

the arabian sun

September 2, 2020 | Vol. LXXV, No. 34

a weekly Saudi Aramco publication for employees

in this issue

citizenship, charity, and giving back is in our DNA

Aramco has a long history of giving back in the communities in which it operates, promoting a vibrant society where people are afforded opportunities to prosper.

see pages 6 and 7

'Pathway' to engagement from course to real life

Employee engagement doesn't occur by accident; it takes work. And a new nine-month program that mixes class work and actual work experiences is showing big results.

see page 5

screen time: lthra launches 2020 Saudi Film Festival

The screening portion of the event will be virtual, allowing for 24-hour access to this year's 25 films via the Saudi Film Festival's YouTube channel.

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at summer's end, why not visit historic al-Hasa oasis

From Al Fakhria Palace to the Al Ja'alaniah Mosque to the expansive rice plantations, the oasis of al-Hasa provides a bounty of surprises for visitors.

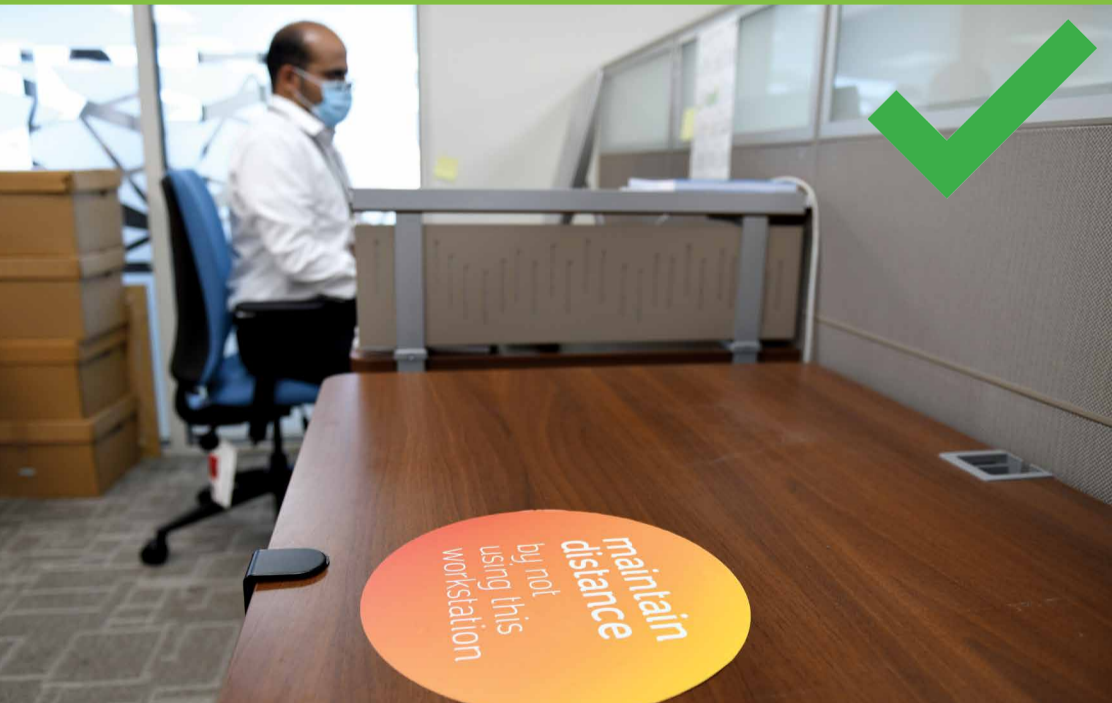
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welcome back and stay safe

and if you see something, say something

see pages 2 and 3



(Photos: Ding, Hassan AlMubarak, Ahmad El Itani, Hatim Oweida, Musleh Khathami)



With restrictions now lifted ...
we must not become complacent in controlling COVID-19.

Do Your Part by
Wearing a Mask in Public

maintain physical distancing
of 2 meters at all times



COVID 19
Return



return with safety

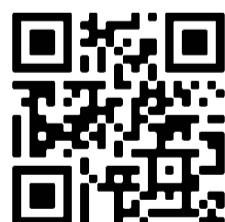
Let's all protect ourselves and each other.

Each employee plays a critical role in the company's commitment to safeguard our people and operations.

Please help protect yourself and your colleagues by reviewing and utilizing these critical resources.



Changes-at-the-Workplace Video



New Habits for Safe Living E-guide



Email Signature Prevention Graphics

aramco.com/covid
87-COVID
(013 872 6843)



welcome back

employees eager to return to routines cast close eye on safety

Aramco has always taken the proper procedures and steps to ensure the safety and efficiency of their operations and employees.

The global pandemic has affected everyone, with almost every company and place of work adapting to new requirements, much of which has been having employees work remotely. For much of the late spring and summer, all but essential employees — those whose presence is critical for business continuity — were included in a work from home policy.

Over that time, the work environment has shifted significantly to ensure both smooth operations and that the safety of employees is being considered. Gradually, and successfully, we have shifted toward a “new normal.”

Starting this week, the company welcomed back many employees, with now

75% of the work force expected to be in offices and work places Kingdomwide — another step toward the new normal.

Regardless, whether employees were working from home or working at the office, taking the necessary precautions collectively has helped us reach to where we are today.

The Arabian Sun talked to a few of the returning employees, to capture their thoughts and feelings about returning to the office.

As employees companywide return to work, they are reminded to follow proper safety procedures such as wearing a mask at all times and maintaining physical distance, as well as conducting meetings virtually when possible. (Photo: Moayed Al Qattani/MPD)



Shahad A. Al Turki expressed her excitement about returning to work after working remotely.

“When I was sent home on March 22, I immediately started working,” she said, noting that she was initially afraid of being quarantined — “just like everyone else.”

Being with the company over the past two-and-a-half-years, she worried that a new lifestyle and pace of work would be difficult to adjust to, especially not being able to physically meet colleagues and participate in face-to-face meetings. Even not being able to go out to lunch with friends during the break proved concerning.

Like all Aramcons, though, Al Turki showed resilience in the face of great change and adjusted to working from home, remaining productive while learning new ways to communicate with supervisors and colleagues virtually.

Still, returning this week has also gone smoothly.

“Even though it feels like a drastic change, it is still nice to get back to a regular work routine,” she said.

And with new company procedures in place to impede the spread of the virus, Al Turki has enthusiastically embraced the practice of physical distancing, wearing a face mask at all times, and washing and disinfecting her hands regularly.

“While there are no big physical gatherings, it is comforting to know everyone is following the necessary precautions to protect themselves and those around them,” she added.

