SHAPING THE FUTURE, PRESERVING THE PAST

On Saudi National Day, Arab News celebrates Diriyah — the priceless cultural treasure that was the birthplace of the Kingdom

MOHAMMED AL-ALAMEEN
ASSISTANT EDITOR IN CHIEF

When we at Arab News decided that Diriyah — the Kingdom’s birthplace — would be the center of our special coverage to mark the 95th Saudi National Day, little did we know that it would be the center of a time machine, allowing us to travel between the past, the present and the future.

Our effort is built on both continuums, to the defining moments that shaped our present, we revisited the epic sacrifices of our kings and the heroes who fought beside them. The journey has also taken us forward to the dawn of a new era and meeting new role for Diriyah, soon to become a world-class destination.

Through the pages of this special issue, and through the interactive feature (deep link) on our website, you will discover that Diriyah has always been central to the story of Saudi Arabia. It was here, on the banks of the Well Blue, that the forebears of King Abdul Aziz (the founder of the Al Saud dynasty) in the 19th century. It was here that the honor of the first Saudi State blossomed in the 20th century, and that power, security and unity first spread across the Arabian Peninsula. It was also the height of innovation; in 2018, we witnessed the world’s largest floating solar farm. It is a reminder of how events unfold over time and how the flow of history can be shaped by creative vision. It is also a testament to what can be achieved with determination and strategic thinking.

Heritage

Our efforts took us back centuries, to the defining moments that shaped our present; we revisited the epic sacrifices our kings and the heroes who fought beside them.

Today has also been made possible by the unprecedented access and support we received from the “real star” of Diriyah, His Highness the Muwafaq bin Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (the father of my favorite children, Al-Murabihin and Al-Jawwadi). His wisdom, experience and counsel, without their combined passion, perseverance and commitment, this project would have never seen the light of day.

A final note for all readers at home and abroad. A small note from me to you that throughout history, Arabia has been a land of progress and advancement. The way to the past three months has been marked with an enthusiastic team at Arab News, leading to this great story, and I want to thank you for making this project a success. The coverage we provide to you.

Al-Murabihin, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia today would most likely be a lesser country ruled by a team different than ours. Re-establishing elements of our National Day coverage would be a challenge to a world that has changed, (to whom), in my opinion. This is why I have heard of Diriyah, had learned about it and remembered the key stories and golden moments in its history, but had never actually visited. These years, when I visited the project for the first time, I was surprised not only by the vision and beauty that the future will bring to the entire Diriyah area, but by the final outcome for the entire Kingdom.

A new era is upon us, a new beginning, to be feared for, protected and built upon.

Have a Safe National Day!

Twitter: @mohammadalameen

1 Hijjah • Vol. XXXVII
No. 281 • 24 pages
Saud the Great and Mohammed the future

By Rehan Al Hussein

In the field of the 63 heroes of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, there have been a number of necessary royal transformations. Some of them would have happened without the intervention and guidance of the leaders of the great country since the reign of King Abdullah, set back for many years ago and established its current climate.

The first Saudi state was founded by Imam Mohammad bin Saud, later to become Al Saud, in 1786. Following the succession of his son into the Al Saud, King Salman, third grandson, in 1975, it realized the dream of the great master project through the establishment of the second Saudi state in 1932.

Despite the difficulties and challenges, the great dream lived. King Abdullah led another attempt to extend the dream of his father's vision to the borders of the world in 2005, marking the start of the great unity project for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the late 20th century.

This chapter has begun what destiny had planned with negotiations and the government of the region. The statement of regional unity has been more than a decade since the first step of the 101st anniversary of the Aramco for a better future.

In this book, it was rightly called "Al Saud" for the first, given the government and expedience of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a whole. The state's influence extended to 55 percent of the Arab states, from the Arabian Gulf to the Red Sea, where all the countries united to ensure security, stability, and well-being. However, the countries generally grow substantially that greatly and not enough diversity is maintained across the leaderships for the most of its allies in the Arabic Peninsula.

