Cultural policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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The purpose of this series is to show how cultural policies are planned and implemented in various Member States.

As cultures differ, so does the approach to them; it is for each Member State to determine its cultural policy and methods according to its own conception of culture, its socio-economic system, political ideology and technological development. However, the methods of cultural policy (like those of general development policy) have certain common problems; these are largely institutional, administrative and financial in nature, and the need has increasingly been stressed for exchanging experiences and information about them. This series, each issue of which follows as far as possible a similar pattern so as to make comparison easier, is mainly concerned with these technical aspects of cultural policy.

In general, the studies deal with the principles and methods of cultural policy, the evaluation of cultural needs, administrative structures and management, planning and financing, the organization of resources, legislation, budgeting, public and private institutions, cultural content in education, cultural autonomy and decentralization, the training of personnel, institutional infrastructures for meeting specific cultural needs, the safeguarding of the cultural heritage, institutions for the dissemination of the arts, international cultural co-operation and other related subjects.

The studies, which cover countries belonging to differing social and economic systems, geographical areas and levels of development, present therefore a wide variety of approaches and methods in cultural policy. Taken as a whole, they can provide guidelines to countries which have yet to establish cultural policies, while all countries, especially those seeking new formulations of such policies, can profit by the experience already gained.

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The opinions expressed are the authors’, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Unesco.
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The dates in this book are those of the Muslim lunar calendar, which begins with the year of the Hegira (Anno Hegirae), A.D. 622. A general rule for conversion into the Christian era is to multiply the Muslim year by 970,224, mark off six decimal places, and add 621.5774. The whole number will be the year A.D.
Introduction

Culture, in its modern sense, is a matter of interaction between many factors. The most important of these are: law, politics, industry, commerce, science, technology and the various expressive, communicative and creative arts (as stated by John Dewey, a modern Western expert on education).

Since the Holy Koran is the constitution of the country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has derived from the Koran the Islamic culture, which distinguishes it from countries that do not profess Islam. In order for people to relate and conform to the doctrines of Islam, it is necessary for them to have read the Holy Koran and the Sunna (sayings and doings) of the Prophet Muhammad.

Starting from this basis, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has established thousands of schools, including kindergartens, preparatory, intermediate and secondary schools, higher institutes and universities. All this has been achieved in a short space of time. The number of schools has shot up from three before the unification of the kingdom to three thousand elementary schools at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan (A.H. 1395–1400).

The abundant financial resources derived from petroleum revenues have had a major impact on the expansion of schools, factories and farms, on the development of commerce and enterprise and on the provision of necessary services. As a result the number of educated and scientifically qualified people is increasing and wider intellectual horizons are opening up for adults who did not have the opportunity for education earlier in their lives. This will certainly encourage them to broaden their understanding of Islam and of the past and present heritage of the Arabian peninsula, and will contribute to the nation’s cultural enrichment. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has attached importance to making education available to every town and village and has provided incentives to encourage people to enrol in education. The state has also opened schools for girls, so that women can play an effective role in giving their children a correct Islamic education and in fulfilling their prescribed duties in the home. This is because the home is considered to be the first school for children before they enter the official educational
system. Children derive their habits, ideas and customs from the home and from their social environment as well as from the school, where they receive instruction together with the resulting cultural development.

Educational establishments, with all their vast potential, are not the only organizations that disseminate culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Many government departments and ministries have participated in disseminating culture throughout the kingdom: for example, the General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship through the literary and cultural associations it has created. In addition, the Ministry of Information plays a major role in cultural dissemination through television and radio programmes and through the numerous magazines and newspapers it controls.

The Ministry of Defence and the National Guard also do effective work in disseminating culture through the schools under their control, especially in the field of literacy and adult education.

The state strongly desires to put an end to illiteracy, believing that the development of human resources is a necessity in order to carry out projects and to develop services, in view of the shortage from which the kingdom is suffering in this field. Institutes and training centres have accordingly been established, to enable this human potential to play its natural role in the private and public sectors. The Statute on Labour and Workers stipulates that priority should be given to nationals, unless there are no trained Saudis with the right qualifications.

The state's concern for spreading education is not limited to the confines of the kingdom. Missions specializing in different subjects have also been sent to various Arab, Islamic and foreign countries, so as to help meet some of the needs of the ministries and other governmental agencies.

There are numerous cultural associations and centres, which can be described as follows: (a) school cultural associations at the various educational levels; and (b) cultural activities run by governmental and non-governmental bodies such as the Young Girls of the Peninsula in Riyadh, and the Red Sea Club in Jeddah. Both the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education also have cultural institutes and centres for young people.

As there is no single book covering the whole range of cultural activity throughout the kingdom, we have attempted a brief provisional synopsis here. This may shortly be expanded into a more general and comprehensive account, commensurate with the major efforts being undertaken by Saudi Arabia in the field of culture.

We should like to thank all the officials who helped us in collecting information from the various educational and governmental organizations mentioned in the work. We have drawn on a large number of reports and information documents made available to us by the officials of the ministries concerned.

It is our earnest prayer that we shall all be enabled to contribute to our country's well-being and prosperity.
It is possible to form an idea of cultural policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by looking at the First and Second Development Plans, especially in connection with educational and cultural affairs, since these plans outline present and future development policy in the kingdom.

First Development Plan (A.H. 1390–95)

With a view to encouraging cultural development, the First Development Plan called on the competent bodies to improve and expand the network of public libraries, giving priority to increasing the stocks of books, expanding the periodicals sections and providing the necessary equipment and furniture. In view of the cultural importance of antiquities and the scientific value of museums, the plan proposed the expansion of the Ministry of Education’s work in this field. It was decided to carry out an annual programme under which missions could be sent out to survey archaeological sites, to look for antiquities and to define their exact location. It was also decided to draw up a programme for the acquisition and maintenance of buildings and landmarks of historical importance, to ensure that they were not damaged or defaced.

During the period of the plan, work continued on developing the radio and television networks as public information media. Attention was concentrated on adding new equipment and replacing old equipment, so as to improve the standard of transmission and increase its effectiveness.

The general aims of the educational and cultural programmes, as they appeared in the plan, can be summarized as follows:

Continuing expansion, so as to provide a full range of educational opportunities and facilities making it possible to absorb students at every level of study and enable all those who have completed the lower levels to enrol in the higher grades if they wish.
Cultural policy

Reinforcing the educational infrastructure at all levels, with special emphasis on measures to improve the quality and effectiveness of education.

Working to preserve sites of especial historical importance and to link the culture of the future with the useful aspects of past ways of life.

Making all possible improvements to the quality of the present radio and television networks, and increasing the possible ways in which they can be used; working to extend their coverage to further areas of the kingdom.

Second Development Plan (A.H. 1395-1400)

The Second Development Plan was even more far-reaching and comprehensive in scope, embracing all aspects of the economic and social life of the kingdom. In the cultural field, its objectives and policies included:

- Expansion and support of education in all its forms and at all its different levels, and the guarantee of education for every citizen.
- Encouraging talented young people to engage in cultural activity; popularization of this work through the system of 'cultural weeks' in different parts of the kingdom and through dissemination by the media.
- Organization of lectures and festivals to disseminate culture among young people in many different fields.
- Expansion of the public library system, and improvement of library equipment.
- Creation of a national museum, to give Saudis the chance to increase their knowledge of the religious, cultural and social heritage, and to increase their appreciation and understanding of this heritage.
- Development of the facilities and activities of the King Abd ul-Aziz Foundation as a major library and centre for research, dissemination and culture relating to the Arabian peninsula in general and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular.
- Strengthening the organization and technical capacity of the Board of Antiquities.
- Institution of a comprehensive antiquities survey programme.
- Detailed exploration in selected sites of archaeological importance.
- Implementation of programmes to restore and maintain historic sites and objects.
- Encouragement of public interest in and awareness of archaeological discoveries.
- Expansion of the existing literacy programme, to cover the largest possible number of male and female primary education drop-outs throughout the kingdom.
- Expansion of opportunities for part-time education at the intermediate and secondary levels.
- Preparation of functional literacy courses.
Cultural policy

Use of the media to reinforce the literacy programme.
Preparation of a programme of incentives to encourage participation in literacy classes.
Organization of summer campaigns to extend literacy programmes to the rural and desert population.
Organization of intensive and short-term training courses in literacy work.
Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Education in its various aspects is central to the culture of both the individual and the group, and forms the natural starting point for any discussion of a country's cultural affairs.