Shahad A. Al Turki,
accounting staff analyst with the
Financial Accounting Department



In five-and-a-half months of working from home, Sunil P. Dalal had everything he needed to be productive. As far as his job duties, it seemed little had changed. So when he returned to work this week, it was a bit of surprise that the workplace wasn't how he remembered it.

“Now that I'm back, I can see things have changed. But it's all based on the company's core value of safety. They encourage physical distancing. Our desks are set at safe distances from each other. We use Skype for meetings to avoid gathering in conference rooms. And in our group, we have moved to a paperless office. Rather than printing and handing out paper reports, which can spread the infection person to person, we send each other files electronically,” Dalal said.

“For us, it's really a sign that Aramco has taken precautions for our safety. So I feel confident about what the company has done for us to be safe in the workplace,” he added.

Dalal said he understood the absolute need to take COVID-19 seriously, and he's grateful that the company has been consistent with its messaging so employees know what is required.

“It's important that we maintain the same practices we have learned over the past five-and-a-half months, now that we are returning to the office,” he noted.

Sunil P. Dalal,
financial analyst in the Financial Risk Management Department

Bashaer O. Bazuhair said that she was worried and nervous about working from home at first.

“I was thinking, ‘How is this going to work out? It is going to be strange,’” she said with a laugh.

Contrary to what she first believed, though, working from home felt good, especially when Bazuhair considered the prospect of being exposed to the virus as numbers continued to rise across the Kingdom.

Instead, it was when she first returned to work last month that felt somewhat alien to her. “It felt strange not being able to socialize with my colleagues like before,” Bazuhair said. “The office was quiet in the beginning.”

Now, though, as the majority of employees are back at work in the department — many that never left as they were necessary to maintain business continuity — she says it's good to see them back and committed to practicing physical distancing.

There are plenty of hand sanitizer stations for employees to use throughout the department,” Bazuhair noted. “And of course, everyone is wearing masks.”

“I believe this pandemic taught us to be prepared in case we have to deal with something similar in the future,” she added.

Bashaer O. Bazuhair,
business system analyst with the Downstream Planning
and Performance Management Department



Karam S. Yateem has been adjusting gradually to working in the office. When his city was placed on lockdown, he worked from home. And when the lockdown was lifted, he performed his duties with a mixture of working from home and office — with the majority associated with the latter.

And now as he is joined by more people in the office, he can see the importance of the precautionary measures that have been into place, making him comfortable with the return to work.

“The return of people being present at the office is happening throughout the company. This week, I am taking a course at the Upstream Professional Development

Center, and I can see the precautionary measures being taken to continue learning and education in a safe environment,” Yateem said.

“As a company, we are following the instruction of our medical service providers, as well as complying with all Ministry of Health requirements. In our department, we have taken courses with Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare to deepen our awareness on how to stay safe,” he said, adding that this kind of information has been very useful to share among families and society in general.

Probably the biggest challenge for Yateem was adapting to the use of Skype for Business and conducting virtual meetings.

“Initially, this was used solely for our team meetings, but it then led to the discovery that virtual meeting tools can connect us more broadly across the company. We have been working on innovation projects with a Central Province Department of the Downstream Business Line, and Skype has given us the opportunity to expand our viewpoint. We would not have thought it feasible until we started utilizing these tools,” Yateem said.

Karam S. Yateem,
group leader for Operational Excellence,
Health, Safety and Environment in the Northern
Area Production Engineering Department

Aramco in the news



Aramco says \$75 billion dividend pledge on track as it eyes oil bounce



Aramco CEO sees oil demand picking up as lockdowns ease



CTO: Aramco shares F1's objective of advancing engine and vehicle technology



Aramco reorganizes downstream business with new operating model

your voice

proudly leading the way in making a positive impact on people and communities



by Abdulaziz AlBaadi
Dhahran

Abdulaziz.AlBaadi@aramco.com

Your Voice reflects the thoughts and opinions of the writer, and not necessarily those of the publication.

Since its foundation in 1933, Aramco has acted as an inspiring example of community empowerment and social progress. A project that reflects the company's values — excellence, safety, integrity, citizenship and accountability — in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 is an initiative that seeks to catalyze the potential of the Kingdom's young talent pool.

In 2017, Aramco built an 18-floor "Knowledge Tower" in Dhahran called The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (also known as Ithra). Ithra, which means "enrichment" in Arabic, reflects Aramco's vision to help the Kingdom's ambition to transform into a knowledge economy.

The Center has played a critical role in encouraging creativity and innovation

through an array of programs that help young generations develop new kinds of skills. This includes a landmark volunteering program — the success of which can be seen in the 60,000 hours from 1,500 volunteers provided in 2019 alone. In fact, Ithra's volunteer programs offer thousands of enriching opportunities that help meet approximately 80% of its staffing needs.

Ithra is just one example of how Aramco generates opportunities that help make a positive impact on people and communities.

Recently, the company's Industrial Security Operations Department initiated a volunteer program that saw 70 participants uniting to provide over 1,000 volunteer hours. It included employees'

family members from 16 to 25 years of age and created a platform to encourage social responsibility among high school and college students.

The volunteers covered social events, such as 'Id and Saudi National Day where they were responsible for serving as ushers, fielding questions from the public, and maintaining a safe environment for the attendees. Apart from contributing to society, such programs allow volunteers to cultivate social skills through interaction with people of different ages and of different backgrounds.

As the world's largest company, Aramco is proud of such programs and endeavors to act with purpose by mobilizing its resources to empower the next generation.



- > Resilience - and results
- > Smokeless innovation
- > A world-class Eco Park



program provides ‘Pathway’ to employee engagement

by Abdelbasit Ayoub

Employee engagement doesn’t occur by accident; it takes work.

Some 13 participants recently celebrated that work as they graduated from the Downstream Development Academy’s “Pathway to Employee Engagement Program.” The nine-month program featured three separate three-day workshops and four one-on-one coaching sessions with

coach and program facilitator Abdelbasit Ayoub.

from classroom to the workplace

Promoting staff engagement is critical for all of Aramco’s leaders, as it makes for passionate employees who are committed to their work. What the “Pathway” program does is to focus on skills that encourage such passion and commitment — first in the classroom, then with real employees.