It is necessary that for more than 1,000 years, the people of the Arabian Peninsula

The line of all 63 of the whom accompanied King Abdullah Al Saud to Riyadh in 1902 is lost to history. What is certain is that all carried the ephedra hero."
A gift from the past

The historic city of At-Turaif is the very foundation stone of modern Saudi Arabia, and the inspiration for the next chapter in the Kingdom’s story

Historians date the foundation of the First Saudi State to 1725, when Saud’s son Mohammed expelled the last of the Al-Nasirian to Mesopotamia.

Diriyah Gate

The going national 21st-century megacity, an architectural treasure trove of royal palaces, mausoleums, towers, and tombs, stands 12 km west of the Kingdom Tower in Saudi Arabia’s capital, Riyadh.

Here, on the site of the capital—within the First Saudi State—can be found the historical and cultural treasures of the Kingdom.

Today, as one of the most ambitious of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030. The project is a joint venture, it will be the centerpiece of a new city, a cultural, and a commercial hub that will be a source of pride for the nation.

Launching in 2018, Diriyah Gate project will create a global cultural and heritage destination expected to attract over 2 million visitors a year. A new capital for Saudi Arabia, it will be home to museums, galleries, and academies offering insights into Saudi culture, history, art, and culture, beautiful public spaces, parks, and world-class restaurants.

Diriyah Gate project is a tribute to the historical significance of the First Saudi State and Saudi Arabia’s role in shaping the modern world.

Building on this rich history, Diriyah Gate project will transform the area into a vibrant cultural hub, attracting visitors from around the world.

The site, designed in part as a living museum, will tell the story of the Kingdom and the First Saudi State. The project aims to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the Kingdom, ensuring that it is accessible for future generations.

The project is expected to create thousands of jobs, bringing economic opportunities to the region and contributing to the overall growth of the country.

In conclusion, Diriyah Gate project is a testament to Saudi Arabia’s commitment to preserving its history and cultural heritage, while also driving economic development and creating a world-class destination for visitors.
Diriyah: Past, Present and Future

Like father, like son


Diriyah has become a site of global significance, challenging the authority of the Ottoman empire. As a local chief, his death was seen as a blow to the Ottoman power and the royal dynasty of Al-Faidh would never have been able to recover.

However, the Ottomans were not the only ones to benefit from the fall of the Ottoman Empire. The broader impact of the collapse of the empire has been felt throughout the region, with new nations emerging and old ones reasserting their independence. It has also been a time of great change, with new ideas and technologies spreading across the region. The Ottomans were forced to confront this new reality, as they struggled to adapt to the changing world around them.

The Ottomans were ultimately a power that was built on a series of victories, but those victories were accompanied by a lack of political stability. The empire was constantly fighting wars, which drained its resources and weakened its ability to respond to the challenges it faced. As a result, the Ottomans were unable to adapt to the changing world around them, and their empire eventually collapsed.

The Ottomans were not the only ones to benefit from the fall of the empire. The area that was once the Ottoman Empire has been the site of great change, with new nations emerging and old ones reasserting their independence. It has also been a time of great change, with new ideas and technologies spreading across the region.

The Ottomans were forced to confront this new reality, as they struggled to adapt to the changing world around them. The fall of the empire was a time of great change, with new nations emerging and old ones reasserting their independence. It has also been a time of great change, with new ideas and technologies spreading across the region.

The Ottomans were ultimately a power that was built on a series of victories, but those victories were accompanied by a lack of political stability. The empire was constantly fighting wars, which drained its resources and weakened its ability to respond to the challenges it faced. As a result, the Ottomans were unable to adapt to the changing world around them, and their empire eventually collapsed.

The Ottomans were not the only ones to benefit from the fall of the empire. The area that was once the Ottoman Empire has been the site of great change, with new nations emerging and old ones reasserting their independence. It has also been a time of great change, with new ideas and technologies spreading across the region.
Born in Brooklyn, but his heart is in Diriyah

“This is the mother city,” says the CEO giving the Kingdom’s birthplace a $50bn makeover

As CEO of the Diriyah Gate Development Authority, he is tasked with transforming the historic site of the Kingdom’s foundation into a tourism destination.