Saudi Arabia's educational system and institutions, which rank in terms of national educational policy among the most important instruments of cultural dissemination, are described below.

Educational policy

Educational policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia states that the aim of education is the correct understanding of Islam and the inculcation and dissemination of the Islamic creed; the imbuing of the student with Islamic values, doctrines and ideals; the imparting of the various types of knowledge and skills; the social, economic and cultural development of society; and the preparation of the individual to be a useful participant in the building of his society.

Some aspects of educational policy can be set out as follows:
Planning of education and instruction in a way which harmonizes with the Islamic religion and derives from its principles.
Basic religious instruction throughout the period of education, from the start of the primary to the end of the university level.
A wish for knowledge has been implanted in every individual. The state must, within the limits of its resources and abilities, give the opportunity to everyone (male or female) to acquire knowledge.
In the light of Islam, turning to account all forms of useful human knowledge so as to develop the community and improve its way of life.
Giving an Islamic orientation as regards the methodology, writing and teaching of science and learning in their various forms and sources.
Harmonious integration with science and technology, which are among the most important tools of cultural, social, economic and health development, making for improved living standards and cultural progress.

Linking of education and instruction at all levels with overall national development planning.

Judicious interaction with international developments in the fields of science, culture and literature.

Social integration of members of the community, and co-operation in matters of common concern.

The Arabic language to be the language of instruction in all subjects and at all levels, except where it is necessary for teaching to be in another language.
Ministry of Education

Education as such has existed in every nation since its creation and formation, inasmuch as each people feels a need for schools where its offspring can learn the principles of reading, writing, religious knowledge, arithmetic, etc. Saudi Arabia has followed the same course as other nations in this respect. Before the introduction of an organized educational system, teaching was dispensed in Koranic schools and in the mosques, especially the sanctuaries in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Before the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded by the late King Abd ul-Aziz of the family of Saud, the private sector played a major role in creating schools and centres of education. These schools, which included the agricultural schools in Mecca and Jeddah, the al-Sultiya school, the al-Fikhriya school and various others, were the nucleus for organized education in the kingdom.

When the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded, it took responsibility for the administration of every aspect of the nation's life, including the Directorate of Education, founded in A.H. 1344, which was entrusted with the supervision of both the planning and the implementation of educational activities and, in other words, with the creation of a system of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Its mandate was 'supervision of all schools and Islamic law colleges in the country'. When the Council for Education was established in A.H. 1346, the country acquired an educational system in the modern sense of the term: a system aiming at unity, universality and the provision of a full range of educational opportunities embracing every level from primary school to university.

When the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was created on 3 Jumada I, A.H.1351, the mandate of the Directorate of Education was extended to cover all educational matters throughout the kingdom. In A.H. 1357 the directorate received a new statute, which remained in force until the creation of the Ministry of Education.

The potential of the directorate was limited, but even so it rendered
Ministry of Education

outstanding service in spreading education. The Scientific Institute was founded in A.H. 1345, the School of Religious Knowledge in A.H. 1353, and a school for preparing missions in A.H. 1355. The directorate issued a statute on schools in A.H. 1347, the first Saudi education curriculum in A.H. 1354, and a statute on non-governmental schools in A.H. 1357. The foundations of higher education were laid with the creation of the Islamic Law College in Mecca in A.H. 1369. The total number of schools of different levels in the kingdom was no more than sixty-five, distributed throughout the country. Enrolment totalled about 10,000.

The work of the Directorate of Education grew enormously, so that there was a pressing need to set up a Ministry of Education. A Royal Decree was issued on 18 Rabia II, A.H. 1373, ordering the creation of the Ministry and appointing His Highness Prince Fahd Ibn Abd ul-Aziz as Minister. The new ministry was given the task of carrying out the work started by the Directorate of Education, together with responsibility for the development which was to be looked for in view of the country’s circumstances and overall progress.

His Highness Prince Fahd selected young and qualified assistants. During its early years, the Ministry of Education did indefatigable work to increase the number of schools and student places in all types of education at the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels. This was done with the full support and encouragement of the state, and the Ministry of Education in due course came to exercise control over a whole range of general educational activities, including teacher training at the higher levels.

Kindergartens

Kindergarten education was confined to the private sector until A.H. 1385. The Ministry of Education was responsible for its technical supervision, and gave it the necessary financial support to enable it to achieve its objectives. In A.H. 1395/96, there were 92 kindergarten schools belonging to the Ministry of Education, with 15,485 children enrolled in them.

Primary level

The number of primary schools rose from 306 in A.H. 1373 to 2,978 primary schools for boys in A.H. 1398. The number of girls’ primary schools rose from 15 in A.H. 1380/81 (when the General Directorate for Girls’ Education was founded) to 1,103 in A.H. 1396/97. The number of primary-level teachers in boys’ schools increased during the period A.H. 1372/73 to A.H. 1397/98 by 23,716. The number of female teachers at this level increased from 113 in A.H. 1380/81 to 11,494 in A.H. 1396/97. The growth in the number of schools in the kingdom reflects the development of the educational budget.
Ministry of Education

Intermediate level

This level lasts three years, and follows the primary level. There were more than 650 intermediate schools in A.H. 1398, as against less than 10 in A.H. 1373. There were 122,755 pupils in intermediate boys' schools in A.H. 1397/98—a remarkable increase as compared with A.H. 1372/73. In A.H. 1383/84 there were 5 intermediate schools for girls. In A.H. 1396/97 there were 147 such schools, with a total enrolment of 53,898.

Secondary level

The secondary level lasts three years, and follows the intermediate level, of which it was previously a part, becoming fully independent only at the start of the A.H. 1378 school year. There were then twenty secondary schools with a total of 2,515 pupils. By A.H. 1396/97, there were 200 secondary schools for boys with 44,036 pupils—an extraordinary increase in enrolments, as compared with A.H. 1372/73.

In A.H. 1383/84 there was only one secondary school for girls. By A.H. 1396/97 the number had risen to 41, with 16,671 pupils.

Non-governmental education

This is of the following types: (a) general education: kindergartens; primary, intermediate and secondary levels (males and females); (b) popular culture (males); and (c) other types of education: religious education, accounting, special programmes, calligraphy, printing (males).

These schools are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in the case of males, and of the General Directorate for Girls' Education in the case of females.

The number of male and female pupils in non-governmental education was 62,220 in A.H. 1395/96, i.e. about 5.9 per cent of the total number of pupils of both sexes in the kingdom.

Teacher training

There was an increase in the number of primary-school teachers in the elementary cycle following the opening of several intermediate-level teacher-training colleges. These were subsequently replaced by secondary-level colleges, awarding certificates equivalent to the certificate of secondary studies. In A.H. 1373 there were no teacher-training colleges; secondary-level teacher training began in A.H. 1384/85.

Intermediate-level teacher training was ended in A.H. 1388/89. At the
end of A.H. 1396/97, the number of graduates of teacher-training colleges and institutes totalled 32,618.

In A.H. 1388/89, there were two colleges for training female teachers. By A.H. 1396/97 there were 32 such colleges, with a total enrolment of 5,618. The transition from intermediate-level to secondary-level teacher training began in A.H. 1391/92 and was completed by A.H. 1393/94.

Other types and levels of education

The Ministry of Education, together with the other educational organizations, has started a number of schools specializing in the arts, religion, commerce and industry, as well as literacy schools, centres for literary culture, and schools for instruction in the Koran. This was done in response to the needs of the country, and in an effort to improve the quality of education in various fields and to spread culture.

In the following pages, we will cover in detail the aspects which are directly related to the dissemination of culture.

The types and levels of education in the kingdom have diversified to the point where they include:

**LEVELS OF GENERAL EDUCATION**

- The kindergarten level.
- The primary level.
- The secondary level.

**DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEACHER-TRAINING COLLEGE**

- Intermediate schools for teaching the Holy Koran—intermediate level.
- Intermediate-level training colleges for female teachers—intermediate level.
- Secondary-level colleges for female teachers—intermediate level.
- Primary-level teacher-training colleges—secondary level.
- Physical education teacher-training college—secondary level.
- Technical education teacher-training college—secondary level.
- Supplementary study centres of teachers—secondary level.
- English-language course for teachers—higher level.
- Evening courses for teachers—higher level.
- The Centre for Science and Mathematics—higher level.
- Intermediate colleges—higher level.
Ministry of Education

TYPES OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Secondary industrial schools—secondary level.
The Higher Technical Institute—industrial—higher level.
Secondary day schools for business studies—secondary level.
Secondary night schools for business studies—secondary level.
The Institute for Financial and Business Studies—higher level.
Secondary agricultural schools—secondary level.

TYPES OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
(FOR THE HANDICAPPED)

The ‘al-Nur’ (light) institutes for blind male students: primary, intermediate and secondary levels—academic and vocational.
The ‘al-Nur’ (light) institutes for blind female students, primary and intermediate levels (academic and vocational), and for training of female teachers—secondary level.
The ‘al-Amal’ (hope) institutes for the deaf and dumb (both sexes): kindergarten, primary and intermediate levels—academic and vocational.
Educational institutes for mentally retarded children: kindergarten and primary levels (academic and vocational).

POPULAR CULTURE (ADULT EDUCATION)

This comprises two stages: introductory, at the level of the first grades of primary education; and follow-up, at the level of the fifth and sixth primary grades. This will be discussed in detail later.

OTHER TYPES OF EDUCATION

In addition to those already mentioned, there are other types of education that cannot be classified in any of the above categories. These are as follows:
Institute for technical auxiliaries for the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs.
Nursing schools and health institutes belonging to the Ministry of Health.
Special kindergartens and institutions for social guidance belonging to the Ministry of Social Affairs.
The Arabic Language Centre and discussion centres belonging to the Islamic University.
Printing and programmes for further education, for accounting, calligraphy and religious instruction in the non-governmental system of education.
Training centres and centres for needlework belonging to the General Directorate for Girls’ Education.
Non-governmental education in all its forms, stages and branches.
Evolution of the education budget
(from A.H. 1385/86 to 1397/98)

The education budget has grown steadily ever since the Ministry of Education was created in A.H. 1373. In twenty-five years the ministry’s budget, which represents the major part of the general public education budget, has increased by a factor of roughly 700. In A.H. 1385/86 the national education budget in the kingdom was about 514 million riyals; thereafter it increased each year until in A.H. 1397/98 it was about 15,000 million riyals. During that time the general state budget rose from 3,960 thousand million riyals to 110,935 thousand million riyals. The education budget has thus accounted for a proportion of the total state budget ranging between 13.5 and 8.2 per cent. We should here point out that the reduction in the proportion of the total state budget represented by educational expenditure does not mean an absolute reduction in the allocations for education. On the contrary, the education budget has been rising at an increasing rate from year to year, with the exception of the two years A.H. 1387/88 and 1389/90.

With the start of the First Five-year Plan (A.H. 1390/91 to 1394/95) we can see clearly the enormous growth of the education budget. In the second year of the plan, A.H. 1391/92, the rate of increase in the education budget as compared to the immediately preceding year was 72.5 per cent. In the first year of the Second Five-year Plan, A.H. 1395/96, the rate of increase in the education budget was 244 per cent as compared with the immediately preceding year.

In general, it was with effect from the year A.H. 1393/94 that there

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<th>Year (A.H.)</th>
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<th>General state budget (in thousands of riyals)</th>
<th>Proportion of the state budget represented by the education budget (%)</th>
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started to be a compound increase in the general state budget. In the years A.H. 1393/94, 1394/95 and 1395/96, there were rates of increase over the preceding years of 72.8, 100.5 and 142.5 per cent consecutively.

Turning to the education budget, we find that in the years A.H. 1396/97, and 1397/98, this budget increased almost fivefold in terms of the budget for the year 1394/95, when it was 3,700 million riyals. It shot up to 13,900 million riyals in A.H. 1396/97 and to 15,000 million riyals in A.H. 1397/98.

This great expansion in the education budget gives clear proof of the extent of the state's concern for disseminating education throughout the kingdom, which had until recently been suffering from a shortage of schools and widespread illiteracy. This constant increase in the education budget has no other purpose than to stamp out illiteracy and to spread culture, so that each citizen can be an effective participant in developing the society in which he lives.

Adult education and literacy

The education authorities have been fully aware of the need to promote adult education and literacy, and to provide organized educational services for those citizens who have not had the opportunity of education. The Department of Popular Culture was created in A.H. 1374 as part of the Department of Primary Education, to sponsor this kind of education. The state had already started work in this field in A.H. 1369 by instituting adult evening classes in day schools under its control.

GENERAL PLAN FOR ELIMINATING ILLITERACY AND FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education and literacy are regarded as a corner-stone of state educational policy, which contains clear and specific provisions regarding them. The state gives technical, financial and administrative support to this kind of education, so as to promote the elimination of illiteracy and the dissemination of culture throughout society. The policy also calls on the relevant agencies to draw up a time frame for the absorption of illiterates into the system and for the elimination of illiteracy. The relevant ministries and other public bodies co-operate in implementing this policy, and associations and individuals are also encouraged to participate. A share of the responsibility is borne by the non-governmental schools, subventions to which are conditional on their participation in the activities under discussion. The agencies specializing in female education are given the task of eliminating illiteracy among women, in accordance with their possibilities, and encouraged to adapt their programmes so as to achieve the particular objectives of female education in accordance with the precepts of Islam.
Since the kingdom's educational policy gave responsibility for adult education and literacy to a number of different governmental and non-governmental bodies, there was a need for legislation to co-ordinate the work of these bodies, define the role of each of them and lay down the method of operation. Accordingly, a Statute on Adult Education and the Elimination of Illiteracy was promulgated in Royal Edict No. 22/M of 9 June, A.H. 1392. The most important elements of this statute were:
1. Precise statement of the objective.
2. Definition of an illiterate.
3. Confirmation of a comprehensive twenty-year plan to eliminate illiteracy.
5. Explanation of the types of work, their scope and location.
6. Clarification of the role of the Ministry of Education in planning, supervision and evaluation.
7. Invitation to government agencies, public organizations and private companies to eliminate illiteracy among their personnel.
8. Indication of the criteria for choosing workers in this field and for giving them remuneration appropriate to their work.

**Higher Committee for Literacy and Adult Education**

The statute called for the formation in the kingdom of a Higher Committee for Literacy and Adult Education, which should be responsible for:
(a) establishing and implementing the comprehensive literacy plan and adult education planning policy; (b) proposing new sources of finance for literacy projects and obtaining agreement to these proposals from the relevant agency; and (c) co-ordination of literacy work carried out by government ministries and agencies and by private organizations.

This committee is made up of representatives of the various ministries and organizations concerned with adult education and literacy. The chairman is the Minister of Education.

**Subcommittees**

The statute provided for the creation of subcommittees by decision of the Higher Committee for Literacy and Adult Education, to monitor the implementation of the anti-illiteracy plan and of the decisions and recommendations of the Higher Committee. These subcommittees are made up of the Director of Education (Chairman) and representatives of the ministries and agencies concerned.
DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUDGET FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Each year, the Ministry of Education allocates special credits from the budget to cover the various literacy and adult education programmes. These credits cover the payment of those working in night schools; the equipment and materials required for these schools; the cost of public information and literacy campaigns; the cost of training courses, etc. See Figure 1.

![Graph showing growth of budget for adult education and literacy](image_url)

Fig. 1. Growth of the budget for adult education and literacy from A.H. 1392/93 to 1397/98.

The work done by the Ministry of Education in the field of adult education and literacy falls into various categories, including:

*Night schools*

These are the schools established by the ministry throughout the kingdom at two levels:

**Introductory.** The period of study is two years, and it takes the student to a level equivalent to that attained at the end of the fourth primary grade. On completion of this level, a certificate of literacy is awarded.

**Follow-up.** The period of study at this level is also two years. It follows the introductory level, and takes the student to a level equivalent to that attained at the end of the sixth primary grade. At the end of this level, the certificate of primary studies is awarded.
These schools are constantly developing. The students are keenly involved with them, and the kingdom gives close attention to their continuing development, as will be seen from Figure 2.

