



FEBRUARY 27, 2007

SAUDI ARABIA-US

Ambassador Al-Jubeir presents his credentials to President Bush

Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel A. Al-Jubeir presented his diplomatic credentials to President George W. Bush at the White House February 27.

Ambassador Al-Jubeir presented a copy of his credentials to Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte at the State Department February 21. He was appointed to the post by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz on January 29, 2007.

Seven Saudi Guantanamo detainees return to the Kingdom

Seven Saudi citizens who had been detained at the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay have returned to the Kingdom, the Ministry of Interior said in a February 21 statement. Minister of Interior Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz expressed appreciation to US authorities for their cooperation, and said that the Kingdom would continue its efforts to repatriate the remaining Saudi detainees.

SAUDI ARABIA

Four French nationals killed in attack in western Saudi Arabia

Four French nationals were shot dead Monday in an attack in western Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Interior said that a group of French nationals – four men, three women and two children – were resting in a desert area about 10 miles from the Madinah-Tabuk Highway when an unidentified vehicle opened fire on them. Two of the French travelers, both male, were immediately killed in the attack. The remaining two French men in the group were severely injured, and later died of their wounds in the hospital.

Upon receiving reports of the attacks, Saudi authorities immediately rushed to the scene. The three Frenchwomen and two children were taken to Madinah. The Ministry said that some in the group were on their way to Makkah to perform the umrah when they were attacked. An investigation into the attack is underway, the Ministry said.

Funeral prayers were held for two of the victims on Tuesday at the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah.

FOREIGN POLICY

King Abdullah meets with Turkish prime minister

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz met with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Royal Palace in Riyadh February 24. The two leaders discussed international issues, in particular the Palestinian situation and Iraq. Matters of interest to the Muslim world and bilateral cooperation were also reviewed.

King Abdullah holds talks on Palestine, Iraq with Jordanian king

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz met with Jordan's King Abdullah II for talks in Riyadh February 26. The Jordanian monarch is visiting Saudi Arabia and Egypt prior to his trip to the United States this weekend. The Saudi-Jordanian talks addressed Arab, Islamic and international issues, notably Palestine and Iraq.

Cabinet welcomes Quartet support for the Palestinian government

In its weekly meeting chaired by King Abdullah February 26, the Cabinet reviewed the talks held by the Quartet (the United States, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations) on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Berlin this past week. It welcomed Quartet members' statements of support for the Palestinian unity government, and expressed the hope that the blockade imposed on the Palestinian people and their legitimate institutions would be lifted.

MUSLIM WORLD

International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation opens in Jeddah

The International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) was inaugurated in Jeddah February 24. The ITFC is the first specialized organization dedicated to developing trade and finance in the Muslim world. More than 50 finance and planning ministers from the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) member countries attended the meeting.

With an initial capital of \$3 billion, the ITFC seeks to increase and finance trade among OIC member countries in accordance with the principles of Islamic law. It also aims to upgrade the export capacity of OIC countries.