As a part of OIC's mandate, there are also plans to transform Diriyah to make it a global tourism destination.
The COVID-19 pandemic's main lesson: Value the partnership

No single country, no matter how well-developed or powerful, can successfully defeat the virus on its own.

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to the U.S. this week is a rare moment of economic and political cooperation between Russia and the United States. The visit demonstrates the value of cooperation in addressing global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the face of the pandemic, no single country can act alone. Countries must work together to share information, resources, and best practices. The partnership between Russia and the United States is a good example of how international cooperation can be effective.

Looking after the environment in 18th-century Najd

Environmental sustainability remains a challenge in the region. The harsh and arid climate, combined with limited resources, makes it difficult to pursue sustainable development. However, there are examples of successful environmental practices, such as the use of traditional irrigation techniques.

The 18th-century Najd was a time of environmental stewardship. The people of Najd understood the importance of water conservation and sustainable land management. Their knowledge and practices provide lessons for modern times.

Environmental impact assessments should be conducted in all projects and programs. The impacts of traditional projects and practices must be considered, and the benefits of modern technologies and approaches must be balanced against the potential negative effects on the environment.

The Cockatoo: A story of hope and resilience

The Cockatoo is a symbol of hope and resilience. Despite the challenges of their environment, cockatoos adapt and thrive. Their story offers a lesson in perseverance and the importance of diversity in ecosystems.

Impact assessments

Impact assessments are crucial in ensuring that projects and programs are environmentally sustainable. They help to identify potential negative impacts and develop strategies to mitigate them.

The impact assessments for the Cockatoo project were conducted in 2018 by the Department of Environment and Sustainability. The assessments identified potential impacts and developed mitigation strategies to ensure the project’s success.
Masmak Fortress: An important historical symbol of Saudi unification

Masmak Fortress, the battle location that changed history forever, restoring power to the Al-Saud family and paving the way for modern Saudi Arabia.

The victory was a turning point in the struggle for independence of the Arabian Peninsula. The Masmak Fortress was captured in 1913, marking the end of the Hashemite era and the beginning of the modern Saudi Arabia.

Walking in the footsteps of the Saudi founding fathers at Salwa Palace

Salwa Palace is a symbol of the spirit and culture of the people of Saudi Arabia. It is a place where the founding fathers of Saudi Arabia lived and worked, and it continues to be a symbol of their legacy and achievements.

The palace is located in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, and it is a beautiful example of traditional Islamic architecture. It is surrounded by beautiful gardens and is surrounded by the city of Riyadh.

The palace was built in the early 20th century and was the home of King Abdulaziz, the founder of Saudi Arabia. It was used as a royal residence until the 1980s, and it is now open to the public as a museum.

The palace has several rooms, each with unique features and furnishings. The main room is a large hall with a high ceiling and beautifully decorated with murals and sculptures. It is used for special events and gatherings.

The palace also has a library, a mosque, and a museum, which contains a collection of historical artifacts and relics. The museum is open to the public and is a popular destination for visitors to Riyadh.

Visitors to the palace can learn about the history and culture of Saudi Arabia, as well as the life of King Abdulaziz and his family. The palace is a symbol of the resilience and determination of the Saudi people, and it continues to inspire generations of Saudis to this day.
Princess Noorah: The woman who had the ‘brain of 40 men’

I am the brother of Noorah — the Princess who gracefully inspired and supported a King

The Unifier

Princess Noorah was the daughter of King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. She was known for her intelligence and leadership qualities. At a young age, she showed great interest in politics and became a key figure in supporting her husband, King Abdulaziz, and later King Saud, in their efforts to unify the Arabian Peninsula.

In 1932, Princess Noorah managed to secure the release of her father, King Ibn Saud, from a British prison in Yemen. She convinced British authorities to release him and also secured the release of her brother, King Abdulaziz, from another British prison. This act of courage and diplomacy earned her the nickname “The Brain of 40 Men.”

Princess Noorah was a force to be reckoned with. She was known for her strategic mind and her ability to navigate complex political situations. She was a key figure in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula and the establishment of Saudi Arabia as an independent nation.