**Summer campaigns**

These are educational campaigns carried out in rural population centres and desert settlements which are far away from educational, health and social services. They take place during the summer months, over a 100-day period, and are designed to eliminate illiteracy among the people of these areas, heighten their awareness of their religion and of the world around them, and educate them in matters of health and in social and agricultural subjects, thereby helping them to improve their productivity and attain a higher standard of living, as well as giving them an opportunity to settle permanently in the places where the campaigns are held.

These campaigns are seen as a form of comprehensive development of the communities which most need the essential services connected with religion, with social and agricultural affairs and with health. The campaigns are accompanied by the necessary advisers and supplies for these purposes, including agricultural and social experts and doctors.

These campaigns have had a marked impact on the behaviour and way of life of those who have participated in them. Some of their social concepts have changed, as well as some of the unhealthy customs which were prevalent among them. Many of them have changed their way of life, and have settled permanently in the places where the campaigns were held. They have started a new life, bringing the land into productive use.
Initially, two campaigns were held each year. From the start of the implementation of the second plan in A.H. 1395/96, corresponding to A.D. 1975/76, this number was increased to four.

*Cultural sections in the development and social-service centres*

These sections participate in literacy and cultural extension work in the areas covered by the centres, helping to provide social and other conditions conducive to popular development and enlightenment.

There are now seventeen development and social-service centres in the kingdom, belonging to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and distributed throughout rural and working-class areas. Their cultural sections can be seen at work in the following activities:

- Participating in organizing and carrying out literacy and adult education campaigns.
- Organizing library services for the people of their area.
- Organizing seminars, lectures and cultural programmes.
- Providing education and guidance through leaflets, magazines and posters.
- Forming cultural committees, carrying out field research, and organizing co-operative clubs.

*Combating illiteracy by means of television*

This is an area with which the state is actively concerned, in view of the enormous potential which television has already shown in education work generally and literacy work in particular. With its ability to make instruction easily accessible in homes and community centres throughout the country, television is an educational medium particularly well adapted to Saudi Arabian conditions. As regards literacy programmes, the aim is twofold. First, combating illiteracy among men and women who are not able, because of their circumstances, to enrol in night schools. The older man is able to continue his education without inconvenience, and the woman can have lessons in her home. Second, providing model lessons that teachers can imitate in their own teaching, and that fulfil the function, so far as they are concerned, of a continuous training programme. The programmes began at the start of A.H. 1391/92. Although this work is still on a very restricted scale, the state is developing and increasing its effectiveness.

*Other fields of action*

In addition to the above, there are various other programmes aimed at eliminating illiteracy as quickly as possible. They include:

*The programme for public enlightenment*. This aims to educate people in religious, social, vocational and health affairs. It also encourages people in
general to participate in the various aspects of the fight against illiteracy, each according to his ability. This programme serves every village and town in the kingdom, especially the remote areas. It accompanies literacy projects in both the pre-project and the implementation phases, and continues to provide the necessary education and cultural guidance when projects have been completed. This programme is carried out by means of a vehicle equipped with complete audio-visual equipment, etc., and with a team of specialists in educational extension work. The vehicle visits different parts of the kingdom throughout the year, in accordance with a pre-determined schedule.

Young people’s summer holiday employment programme. This programme aims at giving university and training-college students a chance to work during their summer holidays and to benefit both themselves and the country by participating in local community development and playing an active part in adult education and literacy work. The students spend the summer actually living in the field-work area throughout the period of implementation of the programme. They share the life of the local people, and help them not only as regards adult education and literacy but with their environmental problems as well, thus playing an effective and useful part in developing the environment and in improving the life of the people.

Co-operation with regional and international organizations

The efforts of Saudi Arabia in the fields of adult education and literacy are not limited to the country itself, but extend to the international arena. The kingdom plays an active role in Arab and international organizations, and in conferences at various levels. It participates in regional and international study meetings, and exchanges experience and information so as to benefit from the most recent developments and the latest experiments in this field.

National Centre for Adult Education

Because of the special nature of their work and the variety of approaches it calls for in different circumstances, adult education and literacy workers require special training. Adult education differs from children’s education as regards both concept and methodology, and cannot be efficiently imparted without a thorough understanding of its nature and philosophy. The Ministry of Education has therefore created the National Centre for Adult Education to provide teachers, counsellors and leaders with training in how to carry out their work and in how to solve problems that arise in the field. This ensures a supply of trained specialists who can make a useful and productive contribution to the adult education movement. The centre supplies instructors and specialists to meet the needs not only of Saudi
Ministry of Education

Arabia but also of the Arabian Gulf States, and intends in due course to offer its services to the other Arab Islamic states as well.

The centre's plan of operations consists basically in the organization of seminars, workshops and training courses. Some of these courses are long, lasting from six to nine months, and the intention is that they should be mainly for persons without previous experience in the adult education or literacy field.

Other courses are short, some of them lasting two or three months and some as little as a month or even a fortnight, according to the tasks and locations. These short courses specialize in training specialists in adult education or literacy work; in up-dating the information of some of those who already have experience of working in the field and acquainting them with new developments; or in dealing with some specific problem or problems connected with the use of modern technological equipment, with the planning of campaigns, or with new developments or projects.

These courses will be further diversified by being split up into two categories: national courses, held either at the centre or in one of the country's educational areas; and regional courses, bringing together students from the countries of the Arabian Gulf.

Public libraries

The Arabian peninsula has had libraries for a very long time. Historians relate that the holy cities of Mecca and Medina had libraries before the fifth century of the Hijra era. The 'ulama (learned men) and the caliphs vied with one another in creating libraries which were open to researchers and readers, and which subsequently came to act as scientific research centres, in addition to performing the function of public libraries.

In the modern period, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been developing rapidly in various fields. The libraries in the kingdom, most of which belong to the Ministry of Education, have benefited from conspicuous efforts and generosity in developing them and in creating new libraries to keep pace with the comprehensive development of the country.

As the authority responsible for supervising public education and the dissemination of culture, the Ministry of Education has given priority to establishing a large number of libraries and has created a special department under its direct control to supervise library affairs. This is the Department of Libraries. Its aims include:

Participation in developing education and culture among the general public by providing the various necessary library services throughout the kingdom.

Administration and supervision of public libraries throughout the kingdom. Checking and confirming the books and educational material which public libraries should contain, in accordance with the ministry’s general policy.
Implementing and supervising the exchange of books and educational material between public libraries within the kingdom and abroad. Participating with other organizations concerned in providing foreign libraries with the books which they require.

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of library</th>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Manuscripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya</td>
<td>51,400</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Abha</td>
<td>22,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Buraidah</td>
<td>31,400</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Jeddah</td>
<td>29,500</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Dammam</td>
<td>29,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Taif</td>
<td>25,250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of the holy city of Mecca</td>
<td>21,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Bishah</td>
<td>14,840</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Tabuk</td>
<td>15,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Jizan</td>
<td>15,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Hail</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Khobur</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Kharj</td>
<td>12,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Zalfa</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Sakaka</td>
<td>12,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Shuqara</td>
<td>19,800</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Library of Anaizah</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Aflaj</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Majma’a</td>
<td>17,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Najran</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Hufuf</td>
<td>17,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Yanbu’</td>
<td>14,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Ashiqr</td>
<td>11,430</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Baha</td>
<td>8,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Bakiriya</td>
<td>12,760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Hariq</td>
<td>10,060</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Harimla’</td>
<td>13,739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Huta Bani Tmim</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Huta Sudair</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Khamis Masih</td>
<td>8,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Duwadami</td>
<td>8,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Ras</td>
<td>11,760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Ruda Sudair</td>
<td>12,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Education in Anaizah</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Qunfudhah</td>
<td>10,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Qaw’iyya</td>
<td>10,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Mudhanab</td>
<td>10,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of al-Mazahimiya</td>
<td>12,146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Maz’al</td>
<td>8,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of the holy city of Medina</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Library of Wadi al-Dawasir</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES
IN RECENT YEARS

The number of public libraries, which play such an important role as an instrument for the dissemination of culture, has increased from year to year. There are now forty public libraries in various parts of the kingdom, whereas until quite recently there were only eight. There is also the Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya (National Book Institute) in Riyadh. Table 2 shows a list of the libraries in different parts of the country, with the number of books and manuscripts in each library.