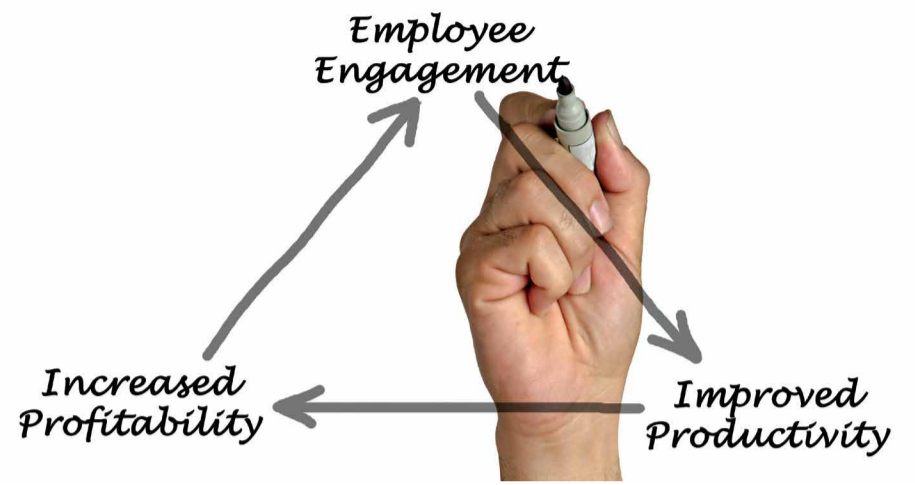
Ultimately, the program’s goal is to help leaders drive results, create and sustain change, and develop and coach their employees. It uses a number of techniques.

In one part, leaders videotape themselves in action, applying what they learned in the classroom with employees. Then, they review the session, reflecting with the instructor on how they’ve applied what they learned by taking note of such aspects as body language.

“Before this program, the business demands drove me to ‘tell’ people rather than ‘ask’ them about challenges,” said Matter F. Otaibi, superintendent of the HR Division in the Ras Tanura (RT) Cluster Shared Services Department. “The program equipped me with a better approach that empowers employees to take action and grow.”

the proof is in the employees

But what makes the program truly unique is how it measures the behavior change on participating leaders over the four to six months after they complete



the program. Using a post-program 180 degree behavior survey assessment tool, 51% had dramatic positive change, 45% had significant positive change, 4% had slight positive change, and 0% had no change or a change for the worse — all of this as judged by their employees.

“This program helped me and my team in conducting effective conversation in broadminded way,” said Fahad A. Al Hamidi, acting superintendent of Area Maintenance at RT Refinery.

“The program showed me how to foster trust with the team. One methodology that has helped me personally is feedforward, which allows employees to give feedback and express leader areas of improvement in a respectful way,” said Hashim A. Ben Selim, a supervisor from the Power Systems Engineering Department.

Graduating participants created their Individual Development Plan for the next 12

months based on their 180 degree behavioral for change survey report.

support from the top

Support from leadership is critical for any program, but especially so when it comes to one promoting engagement.

Members of management included Fawwaz I. Nawwab, acting admin area head of Domestic Refining and NGL Fractionation; Mohammad A. Al Hatlani, acting admin area head of Pipelines, Distribution and Terminals; as well as managers of departments from different business lines showed their support during a ceremony recognizing the 13 program graduations.

“The best investment we can make is building our front-line leaders skills to lead a modern industrial work force through extended leadership development programs like this one,” said Hamad M. Qahatani, manager of the RT Cluster Shared Services Department.



Why is employee engagement important?

Engaged employees invest more in the work they do, leading to higher quality and productivity, and are less likely to leave, reducing turnover.

Common methods to increase employee engagement:

- Ask employees what engages them
- Take action
- Check in with them regularly (employee conversations)
- Empower managers
- Establish trust
- Recognize accomplishments.

Stay Safe at Work



Wear a mask when going to work and keep it on when you are with others



Wash your hands for 40-60 seconds or sanitize your hands for 20 seconds frequently during the day



Make all meetings virtual if possible



Keep at least two meters between yourself and others



Disinfect the surfaces you touch frequently



Practice non-contact greetings such as waving or placing your hand on your chest



Avoid gatherings and crowded spaces such as busy elevators and coffee rooms



If you experience any COVID-19 symptoms, contact your medical provider and stay home



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giving is an integral part of Aramco's DNA

International Day of Charity

On Sept. 5 of every year, the world unites in the name of charity to raise awareness and rally efforts to alleviate the suffering of those in need.

This year, we join in celebrating the significance of the International Day of Charity, which was originally conceived by the Hungarian government in 2011 to commemorate the anniversary of Mother Teresa's passing. In 2012, the United Nations general assembly marked the day officially as an international day.

Born in Macedonia to Albanian parents in 1910, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu's path led her to Calcutta, India, where she taught at a women's school for two decades, and was known for devoting her life to caring for others. In 1979, Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian efforts.

by Rawan Nasser

Aramco has a long history of giving back to communities locally and around the world, mobilizing resources to create opportunities for growth and prosperity.

From Aramco built government schools and scholarship programs to the Ajyal Center for students with learning disabilities in Dhahran, the company's commitment to promoting education has empowered people to positively contribute to their communities Kingdomwide for more than 80 years.

giving that leads to opportunity

And from coast to coast, the company invests in projects such as the King Salman Energy Park in the East and the Jazan Economic City in the West to spur economic development, enhance community lifestyles, and provide those who live there with the resources to lead productive and meaningful lives.

"We believe a vibrant society is only possible when people are afforded opportunities to prosper and build a better future for their families," said Nabeel A. Al-Jama', senior vice president of Human Resources and Support Services.

"Our outreach initiatives and campaigns are helping to drive national development in line



with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, with a clear mission of protecting the planet, empowering people, and uplifting communities," Al-Jama' added. "We're committed to creating a world of opportunities for all, and that means helping to strengthen the capabilities of the Kingdom's working hands while also supporting families, communities and ecosystems wherever we operate."

helping develop people, resources, and economies

Aramco's socioeconomic projects have especially been effective in localizing and growing traditional professions across the Kingdom.

"With social economic projects, we look at the environment and resources in that area," said Najwa Azaimi, director of Corporate Citizenship. "In Al Jouf, for example, olive trees

are abundant so it makes sense to invest in building an olive soap factory."

National initiatives also include supporting the Kingdom's fishing sector in Yanbu' and Baish, building an ecosystem for coffee plantation and production in several areas of Jazan, as well as training low-income women to produce a variety of date products in al-Hasa and al-Qassim for commercial use.