In 1933, Princess Noorah was married to King Saud, who later became the first king of Saudi Arabia. Their marriage was a political alliance, and Princess Noorah played a crucial role in supporting her husband in his political endeavors.

Princess Noorah was not only a political strategist but also a symbol of the Islamic world. She was known for her piety and her support of Islamic causes. She was a patron of education and a key figure in the establishment of the first modern education system in Saudi Arabia.

In 1935, Princess Noorah was awarded the title of Princess of the House of Saud, which was a significant honor for a woman in a male-dominated society. She continued to play a key role in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula and the establishment of Saudi Arabia as an independent nation.

Princess Noorah’s legacy is one of courage, intelligence, and dedication. She was a trailblazer for women in the Middle East and a symbol of the strength and resilience of women in the face of adversity.

In conclusion, Princess Noorah was a remarkable woman who played a key role in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula and the establishment of Saudi Arabia as an independent nation. Her contributions to her country and the Islamic world will be remembered for generations to come.

Ludovic Poulilé

In Diriyah, By the majestic site of Al-Turaf

O ut of a national occasion, I would like to add all my thanks and gratitude to the King for his role in what we considered a triumph for the King, and the majesty of the site of Al-Turaf.

Princess Noorah was a remarkable woman who played a key role in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula and the establishment of Saudi Arabia as an independent nation. Her contributions to her country and the Islamic world will be remembered for generations to come.

Ludovic Poulilé
Diriyah: An enduring reminder of the frontiers of the possible

The addition of the historic site to the UNESCO World Heritage List is a recognition of its universal importance.

The Regal Architecture

Panoramic view of the historic site within the UNESCO World Heritage List, providing a glimpse of its architectural significance.

A beacon of the Saudi transformation

The opening of the Al-Shurafa Mall, a significant development in the transformation of the Diriyah district, with the presence of various cultural and commercial activities.

Diary

On behalf of the Japanese citizens, I would like to extend our deepest congratulations to the King of Saudi Arabia, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and the people of Saudi Arabia, on the occasion of the 92nd National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The renewal of diplomatic relations between Japan and Saudi Arabia is a significant step forward for both countries, as it strengthens mutual understanding and cooperation in various fields. Japan is committed to furthering these relations to achieve mutual prosperity and peace in the region.

On this special day, we extend our best wishes to the people of Saudi Arabia and join in celebrating the spirit of unity and progress that characterizes the Saudi nation. We look forward to continuing our fruitful partnership and contributing to the development and prosperity of the region and the world at large.

A. Tanaka, Ambassador of Japan to Saudi Arabia
I am impressed by the new rhythm created by Saudi Vision 2030

This is the third time I am making my visit to Diriyah to celebrate the National Day. The national days for Saudi Arabia and China are only a week apart, which shows our deep friendship.

To understand a country, one must understand its history and culture. I have paid many visits to Diriyah, and participated in the opening ceremony of Diriyah Gate, where I was attracted by the long lasting history and cultural civilization of Saudi Arabia, and witnessed the sorrowful changes that took place in this ancient land with Saudi friends. In my opinion, Diriyah represents Saudi Arabia’s cultural heritage, the origin of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the cornerstone of the bright future of this country.

This year marks the 48th anniversary of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030. In the past five years, Saudi Arabia has been marching forward to a brighter future, and enhancing the world with a brighter heart.

After arriving in Saudi Arabia on the new Chinese ambassador, I visited several great development projects, such as MBSH and the Al Marhal project. I also participated in the G20 series of events which were held in Saudi Arabia, as well as the Future Investment Initiative Forum and Global Al Summit. At the same time, I have personally experienced the excellent stage art of Saudi Arabia. In the past five years, Saudi Arabia has done a lot in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its active role in promoting international cooperation against the pandemic and enhancing the green and sustainable development of the Kingdom and the region. I have been engaged with this new vision of Saudi Arabia in Vision 2030.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Saudi Arabia, the friendly and cooperative relations of the two countries have developed comprehensively and rapidly, with frequent high-level exchanges and high communications, deepening of cooperation in various fields. China and Saudi Arabia are close partners in the joint construction of the Belt and Road, and we also maintained a common stance on the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

For 20 consecutive years, Saudi Arabia has been China’s largest trading partner in West Asia and Africa. For seven consecutive years, China has been Saudi Arabia’s largest trading country. In 2020, Saudi Arabia was China’s largest market in export.

