prince to Pakistan, India and China, and the positive reactions after visits stand evidence.

To serve the pilgrims in the best possible way, the Kingdom has been sparing no stone unturned. It strives to make the pilgrims' stay in the holy lands comfortable. The pilgrims' convenience, their comfort and their satisfaction while performing the rituals with utmost convenience is the target of the administration. Mega projects and addition of unique services year after year serve the pilgrims and are part of Vision 2030.

And to keep pace with a shift in the service industry, the Board of the Directors of Mutawiffy Hujjaj South Asia Establishment has been working tirelessly 24/7. Most of its services have been restructured. HE Dr. Mohammad Saleh Benteen, the Minister of Hajj and Umrah has been all praises for the Establishment and its members and has graciously extended their term for an extra year. Preparations for the operational plans have been completed to welcome

the pilgrims who will begin to arrive in the month of Shawwal.

In addition, a number of training sessions have been organized for the employees and field services officers of the Establishment. These specialized training sessions focus on coordinating with tour guides in Makkah in cooperation with the Saudi Commission for Tourism & National Heritage (SCTH); to obtain tourist guide license to conduct tours to historical and archaeological sites in Makkah and at other holy sites.

Recently, the Establishment in coordination with the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah also organized at its headquarters in Makkah an exhibition. More than 10 companies specialized in pre-processed meals took part. The highlight was the food, Establishment's pilgrims prefer. This will help the companies, tour operators, representatives of pilgrims and head of field services to serve the pilgrims food of their choice during the upcoming Hajj season 1440. The catering service for the pilgrims thus will be in accordance with the directives of HE Dr. Benteen.

On the advent of the Holy month of Ramadan, I sincerely extend our greetings to our leadership and to the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the entire Muslim Ummah. May Allah SWT bless us with His Mercy and guide us all to Fast. I also ask the Almighty to reunite us with the month of Ramadan for many years to come while we are well, healthy, safe and secure.



**Dr. Ra'fat Ismail Badr**

Chairman of The Board of Directors  
South Asia Pilgrims  
Mutawiffy Establishment



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# King Salman attends 'Summit of Determination and Solidarity'

**Tunisia awards the King the republic's medal, the highest official award**

**C**ustodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman reiterated the Kingdom's steadfast stand in support of the Palestinian cause; denounced aggressive policies of Iranian regime; rejected "any measures that would infringe on Syrian sovereignty over the Golan," and called for a political solution in Yemen.

Riyadh - "Al-Ahella"

The King leading the Saudi delegation, while addressing the 30th Arab League summit – "Summit of Determination and Solidarity" - in Tunis on March 31, 2019 said: "The Palestinian cause will remain at the top of the Kingdom's

concerns until the Palestinian people have all their legitimate rights, foremost of which is the establishment of their independent state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem (Al-Quds) as its capital, based on the resolutions of the international legitimacy and the Arab peace initiative.”

He told the summit that the aggressive policies of the Iranian regime constitute a flagrant violation of all international charters and principles and called on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities to stop Iranian regime’s support for terrorism.

“The Kingdom continues to support efforts to combat terrorism and extremism at all levels. The terrorist act that targeted two mosques in New Zealand confirms that terrorism is not linked to religion, race or homeland,” the King told the summit.

On the Yemeni affair, King Salman reiterated the Kingdom’s support for UN efforts to reach a political solution in accordance with three references. “We call on the international community to compel Iran-backed Houthi militias to stop their aggressive practices that have caused the sufferings of the Yemeni people and threatened the security and stability of the region.



He assured that the Kingdom would continue its humanitarian and development aid programs to alleviate the

sufferings of the Yemeni people.

With regard to the Libyan



crisis, the King emphasized the Kingdom's keenness on the unity of Libya and its territorial integrity, and support

the UN efforts to reach a political solution.

### Meeting with leaders

On the sidelines of the summit meetings, King Salman met Bahraini Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa. They reviewed fraternal relations between the two brotherly countries and discussed a number of issues.

The King also met UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. They reviewed the latest regional developments and discussed ways to achieve stability and security in the region.

A third meeting of the sidelines of the summit was between King Salman and Abdelkader Bensalah, president of the Council of the



Nation of Algeria. The King wished Algeria stability. They reviewed bilateral ties.

The royal visit to the North African country was in response to an invitation from Tunisian President Essebsi to King Salman to attend the 30th session of the Arab League.

President Essebsi himself received the King at the presidential airport in Tunis along with Prime Minister Youssef Chahed and other high-ranking Tunisian officials.

At an official reception President Essebsi awarded King Salman the republic's medal, the highest official award

The King's visit to Tunis confirms that bilateral ties between the two countries are at the highest level. During his visit, the King Salman held wide-ranging talks with President Essebsi to further enhance bilateral ties between the two countries in all fields. They also discussed regional and international issues of mutual concern.