"In Taif, we're developing a rose factory and partnering with companies and experts to ensure that the products created can be exported. We are also providing research opportunities and training to expand coffee production in the South," said Azaimi. "Our strategic drive is to create a real impact, which is why we collaborate with entities in and out of the Kingdom, and follow initial support with research and development to ensure the sustainability of these projects."

reaching out when it matters most

The role of citizenship took center stage when the world began to suffer the economic and health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The company set up a COVID-19 Donation Campaign, which generated SR6.54 million from contributions made by 17,674 Aramco employees. These funds supported the delivery of care packages to 20,219 families in 27 cities Kingdomwide who have been impacted

by the pandemic.

"Reaching out to all those cities during the pandemic and curfews was a huge effort," said Azaimi. "What made our campaign special is that we not only provided food items, but also hygiene and sanitizing products.

"That's in addition to edutainment, because we wanted families to use their time at home productively by reading books together and bonding over games that are engaging and educational," she added.

Aramco also made contributions to several international entities through the company's offices in America, Asia, and the EU, including food banks, medical facilities, disaster relief associations, and charities.

Aramco Korea, for example, made a donation of more than \$840,000 to Hope Bridge Korea Disaster Relief Association in March — when the virus was at its peak — to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in South Korea. And the company donated a total of 10 million yuan to the Red Cross Society of China to help the country's ongoing relief efforts in containing COVID-19 there.

The heart of citizenship beats loudly inside Aramcos all around the world, helping the communities in which they work and making the world a better place. As Nabeel A. Al-Jama' says, "We believe a vibrant society is only possible when people are afforded opportunities to prosper and build a better future for their families."



some of the ways we give back

Aramco has stepped up to help those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic, but giving back has been an integral part of the company for decades. Some of its other citizenship activities include:

- Supporting micro industries across the Kingdom, such as bee keeping, fisheries in Yanbu' and Baish, olive products in al-Jouf, sewing centers, and coffee cultivation in Jazan.
- Partnership with Technical and Vocational Training Corporation and other stakeholders to build training academies for young Saudis, with 22,000 graduates to date. Participants are trained in various sectors through a sponsorship initiative, which is then followed by employment.
- Shamah Autism Center in Dammam.
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and vocational education programs for young Saudis designed to empower the Kingdom's youth while actively contributing to localization efforts under Saudi Vision 2030.

helping where it counts: Aramco's helping hand spans the globe

From the Americas to the Netherlands, to Singapore, Indonesia and Mongolia, employees have consistently given their time to helping less fortunate and diverse communities and improving the environments they live in. Their inspirational, selfless dedication and humanity continues to enhance Aramco's reputation as a responsible energy company across the globe. Today, some of them tell us about their activities and what drives them.

Saudi Arabia



Everyone has something special and unique to learn from; I usually think of how to act as a role model. I'm actively involved in many of the social responsibility

activities organized with different societies in Saudi Arabia and Aramco.

As an Aramco employee, I believe in our corporate values, and I make sure to implement them into my life. Giving my time to charity makes me feel happier, more fulfilled, and it strengthens my own personal values and ethical beliefs. I believe that the more I give, the more that comes back to me.

Giving back to my community will help me to enhance my learning abilities and boost my understanding of the importance of teamwork, communication and relationship building. It expands my network and makes me feel good about myself.

Giving back also unlocks my capabilities, because there are things you will never know about yourself and what you can do, until you have to try to help someone else.

Hind M. Al-Rayes,
analyst, Planning and Performance Management in Dhahran

Saudi Arabia



My involvement started in 2009 when I organized the Saudi National Day booths at the American University in Sharjah. This multicultural and multi-organizational

experience built the basis for a solid public affairs acumen that relies on interactions with different nationalities and multiple teams.

Through 2,800 hours over 10 years of continuous participation in Aramco volunteering activities, I supported the Volunteering Group by developing a volunteerism handbook that provided a comprehensive outline for processes addressing such issues as recruitment, training, program design, recognition, and media relations.

These activities helped increase the productivity of these individuals by helping them learn to handle multiple personality types, and in turn enabled me to also broaden my network and improve my public speaking skills.

All this has helped me and the company, increasing the awareness of the importance of charity and volunteering work.

Based on my previous experiences, I have become enriched by such knowledge and experiences that help not only my department, but also Aramco, to increase the awareness of the importance of charity and volunteering work.

Bader Baytoor,
business systems analyst, King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture, Ithra Volunteer Services

The Netherlands



The idea of volunteering to local communities has always intrigued me, and thanks to Aramco Overseas, I have been able to enroll and enjoy these kind-hearted

activities.

Personally, I have been to four volunteering events organized by Aramco, mainly with elderly people and schoolchildren.

During these events, colleagues from different backgrounds and parts of the world came together, and we all gave our best to add some happiness in the lives of those surrounding us.

As an Aramco volunteer, I truly felt that I was demonstrating our commitment to our citizenship values and I was giving back through social responsibility.

Moreover, volunteering has brought an even greater sense of teamwork and camaraderie amongst my colleagues within Aramco, as an organization.

Last but not least, believe it or not, but giving of your time for a good cause does wonders for your physical and mental health.

Every volunteer can make a difference. Don't underestimate your potential. No matter how small your steps are, you have the potential to make a big difference!

Marouane Ghribi,
Procurement Planner, The Hague, Aramco Overseas Company (AOC)

Singapore



In Singapore, Finance manager Eunice Ng has participated in all Aramco CSR programs, helping build new houses for the poor in Batam, Indonesia, planting mangrove seedlings in Johor, Malaysia, and packing customized care packages for those in need.

Outside of Aramco, she also makes yearly visit to nursing home to spend time with the elderly there.

As for me, I champion Aramco Asia CSR activities in Southeast Asia region and have actively promoted volunteerism since 2016.

We actively promote sustainability by looking at solutions to environmental and societal issues in local communities with the Aramco Asia Enactus Energy Cup (Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines).

In 2018 and 2019, we also delivered access to clean water in Lombok and Cilacap in Indonesia, focusing on building a healthy nation by providing sanitation and education to school children in Cilacap.

This year, we have been delivering customized care packages to the vulnerable elderly people.

Since 2016, I have made yearly trips to Mongolia to participate in children's summer camps for the children from poor families, raising money back in Singapore to purchase good quality coal for the poor families to use in winter, (if they do not have coal, they will burn whatever they can find such as plastic, etc for winter, which will cause health issues).

Patsy Koh,
Public Affairs manager and
Eunice Ng,
Finance manager, Aramco Singapore, Aramco Asia

U.S.



The opportunity to serve is one of the best parts — almost a perk — of life. I am so thankful that it is richly incorporated in such an integral part of my life, my

job.

The charity efforts at Aramco Americas are well-planned, fun, family-friendly, and encourage teamwork and collaboration among my peers.