There are some public libraries in the kingdom which belong to bodies other than the Ministry of Education. The most important of these are:

- The library of the sanctuary of Mecca. This belongs to the General Directorate for Religious Supervision of the Holy Mosque. It is in the holy city of Mecca.
- The library of the holy city of Mecca. This belongs to the Ministry of the Pilgrimage and of Religious Endowments. It is in the holy city of Mecca.
- The Arif Hikmat Library. This belongs to the Ministry of the Pilgrimage and of Religious Endowments. It is in the holy city of Medina.
- The Public Library in the holy city of Medina. This belongs to the Ministry of the Pilgrimage and of Religious Endowments.
- The Saudi Library in Riyadh. This belongs to the General Directorate for Legal Opinions, Research, Propagation of Islam and Guidance. These libraries contain large stocks of printed books, and also most of the manuscripts to be found in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

PROVISION OF BOOKS
AND CULTURAL MATERIAL
FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

One of the principal concerns of the Ministry of Education in the area of public libraries has been the provision of books, printed matter and other cultural material for these libraries. During the past five years, the ministry has provided the libraries with books and cultural material to a value of 10 million riyals.

At the end of A.H. 1398, the acquisitions of these libraries totalled approximately 645,105 volumes.

The ministry's plan for developing library stocks also includes microfilming some of the most important manuscripts in the libraries of the kingdom, using a microfilm camera. Work has already begun on this project with the photographing of the manuscripts in some of the ministry's public libraries. About five hundred manuscripts have been photographed. When this phase ends, work will continue with the photographing of manuscripts in the other libraries of the kingdom, such as the libraries of the
Fig. 3. Increase in the number of libraries throughout the country from A.H. 1388 to 1398.

Fig. 4. Supply of books to public libraries from A.H. 1388 to 1398.
sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina, the Arif Hikmat library in the holy city of Medina, the university libraries and private libraries. Figure 3 shows the increase in the number of public libraries throughout the country during recent years.

**FURNISHINGS, EQUIPMENT AND APPARATUS**

Good and comfortable furnishings are among the most important factors in providing the right atmosphere for readers, and therefore constitute basic essentials for any modern library. To this end, the Ministry of Education has been concerned with providing public libraries with the necessary furnishings, equipment and apparatus. During the last four years, the cost of the material supplied has come to about three million Riyals.

Furthermore, the ministry provides the necessary furnishings for libraries which have been given or are being given new buildings, so that the furnishings are appropriate to the level of the building and to the size of the town in which the particular library is situated.

**SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION CURRENTLY USED IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

For public libraries, the library administration applies the Dewey decimalized classification system. Indexing is based on the system devised for Arab libraries by Dr Muhammad ash-Shnita and Muhammad al-Mahdi.

In the interests of uniformity and because of the lack of suitably qualified staff in the provinces, all the technical work of these libraries is done centrally by the library administration.

**FLUCTUATIONS IN THE NUMBER OF READERS**

The number of readers increases during term time, when there is a high concentration of students who have to do research and study connected with their curricula, and decreases somewhat during the summer holidays. The number of readers in the Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya varies between 3,000 and 3,500 each month. In the provinces, the number of readers varies from one town to another and from one library to another, and generally fluctuates between 500 and 1,500 each month.

**HOURS OF WORK IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

Public libraries are open to readers from 7 a.m. to 12 noon and from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. These hours were fixed in pursuance of an order issued by the Council of Ministers, instructing the heads of libraries to work additional
hours throughout the year, in recognition of the pressing needs of students
and researchers, as well as of other people who only have the chance to read
after finishing work, i.e. in the late afternoon and early evening.

The Dar al-Kutub al-Wataniya in Riyadh has even longer opening
hours: from 8 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. A fresh team of
personnel comes on duty for the 4-11 p.m. session, which counts as a full
working day.

Department of Antiquities

The Department of Antiquities was created by decision No. 727 of the
Council of Ministers of 8 Dhu al-Qa’dah, A.H. 1383, in view of the growing
range of the subject and the wealth of antiquities and traces of the past,
all of which necessitated work on a scale beyond the capacity of the admin-
istration at that time.

The activities of the Department of Antiquities can be summarized
under the following headings:

Visiting, exploring and recording historical sites and buildings throughout
the kingdom. This is in preparation for making a general record of
antiquities in the kingdom, in accordance with modern archaeological
methods, containing the fullest and most exact information about each
site. The record will be supplemented by photographs, drawings and maps.

Preventing the damaging, demolition or destruction of historic buildings
and sites throughout the country.

Preparing reports on the condition of historic sites and buildings and on the
protection and maintenance needed.

Bringing to light aspects of the country’s history, by carrying out archae-
ological excavations, either alone or in collaboration with archaeological
agencies and organizations.

Maintaining historical buildings, reinforcing them against the effects of
time, improving archaeological sites and increasing their tourist potential.

Setting up national and local museums, disseminating archaeology and
knowledge of antiquities.

On the basis of these objectives, and within the limits of the possibilities
available to the Department of Antiquities, the following work has been
accomplished in recent years:

An archaeological field survey has been carried out in the following places:
(a) Mada’in Salih; (b) al-Ulla; and (c) Tima’.

A partial survey has been done of ten sites in the east of the country.

The department has co-operated with a number of foreign archaeological
missions in conducting archaeological surveys, which have so far
covered approximately half the kingdom. It is hoped that the missions
will continue their work until the entire kingdom has been covered.

This survey work will provide a useful basis for deciding on sites to be
comprehensively excavated in the future.
PROGRAMME OF THE DEPARTMENT

First. Training of nationals in archaeological skills. Most of the department’s programmes depend in the first instance on the availability of the necessary skills and qualifications in various technical and scientific fields. So the first objective which the department plans to achieve is the creation of a plan for sending its personnel and other people for training and study, following an organized time-scale which will in due course meet all the needs for development and growth.

Second. Strengthening the technical and scientific capacity of the department’s central office by imposing the staffing and equipment of the existing sections, which cover the fields of photography, engineering, drawing, surveying, restoration and upkeep of antiquities, investigation of antiquities, etc.

New sections are being established for museums, administration, traditional crafts, numismatics, manuscripts, and specialized archaeological research covering the prehistoric, pre-Islamic, Islamic and historical periods; as well as operational sections covering transport and maintenance and storage, and information sections responsible for public relations and for dissemination and printed material.

Third. The programme to establish a National Central Museum in Riyadh. The aim is to preserve the nation’s past for the benefit of present and future generations, at a time when long-established values, with the way of life which they created, are undergoing great change. Studies for the programme began in A.H. 1395/96 and the implementation of the project will be completed at the end of A.H. 1399/1400.

Fourth. Subsidiary museums in the regions. In order to foster archaeological awareness among the inhabitants of the various regions, to support those regions, to illustrate the nature of each of them and draw attention to its

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (A.H.)</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1394/95</td>
<td>Setting up of temporary museums of Islam in both Mecca and Medina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1395/96</td>
<td>Creation of a temporary museum in the Western region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1396/97</td>
<td>Start of work on the museum of the Eastern region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start of work on the museum of Islam in Mecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1397/98</td>
<td>Start of work on the regional museum in Jeddah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start of work on the local museum at Mada'in Salih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>Start of work on the museum of the Northern region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start of work on the local museum at Jizan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1399/1400</td>
<td>Start of work on the museum at Asir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34
role throughout the history of the Arabian peninsula in general and of the kingdom in particular, and to preserve the historical and archaeological heritage, the plan includes a programme for establishing regional museums in the provinces as shown in Table 3.

Fifth. Because of the size of the kingdom, and the fact that the areas of archaeological importance are located in many different regions, a network of subsidiary centres is needed. It is therefore proposed to divide the kingdom into five regions, listed here in the chronological order of the establishment of their respective centres over a five-year period: Eastern region—centre at Dammam, North-western region—centre at Medina, Northern region—centre at Hail, Western region—centre at Jeddah, South-western region—centre at Abha.

This is in addition to the headquarters at Riyadh, which serves the Central region.

Sixth. The programme for a complete archaeological survey. In the field, the most important aim of the organization now and for the next ten years is the listing and study of all archaeological features, areas and sites in the kingdom.