The world will be more harmonious and prosperous when different cultures, civilizations and civilizations respect each other, and engage in exchange and mutual learning. China and Saudi Arabia have a lot of potential for practical, cultural and educational exchange and dialogue. Under the personal efforts of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Chinese language education in Saudi Arabia has developed rapidly and made obvious achievements.

As an Arab ambassador, I choose to write a letter before the road. China is willing to continue to promote joint development strategies with Saudi Arabia, and we are firm partners in promoting world peace, strengthening dialogue and cooperation, and promoting development project.

Best wishes for all people of Saudi Arabia, I wish you success and progress, prosperity, peace and health, and wish the relations of our two countries greater development.
Diriyah
Past, Present and Future

To mark Saudi Arabia’s 91st National Day, we shed light on how the birthplace of the Kingdom is continuing to make history.
THE ROAD TO GLORY

This National Day, Arab News partners with Diriyah Gate, the SR190 billion ($50.6 billion) cultural giga-development on the outskirts of Riyadh to showcase the history of Saudi Arabia’s birthplace and help pave the way to the Kingdom’s future.

1146
Messiah an administrative center of the Muslim world. Diriyah Gate Development Company (DGDC) is a Saudi Arabian state-owned corporation that has been created to implement the vision for the development of Diriyah Gate project.

1720
Construction of the historic Diriyah fort begins under the leadership of King Faisal bin Saud.

1766
Construction continues under the leadership of King Abdulaziz bin Saud.

1805
Completed, the historic Diriyah fort stands as a testament to the rich history of Saudi Arabia.

1818
Diriyah is strategically located on the eastern coastline of the Arabian Gulf, providing a strategic advantage.

1824
Diriyah is declared an international heritage site, recognized for its historical and cultural significance.

1902
Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the founder of the House of Saud, establishes the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2002
Al Saud family begins a series of interventions to stabilize and redevelop Diriyah.

2020
Diriyah Gate opens to the public, marking the start of a new chapter in Saudi Arabia’s history.

2019
Diriyah Gate opens its doors to the public, offering a glimpse into the rich history of the region.

2018
Diriyah Gate hosts the inaugural Diriyah International Festival, a celebration of culture and art.

2017
Diriyah Gate hosts the inaugural Diriyah International Festival, a celebration of culture and art.

1998
With governance of the region, Diriyah Gate becomes a hub for cultural and historical tourism.

2030
Diriyah Gate: The continued development of Diriyah Gate is a testament to Saudi Arabia’s commitment to preserving its rich heritage.

At-Turaf
The first phase of Diriyah Gate to be opened to the public. At-Turaf is a cultural and historical hub, offering a glimpse into the region’s rich past.

King Salman Square
A park that celebrates the history and culture of the region, featuring sculptures and works of art.

Bujairi Terrace
The terraces of Bujairi provide a unique perspective on the historical site, offering views over the region.

King Salman Grand Mosque
The mosque is a symbol of the region’s rich heritage, featuring intricate designs and architectural elements.

Escarpment Walk
A walkway that offers stunning views of the escarpment and the surrounding landscape.

Sambhan Heritage Hotel
Located on the escarpment, the hotel offers a unique experience, blending traditional Saudi architecture with modern amenities.

Art District
The Art District is a hub for contemporary art, featuring galleries, studios, and workshops.

Diriyah Square
A square that celebrates the region’s cultural heritage, offering a space for public events and gatherings.

Sambhan Amphitheater
The amphitheater is a venue for cultural events, offering a unique experience for visitors.

Period Village
A village that showcases the region’s rich cultural heritage, offering a glimpse into the past.

Cover Illustration for Arab News: The Sporting Press