With four children, finding time to volunteer in the community and participate in some of Aramco's biggest volunteer events like the Aramco Houston Half Marathon — which raises more than \$2 million every year for over 60 local charities — is a treat.

I've recruited my family to volunteer with me because I believe it's important to demonstrate values such as generosity and compassion to our children.

In fact, my 15-year-old daughter Amiah has volunteered with me for numerous years. One of my favorite memories is seeing her give out refreshments to the runners after a long race — her small hands barely big enough to hold the cookies she was handing out.

Jessica C. Burgess,
accounting staff analyst,
Finance Department, Aramco Americas

India



I believe it is important to give back to society and make it a point to consciously take time out for community charitable activities. This includes volunteer-

ing time, donating food packets, books and medicines to the needy, etc.

Lives of several people, especially the underprivileged, has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are particularly vulnerable as their nutrition and education has been affected.

I've participated in a camp organized by local NGOs at Vaishali in Ghaziabad, India. The objective of this camp is to spread awareness about the importance of education among underprivileged children and their parents, living in shanties. A general knowledge session was held as part of the camp and seventy food packets were distributed to the children who participated in the camp.

Puneet Kakkar,
quality management Coordinator
with Aramco India since 2015

Saudi Arabia



As an Aramco employee, I feel that the company's citizenship and social responsibility values and leadership orientations have positively influenced me

personally over time.

When I was young, I stuttered and was very shy, fearful to talk with others because of my speech impediment.

Over the years, I learned tricks to hide my stutter and pretend to be a normal fluent speaker. But in 2014, I joined the McGuire Program in London, and my life has changed completely. It did not cure my stuttering, but that's not the goal of the program.

My mentality toward the issue has turned into a strength and something I am proud of.

Currently, I am the MENA regional director of the McGuire Program to help people who stutter. I have done several TV and radio interviews with only one thing in mind — help raise awareness about stuttering and spread the word about International Stuttering Day. Aramco has supported my passion and encouraged volunteerism, something that has been key in helping more than 350 people I've worked with across the region, giving hope to stutterers across the MENA region.

Abdullah R. Bin Buayjan,
engineer, East-West Pipelines
Department, Pump Station 3

If our readers know of colleagues who go the extra mile for charity and volunteerism, email publishing@aramco.com so we might feature their efforts in future issues.



Al Ja'alaniah Mosque



A Local Farm



A Local Farm



A Pottery Factory

an oasis in summer

al-Hasa farms a welcome surprise for Eastern Province visitors

by Chiara Ciampricotti Iacoangeli

Al-Hasa — The summer heat of Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province doesn't generally portend places full of lush vegetation, but al-Hasa is one of those rare exceptions.

An oasis flush with palm trees, it features many sources of artificial canal irrigation that reaches private plots of land dedicated to agriculture. Inside these small farms, rich plantations survive even the difficult summer season.

Crossing the threshold of these farms, you enter avenues that enjoy intense plays of light and shade created by the intersection of the leaves of tall palm trees and sun rays filtering through from above, nourishing plants and offering shade for shelter and relief.

to everything, a season and purpose

Here, everything is ordered. The land is organized in squares that separate each crop. Plants are grown to a seasonal rhythm — fruits, vegetables, herbs, and spices. The scent of lemons and limes is pervasive as they are being harvested and left to dry.

Many paths flank the irrigation canals, and precariously narrow wooden bridges to the plots test your balance.

Farmers also dedicate themselves to breeding a variety of animals, including pigeons, chickens, sheep, goats, and cows. Rare birds also appear to be highly sought after in this area and are bred for this reason. The more their plumage is refined, curled, convoluted, colored, the more their selling price increases.

It is not uncommon to find camels here, a fraternal animal friend of the locals. Far away at the end of an avenue, a beautiful white donkey can be seen, guarding the fields and supporting moves and activities.

the hidden treasures of al-Hasa

The al-Hasa area hosts greenery everywhere; it is, after all, an oasis. One could get pleasantly lost meandering along the streets, stumbling across precious hidden treasures around a corner.

One of these treasures is the Al Fakhria



Palace, an ancient royal mansion. It was once a summer residence, the remains of which still demonstrate the splendor of the past in the wealth of its details — luxurious ceilings of intertwined palm tree lattices, large arches dividing the rooms, magnificent decorative friezes, and arched windows from which to look out over the green landscape.

Another beautiful ancient site is the Al-Ja'alaniah Mosque, which is currently under renovation. Excavations are being carried out in the area in front of the arches that lead to the place of prayer. Here, interesting finds of carved and painted ceramics have been found.

Proof that this art is ancient and has been handed down from generation to generation, still to this day. In fact, one can find nearby more recently produced handcrafted ceramics for sale including containers, vases, jars, candle holders, and incense burners.

The pottery wheel is at the center of the activity, and you can personally observe the processing. There is no shortage of more elaborate pieces, such as the traditional perforated candle holders, from which

the light is projected in complex geometric shapes.

a bounty of Hasawi rice and smiles

The curtain on the most beautiful spectacle opens on the cultivation of Hasawi rice. A red rice, which is planted between July and August to be harvested in December. The product is indigenous, but some varieties have been hybridized with a rice native in Indonesia to produce a dwarf Hasawi rice with a shorter growing season.

Hasawi is a drought tolerant rice and capable of growing in high salinity soils. It is traditionally used to provide strength for those who are unwell.

This time, the squares into which the soil is portioned are filled with water where the rice will be planted. These tufts of leaves that are inserted into the ground grow rapidly and multiply, becoming very dense. Here a second step is necessary to thin out the crop, transplanting them nearby.

This work is hard, as the job requires planters to immerse their feet in the water and be bent over for many hours. Workers wake up early in the morning so they can



Hasawi rice plantation



rest during the hottest hours of the day, resuming in the afternoon until the evening.

Yet the faces of those who work are smiling.

Traditionally, they sing as they are lined up in a row to start their work, the arid ground crossed by cracks and fissures gradually filling up with water, flooding, and dissolving all these cracks. The water creates natural pools on which the sunlight reflects and breaks.

Men enter the waters by breaking the stagnation and placing the plants inside. A small tropical kingdom has been transplanted in the shade of palm trees and grows dense and prolific.

The ripe rice will eventually have to be stripped of its outer skin. After months in storage, it can be cooked as a precious ingredient for a delicious kabsa. Its flavor is delicious, similar to that of a crunchy cereal, and it gives an unusually reddish color to the dish.