Seventh. Protection of archaeological sites. In most countries of the world, archaeological locations are vulnerable to robbery, theft and damage. As archaeological sites are generally in rather remote areas, a large number of guards and watchmen have been appointed, sufficient for the number of sites which have been discovered and those which are now being discovered, with the duty of protecting these sites and giving notification of any damage to them.

Eighth. Restoration of the antiquities of al-Dar'iya. This programme has a special character. Its main aim is information and education, followed by the no less important aim of conserving the antiquities. The first stage of the programme involves the study phase and the take-over of property. Then the field work will be done, followed by architectural restoration. This will take up the first three years, and then a ‘Son et Lumière’ project will be carried out for the ancient city.

Ninth. Programme for the restoration of the historic road of Zubaida. This road is a unique phenomenon from the archaeological and architectural point of view, quite apart from its historical value. The road is made up of three branches, with a total length of about 2,000 kilometres punctuated by some 30 miniature lakes. Restoration of these lakes will begin at the start of the first year of the plan and continue until the end of the final year.
Ministry of Education

Tenth. Outstanding archaeological districts. There are some important archaeological districts—often still to be fully investigated—which are threatened by the activities of plunderers or the steady encroachment of civilization. A programme has therefore been drawn up for preserving these districts and the antiquities which they contain. The programme covers the indexing and recording of the districts, with provision for expropriation in the case of historical buildings and archaeological sites. The districts in question are: the archaeological district of Tima', the archaeological district of the island of Tarut, the district of al-Ukhdud in Najran, the archaeological district of Taj, and the district south of Dhahran.

Eleventh. Media coverage and promotion of archaeological awareness. This programme aims to promote public awareness of archaeology in all its aspects—projects, museums, sites, exhibits, etc.—and comprises the following elements: printing of an illustrated book; labels and signs; posters; preparation of educational booklets for information purposes; preparation of scientific publications, research papers and studies; and publication of a magazine dealing with archaeology.

Higher council for sponsorship of the arts, science and literature

The Higher Council for Sponsorship of the Arts, Science and Literature was set up in the kingdom’s Ministry of Education to co-ordinate and link the work of the various public bodies active within its fields of competence. It works by all possible methods to preserve the literary and artistic heritage of the kingdom; to raise the level of creativity; and to encourage and sponsor people working in these fields. This is especially important inasmuch as the Arabian peninsula has been the scene of uninterrupted activity in literature, science and the arts throughout its history, from the earliest times right up to the present and not excluding even the periods of comparative decline. To conserve, restore and draw on the literary and artistic heritage accumulated over the centuries is an inseparable part of the kingdom’s mission.

As the literary and artistic movement can make progress only if sound criteria are laid down for evaluating literary and artistic output, the council has worked to define these criteria for each branch of literature and art. The council applies these criteria by awarding scientific, literary and artistic prizes, and by holding regular competitions in these fields. This is done by forming subcommittees of the council. Each subcommittee suggests projects within its particular area of specialization which can achieve the aims for which the subcommittee was formed. The subcommittees also study matters referred to them by the council or by the principal committees.
The following is a list of the various subcommittees, grouped under their respective main committees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main committees for:</th>
<th>Arts</th>
<th>Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Islamic jurisprudence</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>Islamic architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Natural science</td>
<td>Graphic arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prose (fiction, drama, criticism, research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Translation and Arabization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manuscripts and archives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The council sponsors and encourages all scientific, literary or artistic work which does not conflict with the precepts of Islam. It also awards an annual State Prize to a leading figure in each of the following fields: literature, science and the arts. Each year, on the basis of the recommendation of the relevant principal committee, the council awards five financial prizes for the five best works produced by Saudis in the fields of literature, science and the arts. It nominates distinguished artists, scientists and authors for official decorations; and it holds regular contests in the various fields of science, art and literature, awarding valuable financial prizes to the winners of these contests.

The council sponsors and supports research projects submitted to it in these fields, and also prints, publishes and translates books, university theses and other scientific and literary works which can benefit Islam and the nation. It also intends to issue a periodical dealing with science, literature and the arts.

The council participates in international congresses and seminars on the sciences, arts and literature. It has also prepared and is now in the course of implementing a programme of competitions in the fields of poetry, fiction, the essay and the short treatise. As a further contribution to the promotion of science, literature and the arts in Saudi Arabia, it plans to publish a number of important scientific and literary books and linguistic guides to assist researchers in their work.
The General Directorate for Girls' Education was established in A.H. 1380, as the first government administrative body to supervise girls' education, which had previously been the responsibility of the private sector. It comprises a number of administrative and educational sections, and has played an important and energetic role since its creation in making the various types and levels of education available to all girls in the relevant age groups throughout the kingdom. It also concerns itself with the education of adults, in a serious endeavour to disseminate culture among all the women of the nation.

As regards literacy and adult education, the main points of Saudi Arabia's educational policy are as follows:

The state is concerned with literacy and with adult education. It gives technical, financial and administrative support to this kind of education, in order to raise the level of the nation and to spread culture among its people.

The basic aims of literacy and adult education are: (a) developing and strengthening love of God in the hearts of the people, and inculcating essential religious knowledge; (b) teaching reading, writing and the principles of arithmetic; and (c) providing general guidance in matters relating to ordinary life. The curriculum gives information about the level of study, the detailed plan, and teaching materials.

The competent educational authorities have drawn up a timetable, based on statistics, for bringing illiterates into the educational system and eliminating illiteracy. The relevant ministries and organizations are co-operating in carrying out this programme.

Literacy work involves two stages: (a) the initial stage, ending with the award of the certificate of literacy; and (b) the second stage, following on from this, and leading to the award of the elementary certificate.

The information media participate by helping to make illiterates aware
of the importance of education and providing suitable educational programmes. Individuals and associations are encouraged to participate in adult education and literacy work, under the supervision of the relevant bodies. Non-governmental schools are involved in this form of education, and receive subsidies only if they have participated to the extent required of them under the applicable regulations. According to their capacities, the appropriate bodies undertake literacy work among women, modifying their programmes as required so as to achieve the particular aims of female education in accordance with the precepts of Islam.

Elimination of female illiteracy in the kingdom

The General Directorate for Girls’ Education opened five literacy schools in A.H. 1392/93: two in Riyadh, and one each in Mecca, Jeddah and Dammam. Additional schools have since been opened each year. The directorate is determined to fulfil the obligation imposed on it by the state to eliminate illiteracy by A.H. 1415 at the latest.

Work is not limited to quantitative expansion. Continual efforts are being made to improve the literacy programme in respect of curricula, planning and books, so as to cover the requirements and practical needs of women, and to make it possible for them to participate with awareness and understanding in the development of society. Programmes are also being prepared for educating women in child care, motherhood and family management, as well as in the principles of health, domestic economy, needlework and all matters relating to the life of women.

As the general directorate is aware of the importance of combating illiteracy among women, it participates in all the conferences organized on this subject or on literacy in general by Unesco, ALECSO and other bodies.

The most recent of these conferences to which the directorate contributed its views and research was the ‘Arab Conference on female literacy and its influence on development’. This conference was held in the hall of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, and dealt with the following subjects:

The importance of female education, the promotion of literacy among women, and the role of women in developing and building society.

Review of current activity and of work being done to promote female literacy.

Obstacles to the promotion of female literacy.

Formulation of an Arab plan for the implementation of a co-ordinated literacy programme.
The conference adopted a number of decisions and recommendations which the directorate is endeavouring to implement. These are:

- That attention should be given to drafting comprehensive, organic plans to eliminate illiteracy among women, with definite qualitative and quantitative objectives.
- That the plan for eliminating female illiteracy should be a fundamental part of the overall plan for social and economic development.
- That the fight against illiteracy should be seen against the background of wider cultural considerations, the aim being to bring about the necessary changes so as to eliminate backwardness and achieve the desired progress.
- Programmes to combat female illiteracy should be designed with specific reference to the tasks and social roles performed by women. The curricula should aim, *inter alia*, at teaching them communicative skills and equipping them to participate in the overall development effort.
Omar mosque at al-Jouf, the foundation of which is attributed to the Caliph Omar.

Central Library of Riyadh University.

Photos: Ministry of Education, Riyadh.
Mosque inside Qasr Ibrahim, Hufuf Oasis. The construction dates back to A.H. 974/A.D. 1558.