### **Honorary doctorate for the King**

The Tunisian capital was full of festivity on the eve of King Salman's visit. During a reception, the Tunis Mayor Souad Abderrahim offered the monarch the Golden Key to the city of Tunis. King

Salman was also awarded an honorary doctorate in Arab and Islamic civilization degree by the University of Kairouan.

King Salman expressed happiness on his visit, and reaffirmed the depth of fraternal relations between the two countries.

Cooperation in various fields, ways to enhance and develop bilateral ties, and regional and international developments were discussed in the meetings between Saudi and Tunisian officials..

The official delegation accompanying the King included Minister of Interior Prince Abdul Aziz Bin Saud Bin Naif;





Minister of State and Member of the Cabinet Dr. Musaed Bin Muhammed Al-Aiban; Minister of Foreign Affairs Ibrahim Al-Assaf; Minister of Commerce and Investment Majed Al-Qasabi; and Minister of Media Turki Al-Shabanah, as

well as a number of princes and senior officials.

### Project to restore Al-Zaytuna Mosque

King Salman and President Essebsi also launched three projects in Tunis. They

include the restoration of the Uqba Bin Nafe Mosque and the City of Utaiqah in Kairouan; the King Salman project to restore the Al-Zaytuna Mosque, and the building of the King Salman Bin Abdulaziz University Hospital in Kairouan.

During the visit, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia signed two agreements. The first deals with a developmental loan to fund projects to protect cities and urban areas from flooding in Tunisia while the second was in relation to Saudi exports to The Tunisian Company of the Refining Industries (STIR).



## **MBS reviews Third Expansion works at Grand Mosque**



**H** RH Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defence visited the Grand Mosque during his visit to the Holy City of Makkah in February 2019.

He performed Tawaf and prayed alongside other Muslim worshippers. After performing the circumambulation – the Tawaf – he went inside the Ka’aba, cleaned the inner walls of the Ka’aba and prayed too. He also went onto the roof of the historic structure looking down on the white circumambulation area to inspect the progress in the work.



During his visit to the Holy Haram he inspected the construction works underway to

renovate and expand the vast Grand Mosque complex surrounding it.



The Crown Prince met with officials prior to his visit to the Holy Haram and he was briefed on the ongoing works. In the Grand Mosque he was also briefed on the current expansion works within the Grand mosque which aim at expanding the area for worshippers to pray. He was joined by government ministers.

### Chairs Royal Commission meeting

In his capacity as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Royal Commission for the Holy City of Makkah and Holy Sites, Crown Prince Muhammad also chaired the commission's second meeting of the Board of Directors at the Safa Palace.

The commission's board discussed various projects within its purview, including the Third Expansion scheme



of Makkah Grand Mosque. The officials reviewed progress and various components

The Third Expansion of the Grand Mosque aims to raise total capacity of worshippers to 2.2 million worshippers.

The expansion includes the main building of the Grand

Mosque; the circumambulation area around the Kaaba, Mataf; the running space between the hillocks of Al-Safa and Al-Marwa, called Masaa; external squares; the first ring road surrounding the Grand Mosque; and infrastructure such as power stations and water reservoirs. The expansion



Holy Places Eng. Abdulrahman Addas stressed that the commission will continue its work on a number of issues pertaining to the administration of the Grand Mosque, transportation, road network and other projects.

The board meeting was followed by a visit to review the work progress in the Grand Mosque.

Earlier, the Crown Prince Muhammad inaugurated the King Abdullah Port in Rabigh. “The port will make the Kingdom a linking point of three continents — Asia, Europe and Africa,” said the Crown Prince in his speech at the launching ceremony.

sion project also includes advanced eletromechanical systems, fire safety networks, hygiene and water treatment facilities, and sound systems that include headphones and 4,524 headsets

The Commission aims to

improve pilgrim services and establish a sustainable system that supports the social and infrastructural significance of the Grand Mosque.

Executive Chairman of the Royal Commission for the Holy City of Makkah and the



## Maqam simplifies pilgrimage

**T**he Ministry of Haj and Umrah in January 2019 launched a package of updates for their Maqam e-portal. The move is to help pilgrims and simplify pilgrimage for Muslim's traveling from outside the Kingdom.

The Maqam portal is an online platform to help Muslims apply for an Umrah package digitally. This helps the applicants choose suitable package; check flight status and bookings, and get electronic visa without visiting any Saudi embassy or consulate.

It is immensely useful for

Muslims from non-Muslim countries where access to organizations and information for making pilgrimages is harder.

Deputy Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr. Abdul-Fattah bin Sulaiman Mushat said that the updates would simplify pilgrimages for the 30 million people visiting the Kingdom every year.

Maqam online service helps Umrah applicants to avail of different services. The applicants can just long on to: <https://eservices.haj.gov.sa/eservices3>

select and book the ap-

propriate Umrah packages, confirm their reservations and check the status of their visas. It will also help Umrah performers know the visa fees.

### Serving 157 countries

The service is available in as many as 157 countries and will particularly help those pilgrims who cannot find external agents to organize Umrah travel.

