

# Saudi Arabia: Part I

## Topics

- Geography.
- Historical overview of modern KSA.
- The ruling family (Āl Sa'ūd).
- The discovery of oil and its impact.

# Geographical Overview of KSA

## Boundaries

- Saudi Arabia is bounded by **seven countries** and **three bodies of water**.
- It is bordered by **Jordan** and **Iraq** to the north, **Kuwait** to the northeast, **Qatar**, (Bahrain as Island), and the **United Arab Emirates** to the east, **Oman** to the southeast, and **Yemen** to the south.
- To the west, by the **Gulf of Aqaba** and the **Red Sea**, and to the east, by **Persian Gulf**.

## Land borders & coastline

- ◆ **Land boundaries:** total: 4,415 km
  - Iraq 814 km, Jordan 728 km, Kuwait 222 km, Oman 676 km, Qatar 60 km, UAE 457 km, Yemen 1,458 km
- ◆ **Coastline:** 2,640 km
  - The **Gulf of Aqaba & Red Sea** (around 2000).
  - **Persian Gulf** (around 1600).

**Total Area:** 1,960,582 square kilometers  
(756,985 square miles)



# Geographical Facts

- The kingdom occupies 80 percent of the Arabian Peninsula.
- Saudi Arabia is geographically the fifth-largest state in Asia and second-largest state in the Arab world after Algeria.
- Desert is the most prominent feature of Arabian Peninsula of which Saudi Arabia is the largest country.

# Deserts of KSA

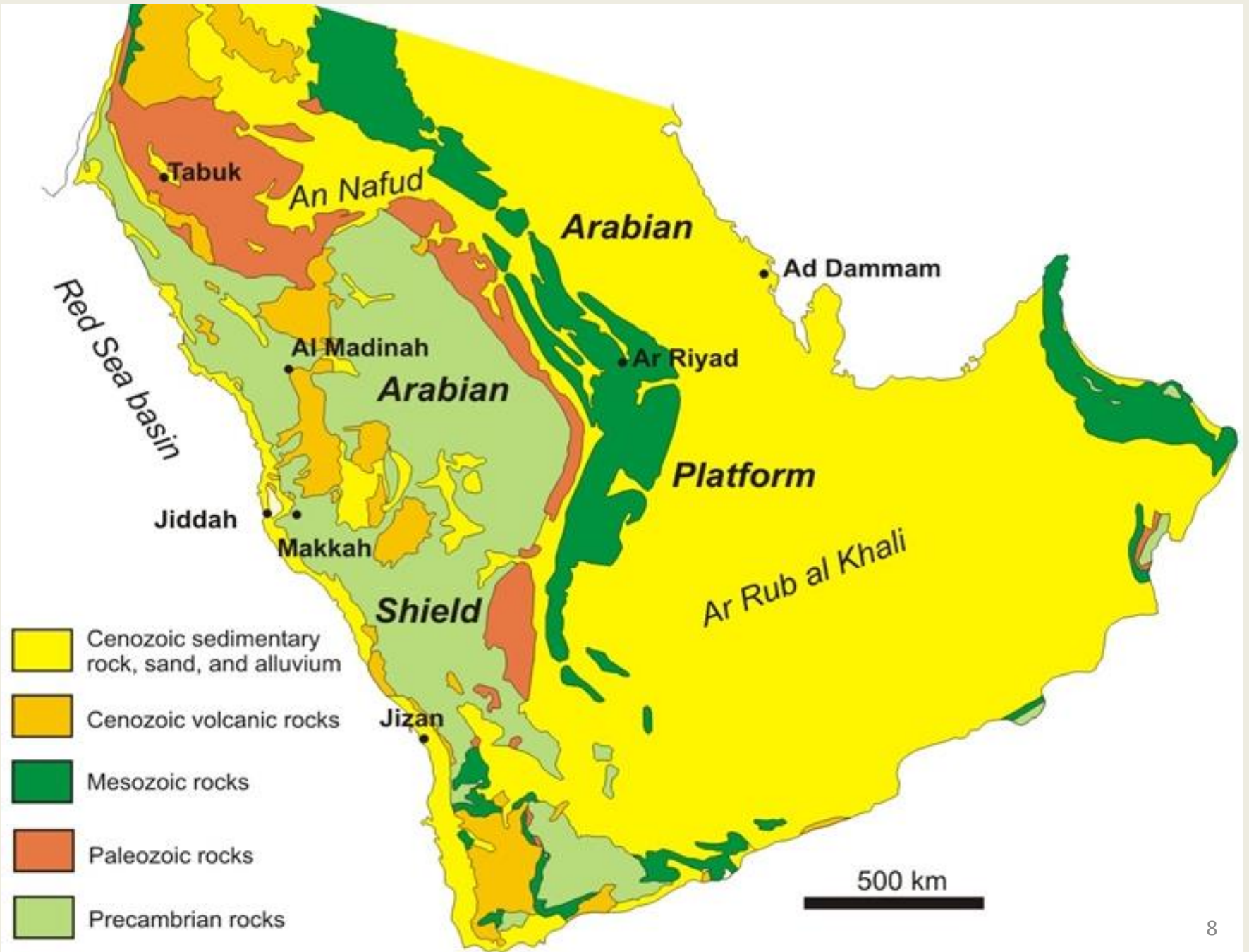
◆ More than half the area of Saudi Arabia is desert. The country has three major deserts.