A continuous sequence of Thamudic inscriptions and graffiti adorning a jebel face at Wadi Ekmah, 4 kilometres north of al-Ula. Humanoid figures represent Thamudic goddesses.
Petroleum and Minerals University, Dahran.

General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship, Riyadh.
Two west-facing tombs at Hreba, a small outcrop at Madain Saleh containing thirteen tombs. The doorways have been eroded to a position of about 3 metres above the present ground surface.

Riyadh University at Malaz.
Higher education

The nucleus of a system of higher education was created with the foundation in A.H. 1369 of a college of Islamic law in the holy city of Mecca. A teacher-training college was established in A.H. 1373.

Thereafter higher education expanded rapidly as the cities grew and with them the demand of young Saudis for advanced instruction. To meet that demand and help satisfy the country's need for workers in various fields, the state established new universities and colleges specializing in a wide range of different disciplines.

In conformity with this general principle and having regard to the objectives set by the kingdom's overall education policy, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has on the instructions of successive monarchs founded a number of universities accessible to male secondary-school leavers. The opportunity has also been given to female students with the general secondary certificate to enrol in special sections for females in a number of universities.

Universities

UNIVERSITY OF RIYADH

This is the oldest university in the kingdom. It was founded in Riyadh in A.H. 1377, with an initial enrolment of twenty-one students in the Faculty of Literature. It has since developed and grown to the point where it now contains the faculties of literature, sciences, pharmacology, administrative sciences, agriculture, education, medicine, dentistry, and nursing sciences, along with the Arabic Language Institute and the Faculty of Education at Abha.
Higher education

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

This university was founded in the holy city of Medina in A.H. 1381 to give children of Muslims from all over the world a sound Islamic education and to train experts in the Islamic religion and Islamic legal sciences who would be qualified to solve the religious and secular problems of Muslims in the light of the Koran, the sayings and doings of the Prophet, and the good example of their forefathers and of the first group of Muslims.

To enable it to carry out its task in the most comprehensive fashion, the university now possesses the faculties of Islamic law, religious propagation and the elements of religion, the Holy Koran, prophetic tradition and Islamic studies, and Arabic language and literature.

KING ABD UL-AZIZ UNIVERSITY IN JEDDAH

The nucleus of the university was created in Jeddah in A.H. 1387. It has developed, and now includes the faculties of literature and human sciences, sciences, economics and administration, engineering, and medicine, along with the Institute of Applied Geology, the Institute of Meteorology, the College of Education in Medina, the College of Islamic Law and Islamic Studies in Mecca, and the College of Education in Mecca.

IMAM MUHAMMAD IBN SAUD ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY IN RIYADH

The nucleus of the university was created in A.H. 1373 with the opening of the Faculty of Islamic Law and the Faculty of the Arabic Language. It is an Islamic university, concentrating particularly on religious studies and accepting students who have obtained the secondary certificate from scientific institutes. The university has developed to the point where it contains the following faculties and institutes: Higher Institute of Juridical Studies, which is the higher educational establishment responsible for training judges and experts in the Islamic religion to the equivalent of master's degree level; the faculties of Islamic law, elements of religion, Arabic language and social studies, along with the Higher Institute for the Propagation of Islam, College of Islamic Law and the Arabic Language at al-Qasim, and College of Islamic Law and the Arabic Language at Abha.

PETROLEUM AND MINERALS UNIVERSITY AT DHAHRAH

This university was founded in A.H. 1383 and specializes in all forms of study and research connected with petroleum and minerals. It has grown until it now includes the faculties of science and engineering, applied engineering, science, industrial administration, and advanced studies.
Higher education

KING FEISAL UNIVERSITY
AT AL-AHSA'  

This university was founded in A.H. 1395, and comprises the following colleges: College of Medicine and Medical Sciences at Dammam, College of Architecture and Planning at Dammam, College of Agricultural Sciences and Nutrition at al-Ahsa', and College of Veterinary Medicine and Livestock at al-Ahsa'.

Because of the proliferation of universities in the kingdom, and in order to co-ordinate their work, the Ministry of Higher Education was created in A.H. 1395.

In addition to the universities mentioned above, which are linked with the Ministry of Higher Education, there are a number of higher educational institutions controlled by other bodies.

Higher educational colleges, centres and institutes

MILITARY COLLEGES

Military colleges controlled by the Ministry of Defence include: King Abd ul-Asiz Military College, College of the Internal Security Forces, and King Feisal Air Force College.

INTERMEDIATE COLLEGES, CENTRES FOR SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS AND HIGHER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES

These establishments, which are controlled by the Ministry of Education, aim to improve the standard of elementary and intermediate-level teaching schools throughout the kingdom, and have therefore been set up in a number of different cities: intermediate colleges in Riyadh, al-Qasim, Medina and Abha, and centres for science and mathematics in Riyadh and Dammam.

In Riyadh there is also a higher vocational institute to train instructors for the technical institutes.

COLLEGES FOR GIRLS

These are controlled by the General Secretariat for Girls’ Colleges, a department of the General Directorate for Girls’ Education, and include the following: College of Education for Girls in Riyadh, College of Education for Girls in Jeddah, College of Education for Girls in Mecca, and Higher Social Services Institute for Girls in Riyadh.

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These universities, colleges and higher institutes play an effective role in disseminating culture through their libraries, which are open to the public, and also through the congresses, seminars and training courses which are held in them.

King Abd ul-Aziz Foundation

This is an independent organization with its own legal personality. It was created by Royal Decree No. 45/M of 5 August A.H. 1392, and is run by an Administrative Council under the chairmanship of the Minister for Higher Education.

The foundation is concerned with research and study in the fields of history, geography, literature and the intellectual and cultural past. Its work relates in particular to the kingdom, then to the Arabian peninsula, the Arab world and Islam in general. It is concerned with collecting and disseminating the heritage. It operates through the following bodies:

Research Section. This section prepares research, and studies and appraises books and research projects referred to it by the other bodies. It also arranges for the publication of manuscripts, and has published fifteen books to date.

Translation Section. This section translates foreign books relating to the history of the kingdom and documents (especially Turkish and English archives) acquired by the foundation.

Library. This contains about seven thousand volumes, with a large number of Arabic and foreign periodicals. There is also the King Abd ul-Aziz collection, which contains about two thousand volumes.

King Abd ul-Aziz Memorial Hall. This is a museum containing relics and items relating to King Abd ul-Aziz as well as paintings and photographs, which, together with the other relics, give an authentic idea of the principal features of the history of the kingdom and of the Saudi state.

The Foundation. This is a quarterly magazine, dealing with research, dissemination of the heritage and other topics relevant to the aims of the foundation. It is now in its fourth year.

National Saudi Centre for Archives and Manuscripts. This centre undertakes the scientific work which is done by archive centres in other countries. It collects documents connected with the history of the kingdom from sources inside the kingdom and abroad. It also collects manuscripts and material relating to the Islamic heritage.

Photography and Microfilming Section. This section is equipped with the latest apparatus and instruments to enable it to support the work of the foundation in different fields. Its functions include still photography, cinematic and television photography, and photography of documents,
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manuscripts and archives. It also makes sound and video recordings of meetings, conferences and lectures, and assists the foundation in various other ways.

King Feisal Prize. The foundation organizes an international competition among research workers and historians for the King Feisal Prize, which is awarded for the most significant contribution to the aims of the foundation. One-week seminars with informative lectures are held, and field trips to record and photograph the details of military and archaeological sites are also organized.
The General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship plays a major role in disseminating culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, both by the direct encouragement and training it gives to young people themselves and by its efforts to promote their output in the various fields of cultural activity for which it is responsible.

The General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship has passed through the following stages of development:
In A.H. 1372, it was part of the Ministry of the Interior, with the title ‘Bureau of Sports Affairs’.
In A.H. 1380, the Bureau of Sports Affairs was transferred to the Ministry of Education.
In A.H. 1381, it was transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with the title ‘The General Bureau for Youth Sponsorship’.
In A.H. 1394, it was given its own legal personality and an independent budget and was linked administratively with the Higher Council for Youth Sponsorship under the title ‘The General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship’.

