



NOVEMBER 3, 2009

SAUDI ARABIA

Arms cache seized

Saudi security forces have seized an arms cache near Riyadh linked to an Al-Qaeda cell dismantled in August, the Interior Ministry reported November 1. Interior Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Mansour Al-Turki said the weapons were found buried in a vacant house north of Riyadh, after interrogations of 44 people linked to Al-Qaeda, whose arrests were announced on August 19. Maj. Gen. Al-Turki said the authorities are searching for the owners of the house. The arms haul was comprised of 281 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 250 magazines and 41,250 rounds of ammunition, the spokesman said.

New Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs appointed

Prince Mansour bin Mit'eb bin Abdulaziz has been appointed to be the new Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs, effective immediately, as directed by a royal order issued November 2. Prince Mansour will replace Prince Mit'eb bin Abdulaziz, whose resignation was earlier accepted by King Abdullah.

King approves Program of Human Rights Culture Promotion

King Abdullah has approved the Program of Human Rights Culture Promotion, according to Dr. Bandar bin Mohammed Al-Eiban, the Chairman of the Human Rights Commission. In a November 1 statement, Dr. Al-Eiban expressed his appreciation of the King's support. "The promotion of the culture of human rights is a clear example of confirmation of the King's policy for human rights care, protection and preservation to enable citizens and residents to enjoy prosperous lives in which human values flourish," he said.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Foreign Minister meets with U.S. Secretary of State Clinton

Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal met November 2 with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Marrakech, Morocco. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral and regional issues. The meeting was also attended by Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir.

Qatari Emir visits Kingdom

King Abdullah received at his ranch in Janadriyah on October 27 Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who was in the Kingdom for a one-day visit. The two leaders engaged in talks focusing on bilateral relations and developments in the Gulf region and the world. In particular, they discussed the Palestinian cause and the recent Israeli encroachments on Islamic holy places in Jerusalem. The meeting was also attended by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jabr Al-Thani, and many other top officials.

GCC Interior Ministers hold 28th meeting

Deputy Minister of Interior Prince Ahmad bin Abdulaziz led the Saudi delegation to the 28th Meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Interior Ministers held in Muscat October 27. The participants focused on issues affecting regional security, including terrorism, drug smuggling, money-laundering, piracy and intelligence sharing. Speaking on the occasion, Prince Ahmed said stability in the Gulf requires coordination between all the region's countries, including Iran, based on the principles of mutual respect, joint cooperation and non-intervention in domestic affairs. "We have been facing serious challenges and dangers, including the dangers of terrorism, which threatens our achievements as well as our moral values and principles in addition to our natural resources," Prince Ahmed said, noting that confronting those challenges requires coordinated Gulf and international efforts. "We should take all precautionary measures for eradication of terrorism, and there is a need for taking collective security measures for confronting terrorism," he added. At the conclusion of the session, the Interior Ministers adopted a proposal to crystallize a joint approach to counterterrorism. Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of maintaining the security, territorial integrity and independence of both Iraq and Yemen.

FOREIGN AID

Kingdom airlifts aid to Burkina Faso and the Philippines

In continuation of its humanitarian airlift to Burkina Faso, which was recently hit by torrential rainfall, a second Saudi relief plane arrived in Ouagadougou on October 26. The plane was carrying 85 tons of relief supplies. King Abdullah has ordered that 180 tons of aid be airlifted to country.

On November 1, the Kingdom began another aid airlift, carrying emergency supplies to hurricane victims in the northern Philippines. Two Saudi relief planes arrived at the Manila Airport on November 1 and November 2. Each plane was loaded with 100 tons of blankets, rugs, tents, and foodstuffs.

