

# *SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS*

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## **TERRORISM**

### **MINISTRY URGES COOPERATION IN WAR ON TERRORISM**

The Interior Ministry January 12 reported the surrender of a number of individuals involved in recent terrorist acts in the Kingdom. Some of those individuals attested to being misled and warned against extremist ideas, publications and *fatwas* [religious rulings]. The statement also gave details of the large quantities of ammunition and weapons that were seized and urged cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

## **REFORM**

### **CROWN PRINCE ADDRESSES NATION ON ISSUE OF REFORM**

In a televised address on January 14, Crown Prince Abdullah vowed that the recommendations of the Second National Dialogue on 'Extremism and Moderation: A Comprehensive Approach' will receive the utmost attention from the State. The Crown Prince reiterated that Saudi Arabia is pressing ahead with its reforms, on a gradual and well-thought-out course that allows no obstruction by calls for either maintaining the status quo or rushing recklessly onto uncharted paths. The Crown Prince also urged all citizens to work together and to be wise and balanced in discussing public affairs, saying: "We do not wish to hamper responsible and enlightened freedom of expression ... Extremism is deplorable no matter which group it comes from. Radicalism is hateful whatever position it supports. The right path is the path of moderation."

## **ECONOMY**

### **CROWN PRINCE INAUGURATES HARADH GAS PROJECT**

On January 18, Crown Prince Abdullah inaugurated the Natural Gas and Petroleum Development Project in Haradh, in the Rub Al-Khali. The gas initiative is providing opportunities for international investment in exploration for as well as exploitation of natural gas. The priority is given to natural gas to meet increasing local demand, boost economic development and build up gas-based national industries. At this week's cabinet meeting, King Fahd said that the nation's economy should not be restricted to the export of crude oil, but should attract investment, both national and international, for the industrial sector.

### **CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT**

On January 12, the cabinet cut the capital gains tax on foreign investors from 45 to 20 percent and fixed the tax on natural gas at 30 percent. The new tax law will be effective 90 days following its publication in the official gazette.

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