So ends our short journey, an exploration into simplicity, a daily escape that gives relief and refreshment from the heat, leads to the discovery of small hidden gems, and is therapeutic in transmitting that sense of peace and tranquility that these surroundings convey.

Al Fakhria Palace



coming to a screen very near you

Ithra launches 2020 Saudi Film Festival

Dhahran — The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra) is hosting the sixth Saudi Film Festival through Sept. 6.

For the first time, the screening portion of the event will be completely virtual, allowing for 24-hour access to this year's 25 films via the Saudi Film Festival's YouTube channel, as well as a live broadcast of discussions with film makers.

The annual festival, which began Tuesday, showcases the Saudi film industry through screenings, competitions, discussions, workshops, and award ceremonies. This year's event was organized in partnership with the Saudi Arabian Society for Culture and Arts in Dammam and supported by the Ministry of Culture's Film Commission.

a catalyst for a burgeoning industry

Launched in 2008, the Saudi Film Festival has developed into a major catalyst for the Kingdom's burgeoning film industry. And since its inception, Ithra has developed into one of the Kingdom's leading venues for film production houses.



The Saudi Film Festival has become a major catalyst for the Kingdom's burgeoning film industry, featuring premieres, awards and recognitions, original content, top-flight starts, and panel sessions. This year, the festival, which began on Tuesday, is being held virtually.

Ithra's support of the growing Saudi film industry has given rise to multiple productions that have received accolades and awards at prestigious local and international film festivals. Several Ithra-produced movies are now being streamed via Netflix to viewers around the world.

To date, Ithra has produced 20 films that have received 15 local and international awards.

"Our first huge step forward was in 2018 when Ithra produced and premiered the

feature film 'Joud' to international acclaim and multiple awards," said Ithra director Hussain Hanbazazah. "In 2019, Ithra produced more than 150 works of original content, including eight movies.

"Ithra has always sought to tap into the wealth of talented men and women of the Kingdom, and provide them with a dynamic platform and the tools to take their art to the next level of a very competitive industry," Hanbazazah added.

"While 2020 remains to be a challeng-

ing year, Ithra continues its support of local cinematic content creation by partnering again with the Saudi Film Festival and screening original films," he said.

"Film has been a bright point for Ithra, and the Center has absolutely been a launching point for the Saudi film industry," Hanbazazah concluded.

cinematic initiatives

Ithra's cinematic initiatives include regular meetings of the Ithra Film Society and the Saudi Film Days contest, a competitive platform for local cinematic production where winners' creative concepts are brought to life.

One of Ithra's leading features is the 300-seat state-of-the-art cinema and screening venue. The Ithra Cinema regularly presents new and compelling films from Saudi Arabia's blossoming film industry, as well as documentaries, movies for kids, and popular and historical films.

For more about the Saudi Film Festival, Ithra's film programs, and movies at the Ithra Cinema, visit www.ithra.com.



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'Udhailiyah beats the summer heat with match play tourney

Eagerly anticipated by the community during the summer break, the 'Udhailiyah Golf Match Play Summer 2020 Tournament was held from July 1 to Aug. 12 at Wadi Al Saeed Golf Course.

Organized by the new golf pro Nisharan Sewshanker, the tournament saw 20 golfers participate in the seven-week tournament. Due to COVID-19 restrictions preventing large gatherings, the golf team developed innovative ways in organizing the tournament to make sure all proper regulations were in place.

The match play format was introduced by Sewshanker to encourage participation and sportsmanship.

woman tops the field

The tournament, which was played on

a weekly basis, featured golfers playing against each other and recording points as a league table. After weeks of play, it came down to the top four golfers — Karisma Samilin, Greg Kortzman, Alexandro Oubina, and Robert Rooney, with Kortzman and Rooney competing for third and fourth place, and Oubina and Samilin vying for the championship and runner-up.

In the end, Samilin took top honors, with Oubina in second, Rooney in third, and Kortzman finishing fourth.

sportsmanship, camaraderie, game improvement

The "five holes of summer play" against each other helped golfers focus more on their play and also learn to play under pressure. This added to game improvement,

sportsmanship, and enhanced camaraderie at the club and in the community.

Golfers appreciated the efforts of the golf operation staff (golf pro, supervisor, assistant supervisor, and green keepers) as the course played well, and staff members were always on hand at the event to ensure that the greens and the course was maintained.

Certificates were awarded to all players and prizes in the form of a golf hamper, and trophies were given to the top four. The golf club thanked the Recreation Services for the opportunity and to promote progress of golf in 'Udhailiyah.

Mallick Nabeel was awarded a certificate of most improved player, having just started golf recently. Nabeel has reduced a 33 handicap to a 15, working hard on his game to show that practice definitely pays off.

A special appreciation went out to all golfers for their willingness to brave the summer heat to compete.

thank you for all the efforts

Officials also thanked Edwin Pinet and Winston Alcantra for providing the additional support and making sure that the tournament was administered smoothly. Thanks also went to the green keepers for always keeping the course in high standards for the players, as well as to the 'Udhailiyah Recreation Services team members, including events team lead Linda Skosana and Josel Tallada, for giving the tournament a professional touch.



Karisma Samilin captured top honors from a field of 20 in the 'Udhailiyah Golf Match Play Summer 2020 Tournament, besting Alexandro Oubina in the finals.



Mallick Nabeel was awarded a certificate of most improved player, having just started golf recently. Nabeel has reduced a 33 handicap to a 15, working hard on his game to show that practice definitely pays off.



Alexandro Oubina tees off from the second hole of the Wadi Al Saeed Golf Course. Oubina earned second place honors in the recent match play tournament, which was held from July 1 to Aug. 12.

well-being

caring for your health and wellness

Suffering from indigestion?

here's a few rules on how to make it stop

Nearly everyone has had indigestion at one time or another, that feeling of discomfort or burning in your upper abdomen. You may have heartburn or bloating, causing you to belch or even vomit.

And as there are many causes of indigestion, avoiding certain foods and situations may help prevent it. Also, not eating too much too fast, eating high fat foods, eating while stressed, smoking, using some medicines, or even fatigue can cause indigestion or exacerbate it.

Also, sometimes it can be caused by digestive tract distress such as an ulcer.

Known as dyspepsia or having an upset stomach, indigestion isn't a disease; it's a group of symptoms. And though it is common, the way you experience it may be different than the way others do.

Some have symptoms daily, others only occasionally.

symptoms

Indigestion may make you feel very full

after a meal, and that fullness might last longer than normal. Or you may feel full after only eating a little bit.