1- *Rub' al Khali* (الربع الخالي The Empty Quarter): It is one of the largest sand deserts in the world. **Partially unexplored**, Rub' al Khali has an estimated area of about 650,000 sq km (about 250,000 sq mi) with lesser portions in **Yemen, Oman, and the UAE.**

# Deserts of KSA

**2- Al-Nafūd (صحراء النفود *ṣahrā' al-nafud*):** Al Nafud or the Great Nafud is an upland desert of red sands covering an area of 64,000 sq km. It lies at an elevation of 3,000 feet (900 meter) in the northern part of Arabian Peninsula. It is noted for its sudden violent winds.

**3- Al-Dahna desert (صحراء الدهناء):** It is a narrow strip of sandy terrain. This **reddish sandy** desert is in the central Saudi Arabia, extending about 1,300 km (800 miles) connecting Al Nafud & Rub' al-Khali.

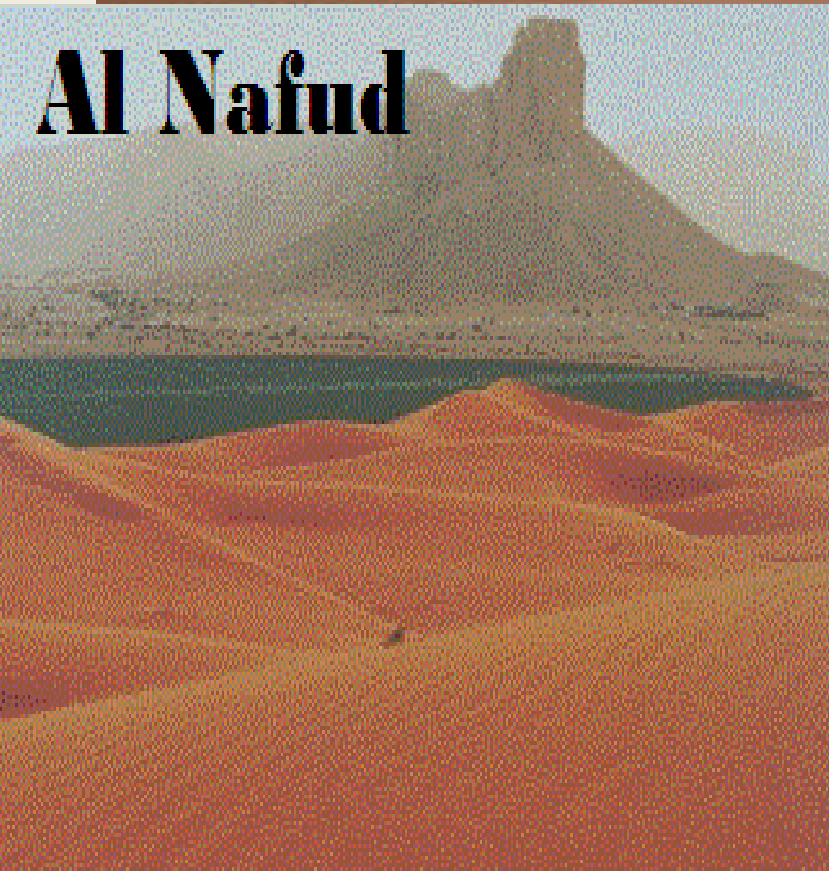




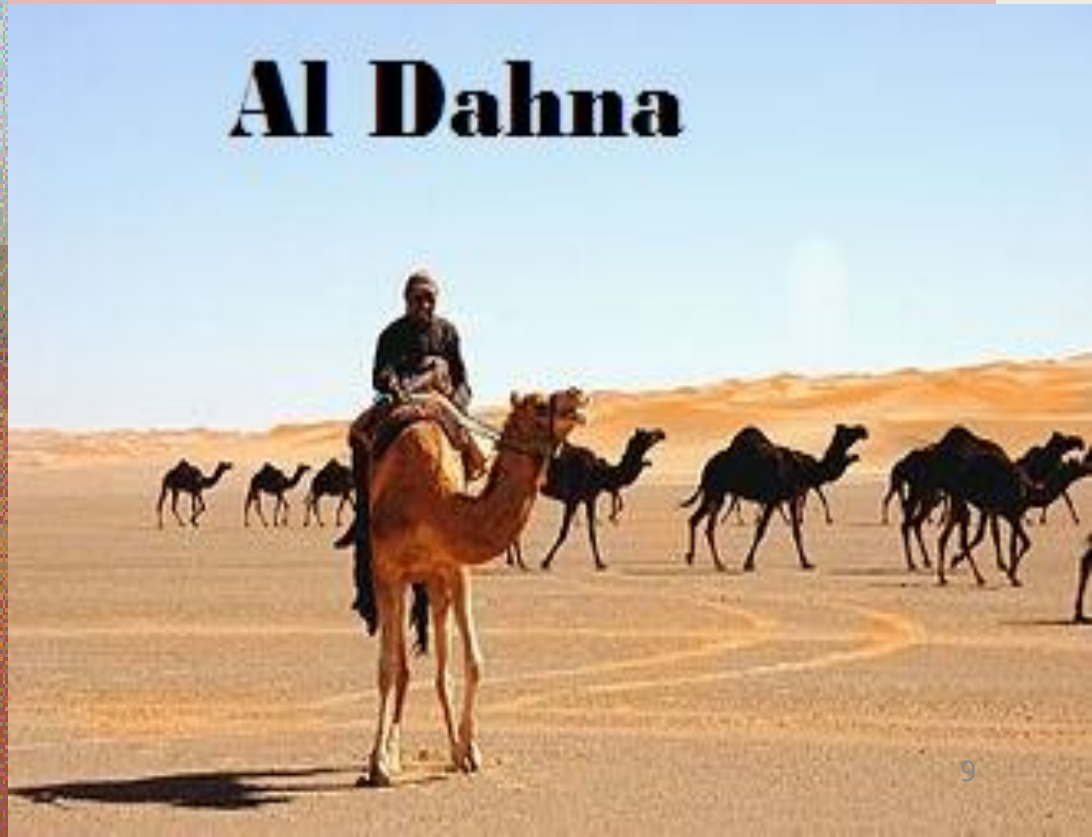
# Rub al-Khali



# Al Nafud



# Al Dahna



# Mountain & Peaks of KSA

- Saudi has **tens** of mountains and more than **800** peaks.
- **Highest Mountains include as follows:**

	Name	Elevation
1	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Sawdā'</u></a> ,	2,995 m
2	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Dakah</u></a> , Makkah	2,585 m
3	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Qarnayt</u></a> , Makkah	2,495 m
4	<a href="#"><u>Qa`mat Abū ash Shaykh</u></a> ,	2,328 m
5	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Radwá</u></a> , Al Madīnah al Munawwarah	2,210 m
6	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Idqis</u></a> , Al Madīnah al Munawwarah	2,160 m
7	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Shadā Āl Zahrān</u></a> ,	2,005 m
8	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Suwaygah</u></a> , Makkah	2,004 m
9	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Shaybān</u></a> ,	1,967 m
10	<a href="#"><u>Jabal Mazḥafah</u></a> , Tabuk	1,897 m

# Water Bodies

- Saudi Arabia does not have any permanent rivers, but does have numerous wadis which are riverbeds that are either permanently or intermittently dry.
- In the northern Hejaz region, dry riverbeds (wadis) trace the courses of ancient rivers and contain water for a brief period following significant rainfall.
- The only consistent sources of inland water are oases, however. Oases are fertile areas of otherwise unfertile land.