The service thus allows individuals from outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to apply on line for Umrah visa. Saudi diplomatic missions will issue online Um-



rah visas.

The facility is in line with the ministry's strategic transformation into digitization of services by introducing a number of services and simplify the procedures for Umrah performers.

On the other hand the Maqam service will also help Umrah operators licensed by the Ministry of Hajj Umrah to provide Umrah services, create packages and ensure that the Umrah performers return to their respective countries after performing the Umrah and other rituals.

The Maqam service will also help licensed external

agencies in every country to market Umrah packages created by licensed Saudi Umrah companies

An estimate reveals that over one million Muslims from the globe used the Maqam service last year, chose between over 30 companies that provided travel, accommodation and other necessities for travels to Makkah and Madina

Maqam has also been a boost for local companies, allowing them to directly target pilgrims around the world with special offers and services tailored to their needs.

Over a million pilgrims used Maqam service in its trial period last year. The service provides e-services in Arabic, English and French.



## The “*Asal Al-Hikaya*” Festival revives Al-Ahella’s commercial activities

**D**r. Ra’fat Bin Ismail Badr, Chairman of The Board of Directors, South Asia Pilgrims Mutawiffs Establishment, inaugurated the “*Asal Al-Hikaya*” festival held at the Establishment’s Al-Maali commercial building in Makkah. This festival is the first of the center’s activities after the Establishment took over management of the building, and much has been achieved in fourteen months. Leased space has increased from 3500 square meters to 9000 square meters, adding six new exhibitions and two restaurants. Included in this is a restaurant serving health-conscious meals for the first time, supervised by nutrition specialists. He noted that all contracts were reviewed and reformulated to preserve the rights and interests of the Tawafa guides.

Dr. Badr pointed out that this investment is in accordance with the dictates of the Hajj and Umrah Foundation which urges the Tawafa in-

stitutions to maximize asset investment for their shareholders’ benefit. The center’s management was keen to contract with major operators

and maintenance to maintain the building.

Mohamed Amin Attas, the center’s director, said that the center witnessed the opening of the first women’s sports club and it is awarded the highest level of ISO certification and equipped with specialized doctors. It is very popular with more than 600 female participants both young and old. The center is equipped with a recreation space, childcare, and a wedding hall that can be leased.

Attas highlighted that lighting the entire building drew





the South Asia Pilgrims Muta-wiffs Establishment was able to place at least 13 permanent committees in the center so that they can be housed in the Foundation's properties to allow smooth communication between them and the Foundation, allowing for better service to the pilgrims.

Attas added that the "Asal Al-Hikaya" festival will continue until Shaaban 23 with a number of activities and planned festivities. These include a local bazaar and a showroom for the Chinese manufactured Tshang automobile. The grand opening was attended by the board of directors, shareholders, and external delegations. All attendees praised the good organization and preparation, and the festival received a great turnout from the people of Makkah.

The Center and its' related property consists of 12 plots while the total building area of the center is 294.56 square meters, including 10 administrative towers with an area of 9,530.13 square meters and a commercial mall with three floors and a total area of 664.10 sq. m., a wedding and events hall with 40.2 meters Square and three floors and a parking lot with space for 366 cars.

attention of the people to the building and acted as an advertisement for its' rebirth.

"We were able to draw attention to this project through its beautiful lighting," adding that

# Dr. Badr discusses Hajj operational plans with board members, field officers

**T**he Board of Directors of the South Asia Pilgrims Mutawiffs Establishment held a meeting on Shaaban 04 . The meeting, held in the main meeting hall at the Foundation’s Rusaifa building, was chaired by Dr. Ra’fat Ismail Badr, Chairman of the Board of Directors. In attendance were all members of the board of directors as well as all Field Service officers.



Makkah - Ahmad Al-Ahmadi

Dr. Badr welcomed and thanked all those attending the meeting which is a part of regular meetings to discuss the early preparations which began with the end of Dhul Hijjah last. The meeting also discussed the operational plans for the upcoming Hajj season this year 1440, taking advantage of last season’s positives for better service and avoid any negativity that may occur. A number of topics on the agenda and proposals were also discussed.

The Chairman also held a question-answer session during the meeting and answered the queries with utmost transparency and clarity.

### Field Service offices increased

The Establishment has increased the number of Field Service offices to 148 with



eight Mutawiffs or specialized Tawafa agents in each office. This will allow the Establishment’s all associates to serve the pilgrims with convenience.

Dr. Badr stressed to all heads of Field Service offices to abide by the code of ethics for employees of the Tawafa agencies issued by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah.

He stressed on the importance of working for the greater public good in serving

the pilgrims, adding that the Establishment and its employees are all highly experienced to resolve any differences as and when they arise.

Dr. Badr pointed out that this year the Establishment will expand the use of bunker beds in the camps after last season’s successful experiment, that the new models will be presented for use in Hajj camps for the Tawafa guides’ use.