Sometimes, people with indigestion also have heartburn — a pain and burning sensation in the middle of your chest. It may spread into your neck or back after or while eating.

Mild indigestion is usually not a cause for concern. Talk to your health care provider if discomfort happens for more than two weeks. Contact your health care provider right away if your pain is severe.

You should also contact your health care provider right away if your pain is accompanied by:

- Weight loss without trying or loss of appetite
- Repeated vomiting or vomiting with blood
- Black stools
- Jaundice

- Trouble swallowing that gets progressively worse.

causes

Indigestion is most often caused by a person's lifestyle, such as food and beverage choices. Other digestive conditions can also cause indigestion.

Indigestion is often caused by:

- Overeating
- Eating too quickly
- Fatty or greasy foods
- Spicy foods
- Too much caffeine
- Too much chocolate
- Too many carbonated beverages.

Healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent mild indigestion. Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Chew your food slowly and thoroughly. Avoid triggers. If certain foods, beverages or behaviors trigger your indigestion, avoid them.

Maintain a healthy weight. Excess

weight can put pressure on your abdomen. This pressure may push into your stomach and cause acid to back up into your esophagus.

Exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight and lead to better digestion. Try for 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

Eliminate stress from your daily life, especially during meal time. Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and yoga. Spend time doing things you enjoy and get plenty of sleep.

Talk to your health care provider about medications you take to find out if any of them cause indigestion. With your health care provider's approval, stop or cut back on pain relieving drugs that may irritate your stomach.

If lifestyle changes don't help your indigestion, medications may help. Most are designed to reduce stomach acid, helping move food from the stomach to the small intestine.

Back in the office? Top tips on how to stay safe and protect yourself and others from COVID-19



• **Taking the elevator? Be sure to push the button with a tissue to keep your hands germ-free.** If you do use your finger/hand, use alcohol-based hand rub after pushing the button.

• Don't pick up COVID-19 during your coffee break.

Avoid resting your hands on countertops or tabletops in communal areas; germs can easily spread from a surface to a person.

• **Don't make it awkward in the office.** Be a responsible colleague; wear a mask at all times, and physical distance.

• **Crowded elevators put you and others at risk of infection.** Adhere to the advised number of people per elevator, or avoid the elevator all together and take the stairs for some exercise.

• **The average office desk is said to contain more germs than a toilet seat,** meaning that many office workers could be at risk of sickness due to dirty desks. Keep your space and your hands clean.

• **When it comes to staying safe, a little distance goes a long way.** Take the necessary precautions; stay 2 meters apart to ensure you and your colleagues are safe.

• **Holding on to a handrail when taking the stairs is**

an important safety measure. However, handrails are a "common area" surface and can easily spread germs. Adjust your behavior to hover your hand above the railing, so you can grasp it if you stumble and need support.

• **Create an environment of accountability.** Invite others to tell you if you are doing something that isn't safe, like touching your face. They might ask you to do the same.

• **Don't forget the 3 W's to stop COVID-19** — wear a mask, wash or sanitize your hands, and watch your distance.

Visit <https://www.jhah.com/en/new-coronavirus> for more on COVID-19 Awareness



expanding in-person visits at JHAH

As a result of our ongoing assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic, Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare (JHAH) is pleased to offer more in-person care at its facilities. You can now choose your preferred type of visit, whether it's a convenient video or telephone call, or a face-to-face visit in one of our clinics.

How can I book a Primary Care visit at JHAH?

You can book an in-person or video/telephone visit in MyChart, or by calling

800-305-4444 and selecting option 1 for appointments.

For more information on JHAH clinic visit options, visit [jhah.com/appointments](https://www.jhah.com/appointments).



As we continue to take precautions to protect against the spread of COVID-19, you will experience changes in how you book your visit with JHAH and the preventive measures it takes at its facilities. Patients, staff and the community are JHAH's highest priority, and it works tirelessly to do everything it can to keep them safe and healthy.

JHAH thanks you for helping maintain physical distancing in waiting areas and hallways.



Become a patient at Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare (JHAH)

Eligible Saudi Aramco employees and their dependents are invited to register for health care at JHAH.

For more information on how to change your registration, contact your local HR Service Center or visit HR Online, or scan the QR code below for detailed instructions.