# A Historical Overview

◆Although the human history of the region extends as far as 20,000 years ago, the region has twice in world history had a global impact:

- In the 7th century it became the cradle of Islam and the first center of the caliphate
- From the mid-20th century the discovery of vast oil deposits propelled it into a key economic and geo-political role

# Foundation of modern-day Saudi Arabia

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932 by Al Saud leader, Abdulaziz.
- The area of modern-day Saudi Arabia formerly consisted of four distinct regions: **Al-Hejaz** (الحجاز), **Najd** (نجد), and parts of Eastern Arabia “**Al-Ahsa**” (الأحساء) and Southern Arabia “**Asir**” (عسير).

# Foundation of modern-day Saudi Arabia

- Ibn Saud united the four regions into a single state through a series of conquests beginning in 1902.
- Between 1902 and 1927, the Al Saud leader, Abdulaziz, carried out a series of wars of conquest which resulted in his establishing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932.

# The Founder of KSA

- **Abdulaziz bin ‘Abd ar-Raḥman Āl Sa‘ūd**  
( عبد العزيز بن عبد الرحمن آل سعود )
- He is usually known within the Arab world as Abdulaziz and in the West as Ibn Saud, was the first monarch and founder of Saudi Arabia, the "third Saudi state".
- He presided over the discovery of petroleum in Saudi Arabia in 1938 and the beginning of large-scale oil production after World War II.

# The Founder of KSA

- He fathered many children, including 45 sons, and all of the subsequent kings of Saudi Arabia.
- Abdulaziz ruled Saudi Arabia as an absolute monarchy from 1932 until his death in 1953.



# Six sons of Abdulaziz in succession

◆Six sons of Abdulaziz in succession reigned over the kingdom. They are as follows:

- 1- Saud bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (1953 to 1964).**
- 2- Faisal bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (1964 to 1975).**
- 3- Khalid bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (1975 to 1982).**
- 4- Fahd bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (1982 to 2005).**
- 5-Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (2005 to 2015)**
- 6-Salman bin Abdulaziz Āl Saud (2015 to present)**

# Abdulaziz & his six sons in succession



# Ruling Family

## ◆ House of Saud (آل سعود) **Āl Sa'ūd**

- The House of Saud (Arabic: آل سعود) is the ruling royal family of Saudi Arabia.
- The family has thousands of members. It is composed of the descendants of Muhammad bin Saud, founder of the Emirate of Diriyah (إمارة الدرعية), known as the First Saudi state), his three brothers Farhan, Thunayyan, and Mishari.

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## ◆House of Saud:

