

# Bahrain marks 91st National Day of Saudi

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Bahrain yesterday joined the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in celebrating its 91st National Day anniversary, which this year had the slogan “A Home for Us” or “Heya Lana Dar”.

Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, HM King’s advisor for Diplomatic Affairs, conveyed congratulations of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Saudi Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the royal family and the Saudi people on the kingdom’s 91st National Day anniversary.

He was visiting Saudi Ambassador to Bahrain, HRH Prince Sultan bin Ahmed bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Shaikh Khalid expressed his pride in the fraternal ties bonding the two Kingdoms and their perpetual growth.

Shaikh Khalid also stressed the tremendous developments and achievements made by Saudi Arabia and its role in consolidating the security and stability of the region.

This year’s theme reflects the deep Saudi traditions to welcome people from diverse backgrounds and make Saudi Arabia feel like home to them.

The day celebrated annually on 23 September marks the re-naming of the Kingdom of Nejd and Hejaz to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 following a Royal Decree by King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud.

The celebrations this year in Saudi, news reports said, will be a muted affair amid the pandemic.

Saudi Arabia celebrated its first National Day in 2005. This year, the national airline, Saudia, repainted some of the aeroplanes in its fleet to mark the 91st annual National Day.



King Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia. Courtesy of the National/SPA)



Shaikh Khalid conveying greetings of HM King on the 91st National Day anniversary of Saudi Arabia



The Director-General of Schools Affairs participates in a celebration of the Saudi educational mission



## Gulf Air starts 91 weekly flights to Saudi Arabia

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Gulf Air, the national carrier of Bahrain, announced the resumption of direct flights to Qassim’s Prince Naif Bin Abdulaziz Airport in Saudi Arabia with four weekly flights starting from 3 October 2021.

The airline will also upgrade its frequencies to and from Saudi Arabia to 91 weekly flights, coinciding with the 91st

National Day of Saudi Arabia.

The acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Air, Captain Waleed AlAlawi, said: “Our operations to and from Saudi Arabia are always within our top commercial priority because of the importance of the Saudi market to Gulf Air. With the resumption of direct flights to Qassim, we will restore our entire Saudi network, which consists of Riyadh, Jeddah,

Medina, Dammam and Qassim.” “We take pride in celebrating Saudi Arabia’s national day by increasing the number of weekly flights to 91, symbolising the 91st national day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Our upgraded services will offer convenience and connectivity to our Saudi passengers to travel to Bahrain and connect to onward destinations within our extended global network”.

kingdom’s biggest airshow.

The Saudi MBC group is to broadcast 14 hours of special coverage from various locations across the kingdom, including a

Fireworks also lit up the skies across Al Hail, Abha, Tabouk, Buraidah, Jeddah, Najran, Dammam, Al Diriya and Al Madinah at 9 pm local time.

The highlight of the celebrations was the dazzling performance of Saudi Arabian air force members known as Saudi Hawks, which also kicked off the



Bahrain International Airport celebrates the 91st Saudi National Day

one-hour operetta sung by Saudi performers on the day.

On the celebrations, Bahrain Television Director, Qais Hassan Al-Dossari, said they had adopted a slogan including the flags of the two kingdoms, under the theme “Our Hearts Beat Together”.

The celebrations of the Saudi National Day by Bahrain TV included mainly three 90-minute live broadcasts.

The coverage includes news reports, interviews and talk shows presented by anchors wearing shawls decorated with the Saudi flag.

Bahrain Radio Director, Yunes

Salman, said that Bahrain Radio, Radio Riyadh and other GCC radio stations are relaying broadcasts with MBC Radio.

The Director-General of Schools Affairs, Dr Muhammad Mubarak bin Ahmed, and the Undersecretary for Policies, Strategies and Performance, Nawal Ibrahim Al-Khater, took part in a celebration at the Saudi educational mission from the Centre for Educational Supervision in the Education Affairs Sector.

Bahrain International Airport Company celebrated the occasion by greeting Saudi passengers with gifts.

## Justice and Islamic affairs ministry announces Umrah permit procedures

● **Tawakkalna and Etamarna apps are the only official portals to issue permits**

● **Foreign pilgrims will have to visit a health centre if their health status has not been entered into Tawakkalna**

● **Both the Umrah visa and e-visa are valid for 2 weeks.**

● **At the Grand Mosque, authorities will check the permit’s date and validity**

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The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments has announced the procedure for Umrah (minor Hajj) and prayer permits in the Great Mosque of Makkah and visiting the Prophet’s Mosque.

The procedures are as per the directives issued by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Hajj and Um-



Representative picture

rah.

The ministry called on licensed Umrah operators and all citizens and residents to ensure registration on Muqem App and use Tawakkalna and Eatmarna apps to show their health status (vaccinated) ahead of receiving the Umrah permits.

Opening an account on Eatmarna is possible only after updating the visitor’s immune health status on the Tawakkalna application.

**Vaccination a must for Visa**

“Only those who had taken two doses of coronavirus vaccine or completed 14 days after taking the first dose of the vaccine or recovered after infection are entitled to obtain an Umrah visa,” the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah said.

Saudi Ministry had stated that they would only allow pilgrims who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 or have recovered from the infection. Umrah visas will only be issued to fully vaccinated individuals.

Saudi Health authorities have

approved vaccines for all above 12 years of age.

Reports say, foreign pilgrims must be vaccinated fully against COVID-19 with Pfizer/BioNTech: Comirnaty, Oxford/AstraZeneca: Vaxzevria, Johnson & Johnson: Ad26.COV2.S or Moderna: mRNA-1273

Pilgrims vaccinated with Sinopharm: BBIBP-CorV and Sinovac: CoronaVac will also be allowed entry, provided they have taken a booster shot of either Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca or Johnson & Johnson.

Saudi also requires pilgrims to be in excellent health conditions and adhere to protocols for ensuring the safety of pilgrims coming from abroad.

**SR1,000 fine**

Entering masjids without a permit will attract a fine of SR1,000.

Authorities also will not allow unauthorised vehicles in the central region around Makkah.

Worshippers are also required to arrive on time to avoid losing their time slots.

The instructions coincide with the safe Umrah season for 1443 AH for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) citizens.

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The Hajj is compulsory for all able-bodied Muslims with financial means during the Hajj season. On the other hand, Umrah is voluntary and allowed at any time of the year, outside the Hajj season. However, both the major and minor journeys revolve around the Kaabah located at the centre of the Masjid al-Haram.

**10 million pilgrims**

According to the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, 10 mil-



Representative picture (Courtesy of Arab weekly)