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the face of community

Abqaiq artists recognized for creativity

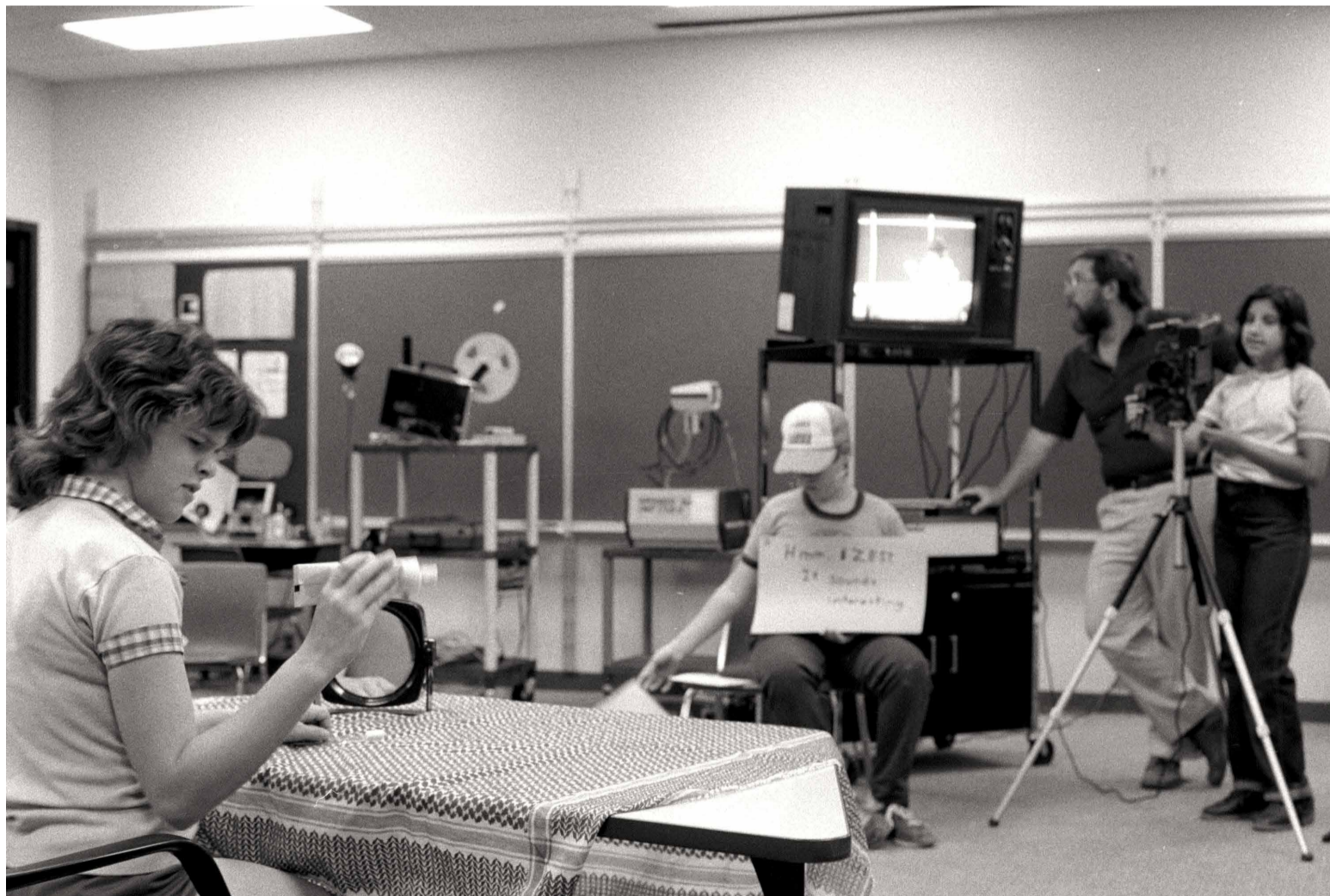


by Masud Rana and Zoe Chiplin

Abqaiq — To promote community spirit and creativity through art in Abqaiq, the Abqaiq Residential and Recreation Services Division (ARRSD) encouraged community residents to show their face painting skills and submit a photo of their masterpiece.

A variety of bright and colorful submissions were received, with two community residents being selected by ARRSD management as the competition winners.

Recreation supervisor Mark Khoury presented gifts to Erum Rizvi and Marciel Managa for these joyful images of children in face paint.



photographic memory

This photograph shows students at the 'Udhailiyah school preparing for an activity called "You Oughta Be in Pictures" in 1983, which gave them a chance to produce their own commercials. The students wrote their own scripts, made their own props and did their own camera work.



The Arabian Sun is a weekly publication issued free of charge by the Corporate Communication Support Department for Saudi Aramco employees.

North Admin Building, Room AN-1080, C-05A, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia
Telephone (013) 876-0374
Email: publishing@aramco.com
ISSN: 1319-156X
Articles may be reproduced provided The Arabian Sun is credited.

Publishing director: Meteb Al-Qahtani
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Designer: Husam Nasr.

Articles and coverage can be requested through CRM. Correspondence may be addressed to the editor, North Admin Building, Room AN-1080, C-05A.



Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) is a joint stock company, with certificate of registration number 2052101105, having its principal office at P.O. Box 5000, Dhahran, Postal Code 31311, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and with fully paid capital of SAR 60,000,000,000.

the arabian sun

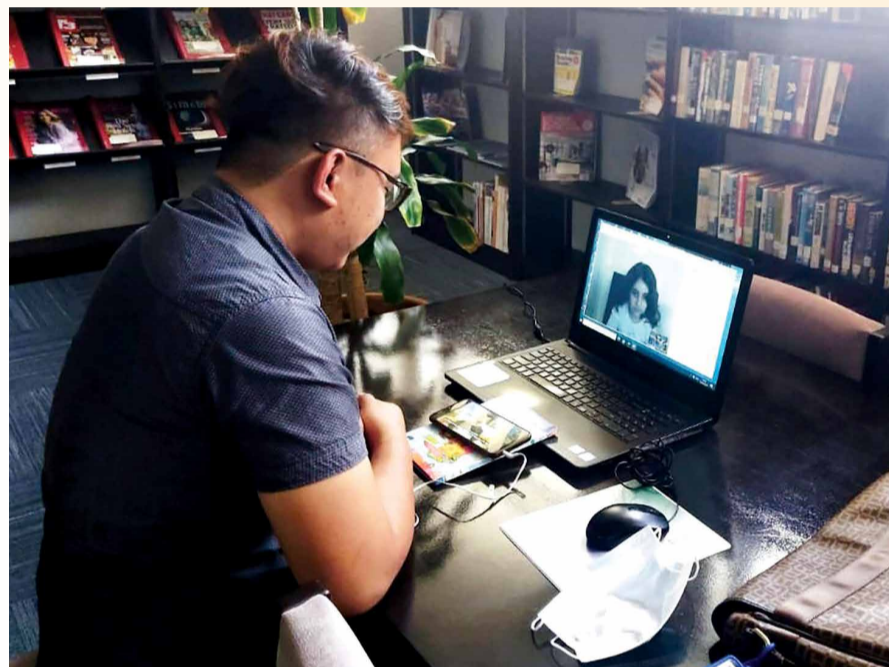


revisit the beauty of al-Hasa

From Al Fakhria Palace to the Al Ja'alaniah Mosque to the expansive rice plantations, the oasis of al-Hasa provides a bounty of surprises for visitors.

see page 8

not exactly by the book virtual story time popular in Abqaiq



Library staff have worked hard during the pandemic to ensure that children's love of reading and stories doesn't wane with regular virtual story time sessions. Held in both Arabic and English, the library hosts the virtual story time every Tuesday and Friday, with hopes of welcoming back the audience to the library when it is safe to return. (Photo: Masud Rana)

by Masud Rana and Zoe Chiplin

Abqaiq — A young person's love of reading and listening to stories cannot be deterred by COVID-19 restrictions.

At least not in Abqaiq. The Abqaiq Residential and Recre-

ation Services Division (ARRSD) has been conducting a regular online story telling program for dependents, hosted by the staff of Abqaiq's Library. Story time takes place every Tuesday and Friday in both English and Arabic.

This virtual story time initiative looks to engage with community members while ensuring all precautionary measures are adhered to.

The program has proven very successful with high participation and positive feedback. The library looks

forward to welcoming its audience back to the library in the future, when it is safe to return.

In the meantime, the online sessions continue, and residents can visit the library reception to collect pre-reserved books to enjoy at home.



Avast! There she goes ...

Furqan Qidwai took this photo of a "miniature" Lego ship while visiting a Lego Land in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, with his family in 2018. Qidwai used his Canon EOS 2000D DSLR Camera with default settings. Qidwai, who lives and works in Dhahran as a 3-D animation and graphic artist in the Media Production Department, has been with the company seven years.