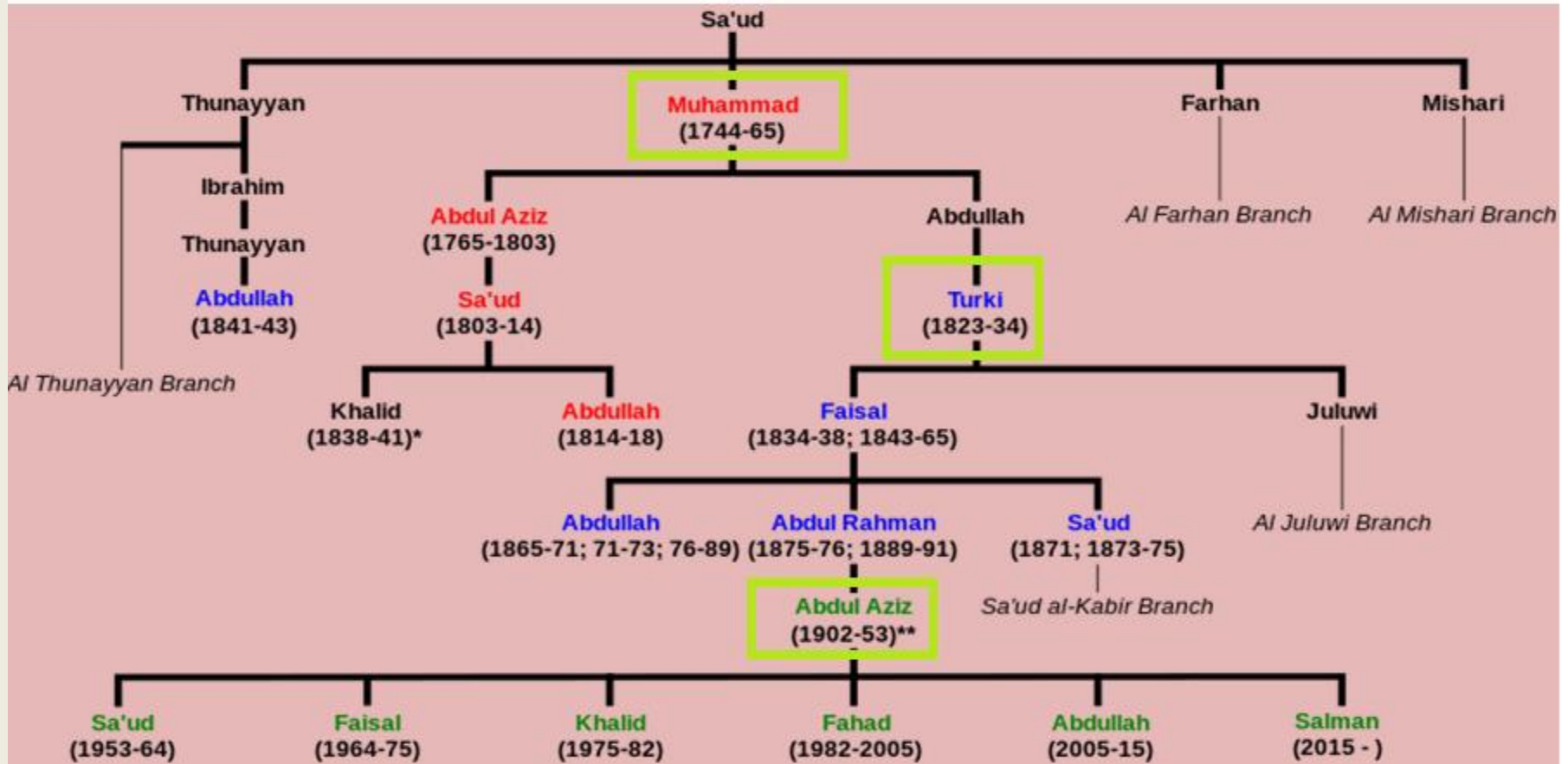
- House of Saud is a translation of “Al Saud”. The latter is an Arabic dynastic name formed by adding the word Al, meaning "family of" or "House of", to the personal name of an ancestor. In the case of the Al Saud, this is Saud ibn Muhammad ibn Muqrin (died in 1725).

# Continued

◆ **The House of Saud has gone through three phases:**

- **The First Saudi State (1744–1818):** The Emirate of Diriyah was the first Saudi state marked by the expansion of Wahhabism.
- **The Second Saudi State (1824-1891):** The Emirate of Nejd was the second Saudi state marked with continuous infighting.
- **The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1932-present).**

# Continued



## Legend

- Red** Imams of the first Saudi dynasty
- Blue** Imams of the second Saudi dynasty
- Green** Kings of Saudi Arabia

\* Ruled as Ottoman viceroy

\*\* Various titles until 1932; King of Saudi Arabia 1932-53

# Continued

## The surname "Al Saud"

- Today, the surname "Al Saud" is carried by any descendant of Muhammad bin Saud or his three brothers Farhan, Thunayyan, and Mishari.
- Al Saud's other family branches are called cadet branches.
- Members of the cadet branches hold high and influential positions in government though they are not in line of succession to Saudi throne.

