



शिक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION



Gian
GLOBAL INITIATIVE OF ACADEMIC NETWORKS

Five-day course

A New Vision For Saudi Arabia



20-24 January 2025

Prof. Joseph A. Kéchichian

Senior Fellow

*King Faisal Center for Research and
Islamic Studies (KFCRIS), Riyadh*

////// For information and registration //

 <https://www.jnu.ac.in/gian>



OVERVIEW

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia significantly influences regional and global affairs, especially throughout the Muslim World. Because of its unique geographic setting and the custodianship of the two holy mosques in Makkah and Madinah, its reach illustrated how this founding member of the United Nations perceived its global roles and growing responsibilities. Since the founder monarch, 'Abdul 'Aziz bin 'Abdul Rahman, Al Saud rulers seldom shied away from their sacred duties to guide them as necessary, help others when possible, and participate in regional and international affairs as required towards fulfilling their obligations. Those efforts were undertaken within pan-Islamic and global organisations and domestic and regional charitable associations before and after the discovery of oil, transforming what was once an isolated land into a modernising entity with rights and privileges.

Simultaneously, Al-Saud leaders confronted intrinsic contrasts between the Kingdom's legal system and those of fellow G20 member-states, which necessitated coordination and, in some instances, adjustments. What Riyadh preferred was evolutionary transformations while preserving its religious and cultural norms. It was safe to argue that important socio-economic reforms were introduced at every stage of life after 1932, although contemporary pressures locally induced by an increasingly urban society necessitated accelerated attention to how best to preserve core values while adapting to universal legal principles. How Riyadh married its commitments to Islamic traditional values while ushering in the dynamics of modernization in the twenty-first century was the ultimate test that Saudis confronted. How King Salman bin 'Abdul 'Aziz and Heir Apparent Muhammad bin Salman coped with secularizing encroachments on the conservative society highlighted some of the kingdom's challenges.



OBJECTIVES



Expose participants to critical changes under way in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Provide participants with knowledge to key transformations in five major areas [succession/political matters, social, economic, and legal]



Engage participants on the putative engagements with Saudi Arabian society



Enhance the participant's capabilities to understand the Kingdom at the local, regional and global levels

Lecture 1

Monday, 20 January, 3.00 - 6.00 PM

Political Developments and Succession Matters in Saudi Arabia: Succession within the Al-Saud family is crucial for Saudi Arabia's political stability, with the process evolving over time to involve key family members.

Lecture 2

Tuesday, 21 January, 3.00 - 6.00 PM

Fundamental Social Transformations in Saudi Arabia after 2015: Saudi Arabia has undergone rapid societal changes since 2015, potentially impacting the Islamic world.

Lecture 3

Wednesday, 22 January, 3.00 - 6.00 PM

Economic Diversification Imperatives: *Vision 2030* aims to diversify Saudi economy and reduce oil dependence, which could significantly reshape the region.

Lecture 4

Thursday, 23 January, 3.00 - 6.00 PM

Legal Reforms in the Kingdom: The modernization drive under King Salman and Crown Prince Muhammad includes a significant legal and judicial overhaul, challenging perceptions of its legal system as monolithic and isolated from social, political, and cultural contexts.

Lecture 5

Friday, 24 January, 3.00 - 6.00 PM

Religious Reforms: Religious reforms are one of the fundamental aspects of the ongoing transformation in the Kingdom which is often ignored, and requires a much deeper analyses.

Prof. Joseph A. Kéchichian

Professor Joseph Albert Kéchichian is a Senior Fellow at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he delves into the intricate tapestry of Arabian and Persian Gulf affairs, Arab foreign policy, and regional security. His academic journey began with a Ph.D. in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia, after a Master's in International Studies from Monterey Institute. Over the years, he has orchestrated a kaleidoscopic array of roles, from serving as Associate Editor of The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics to a columnist in Gulf News. His research primarily addresses West Asian politics, focusing on Arabian Gulf affairs, Arab foreign policy, and power dynamics in Arab monarchies. His works include *A Sultanate that Endures: Oman in the World from Qaboos bin Sa'id to Haitham bin Tariq* (2023); *The Nationalist Al Sa'ud Advisor: Yusif Yassin of Sa'udi Arabia* (2022); *From Alliance to Union: Challenges Facing Gulf Cooperation Council States in the Twenty-First Century*, (2016); *'Iffat Al Thunayan: An Arabian Queen*, (2015); *Legal and Political Reforms in Sa'udi Arabia*, (2012); *Faysal: Saudi Arabia's King for All Seasons*, (2008); and *Power and Succession in Arab Monarchies*, (2008). Fluent in Arabic, English, French, and Turkish, with proficiency in several other languages, Professor Kéchichian is recognized for his scholarly contributions and has received numerous accolades, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society for Armenian Studies in 2019.



Who can attend?



Students (Bachelors/Masters/Ph.D.)



Faculty from academic institutions



Professionals/researchers in Media/research institutions



Students/scholars of religion/West Asia/Islam

Venue



Convention Centre, JNU

Registration and Fees



Prior registration is mandatory for all students through the following link: <https://www.jnu.ac.in/gian>.



Certificate of participation will be given to those who attend all the lectures and successfully complete the GIAN course.



The course will be available live on the GIAN website.

Fees



Bachelors/Masters Students: ₹ 100



PhD: ₹ 1000



Faculty/Professionals: 2000



Registration starts from 15 December 2024

Course Coordinator (GIAN)

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