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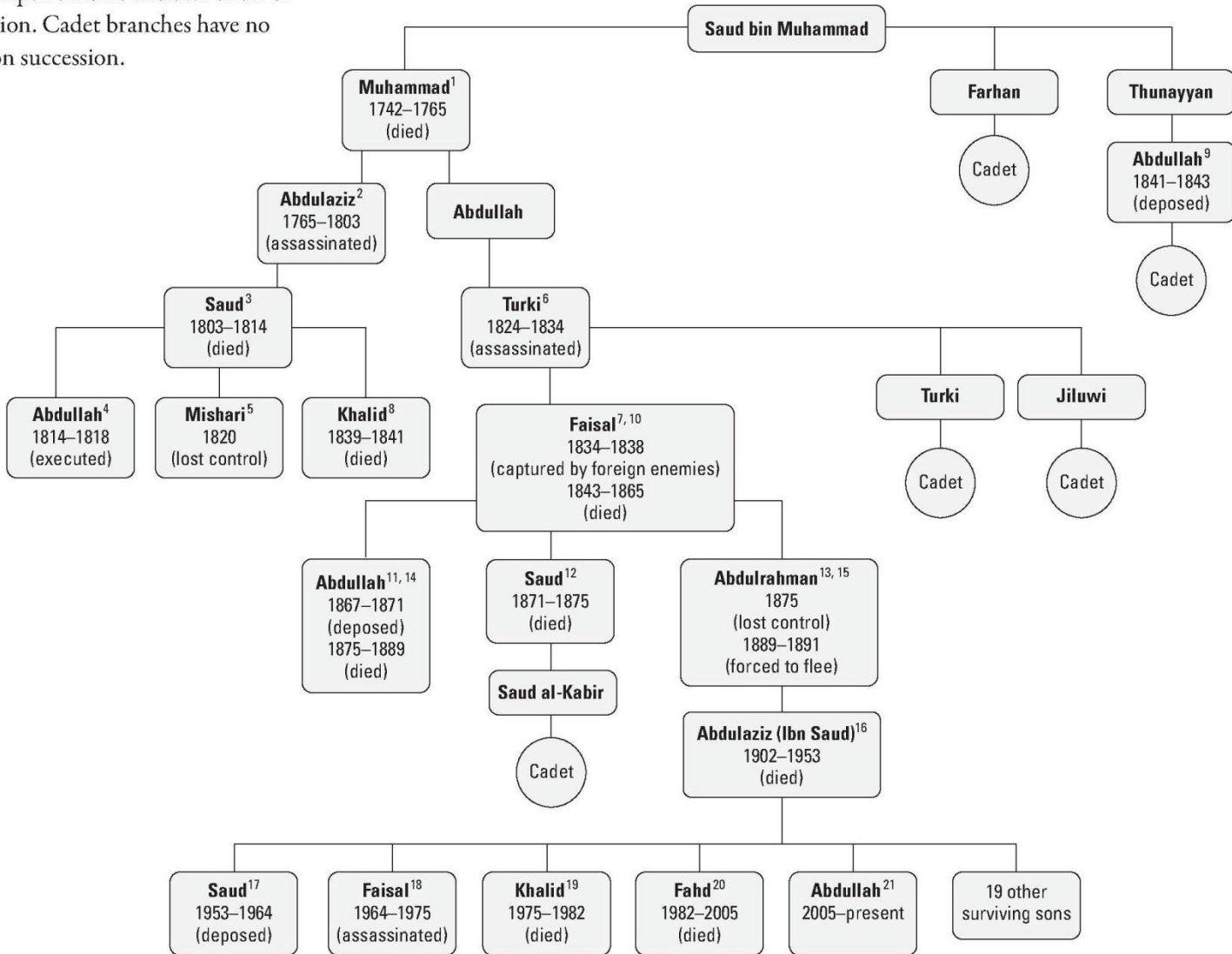
## “HRH” & “HH”:

- Sons and grandsons of King Abdulaziz are referred to by the style "His Royal Highness" (**HRH**), differing from those belonging to the cadet branches, who are called "His Highness" (**HH**).



## The al-Saud: Main Line of Succession

Dates indicate period of rule; superscript numbers indicate order of succession. Cadet branches have no claim on succession.



# Discovery of Oil in Saudi Arabia

- Saudi Arabian oil was first discovered in commercial quantities at Dammam oil well No. 7 in 1938 now modern day Dhahran.
- The company behind the discovery was Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO).
- By 1988, ARAMCO was officially bought out by Saudi Arabia and became known as Saudi Aramco (أرامكو السعودية 'Arāmkō s-Su'ūdiyyah), officially the Saudi Arabian Oil Company.

# Continued

- The discovery changed the physical, human, and political geography of Saudi Arabia, the Middle East, and the world.
- Before the discovery Saudi Arabians were largely nomadic.
- The country's economy was based on tourism revenue from observant Muslims' pilgrimages to the holy city of Mecca.
- Saudis established strong infrastructure dotted with wells, pipelines, refineries, and ports.

# Continued

- Today, oil accounts for more than 92% of the Saudi budget.
- Saudi Arabia is one of the largest producers and exporters of oil in the world.
- The lucrative petroleum trade fostered sophisticated diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and the West, as well as Japan, China, and Southeast Asia.

# Continued

- Saudi Arabia has an outsized role in some foreign policy decisions, especially those surrounding the Middle East.
- The discovery of oil also changed the demographics of the kingdom. Today, millions of foreign live and work in Saudi Arabia.

# Thank you

- (Prepared by Dr. Mukhlesur Rahman)