Bureau of Cultural Affairs

This was created as one of the technical departments attached to the Deputy Director for Youth Sponsorship, by decision No. 514 of 19 Ramadan A.H. 1394. Among its principal tasks are:
Supervising the implementation of special programmes of activity for the development of youth in the fields of literature, science and the arts, within the framework of Islamic doctrines and Arab customs and traditions.
Encouraging spare-time activities among young people; stimulating their creativity and talent.
Disseminating, organizing and supervising the various forms of art.

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General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship

Holding artistic festivals, cultural contests and exhibitions especially devoted to amateur work by young people.
Encouraging and supporting club libraries; supervising cultural and artistic associations and clubs, and supporting their activities.
Organizing cultural weeks and cultural festivals for young people. The Bureau of Cultural Affairs is made up of five sections: Literary Section, Visual Arts Section, Dramatic Arts Section, Section for Scientific Clubs, Associations, etc., and Cultural Affairs Section.
The Director of Cultural Affairs in the General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship is also the chairman of the Committee for External Art Exhibitions. The responsibilities of this committee include:
Organizing foreign cultural weeks in Saudi Arabia and Saudi Arabian weeks in foreign countries.
Arranging for Saudi Arabian participation in international art exhibitions and competitions.
General supervision of matters relating to the visual arts. This committee has held Saudi cultural weeks in a number of Arab and other foreign countries, including Morocco, Iraq and Sweden.
The Bureau of Cultural Affairs in the General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship plays a major role in its field. By way of example, in the second half of A.H. 1398 it accomplished the following:

WORK DONE
BY THE CREATIVE-ARTS SECTION

At the local level: the various local offices organized 10 exhibitions, with 900 pictures. About 13,000 people visited these exhibitions.
At the national level: the bureau organized 4 exhibitions, with 700 works of art, visited by about 6,000 people.

WORK DONE
BY THE DRAMATIC-ARTS SECTION

The Third Dramatic Arts Festival was held during four evenings in the month of Sha'aban, A.H. 1398, in the Riyadh university theatre: 15 clubs and 8 offices took part, 15 dramatic and popular works were presented, 300 young people took part, and there were about 2,000 spectators.
At the local level, the clubs have held 75 events, in which 2,250 young people participated, and which were seen by about 30,000 spectators.

WORK DONE BY THE LITERARY SECTION

At the local level:
A contest for summarizing a book (The Intellectual Invasion of the Arab World). Eight offices organized this contest, and 120 young people participated.
Lectures: 80 lectures were organized by the various offices, and 15 by the directorate.
A poetry contest, organized by 6 offices. Ninety young people took part.
An essay contest, organized by 5 offices. Seventy-five young people took part.
A short-story contest, organized by 4 offices. Sixty young people took part.
A Koranic memorization contest. This was organized by 6 offices, and 80 young people took part.

At the central level:
An exhibition of wall newspapers was held at the national level in the month of Rajab, A.H. 1398, the date being chosen to take account of the holding of public examinations. Eight offices participated, showing 45 papers with contributions from 242 young writers.
The judging of cultural contests took place at the national level in the month of Ramadan, A.H. 1398, the date being chosen to take account of the holding of public examinations. Seven offices were involved, 6 meetings were held, 35 young people took part, and about 1,800 people attended.

**Saudi Arabian Association for Culture and the Arts**

On the basis of decision No. 43 of 26 Zu’lkadah A.H. 1393, issued by the General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship, an association known as the Saudi Arabian Association for the Arts was formed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
The association is based in Riyadh, and has the right to establish branches in the provinces.
On 16 Jumada II A.H. 1398, Decision No. 1341 was issued adding culture to the mandate of the association, with the consent of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy President of the Council of Ministers. This decision recognized the Saudi Arabian Association for Culture and the Arts as the body responsible for cultural and artistic matters in the kingdom, and as an association with a legal personality, directly linked to the General Director for Youth Sponsorship.
The aims of the association are:
To improve the level of culture and the arts in all their various forms.
To sponsor Saudi artists and cultural workers, contribute in all possible ways to improving their artistic and cultural, social and material advancement and guaranteeing their future.
To participate in representing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the artistic and cultural fields both at home and abroad.
To develop new talent and to give it an opportunity to display its excellence.
The committees dealing with specific activities in the association are:
General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship

Cultural Committee, Visual Arts Committee, Dramatic Arts Committee, Popular Arts Committee, Committee for Instrumental and Vocal Music, and Committee for Information and Dissemination.

Through these committees, the association presents various forms of cultural and artistic activity. By way of example, we can list the following:

**PUBLICATIONS**

Two books on popular literature.
A magazine of culture and the arts. This is a volume containing a number of studies, research papers and articles connected with culture and the arts. A large number of Saudi intellectuals, artists and writers were involved in preparing material for it.
An information handbook, prepared under the supervision of the Committee for Information and Dissemination. This guide gives the programmes and dates of the various artistic and cultural activities of the association and its branches during the season. It describes the administrative and technical structure of the Association, and illustrates all the activities of the association and its various committees.
Teaching of the violin (three parts); and studies of Omar Khayyam.
Poetical works of Ibn Saqiya al-Tamima (Part Two). *Affection’s Blossoms* by the poetess Rim al-Sahra.

**SEMINARS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Seminar on literary criticism in the kingdom.
Discussion of the work of Dr Ghazi al-Qasibi.
Seminar on the theatre (from a literary and artistic point of view).

**DRAMATIC WORK**

Saudi dramatists have supplied the association with a number of plays and scripts, including:
*Doctor at al-Mish’ab*. This was presented by the association, with a cast that included several leading Saudi actors.
*Journey’s End*. This was performed by a mixed cast of leading professionals and talented young amateurs, inaugurating the association’s ‘integrated drama’ policy. (These two plays were performed during the first phase of the association’s activities.)
*Fortune’s Train*, a play dealing with social problems.
OTHER ASPECTS OF CULTURAL ACTIVITY

The association has invited a number of writers, artists and cultural workers to give lectures and hold seminars and cultural evenings. The subjects of these lectures have included: the heritage and popular literature; the Bani Hilal and their influence on popular literature; music in the Arabian peninsula (Professor Mutlaq al-Dhiyabi); writing for the stage (Professor Samir Nida); and contemporary Arab poetry (Professor Abd ul-Halim Radwa). There have also been numerous poetry evenings.

ARTISTIC EVENTS

The members of the Dramatic Arts Committee at the association’s headquarters in Riyadh organized a one-hour television show, *Up to You, Father.*

Work was then started on a television show called *The Dearest Bridegroom,* to be performed by members of the acting group in the Jeddah branch of the association, and another called *Resignation,* to be performed by members of the Dramatic Arts Committee in Riyadh.

VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Four musical groups have been formed by members of the association and of its branches in Riyadh, Dammam, al-Ahsa’ and Jeddah respectively. These groups have taken part in a number of concerts within the framework of the association’s activities, as well as some special concerts. They have also accompanied Saudi artists in records for radio and television.

With a view to raising standards of musical performance, the association has started music classes for young people, in all branches, engaging first-class instrumental, vocal and theory teachers for the purpose.

THE VISUAL ARTS

These too are actively encouraged by the association, which provides art classes for its members in a fully equipped studio under the guidance of qualified teachers, and has organized a number of individual and group exhibitions in this field.

Exhibitions of work by artists from Arab and foreign states have been held, and further exhibitions are currently being arranged.

LIBRARIES

The association has provided its members with a library containing basic works of religious, cultural, literary, artistic and scientific interest, as well as books dealing with spare-time activities related to the concerns of the association.
General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship

It has also established a visual library, containing about one thousand hours of cultural and artistic material recorded on video-cassette and providing information about outstanding Arab and international works of art.

PROJECTS NOW BEING IMPLEMENTED

A cultural centre is being created, containing books, pictures, examples of calligraphy, slides, stamps, coins, clothes, ornaments and a wide variety of other objects relating to Saudi life.

The association is planning to hold Saudi cultural weeks in other Arab countries and friendly foreign states, with the aim of spreading knowledge of culture and arts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and of strengthening the bonds of friendship between young people in the kingdom and young people abroad.

The association has been studying the idea of holding a national festival of poetry and folk-dancing. It is hoped that this will be staged in the spring outside the city of Riyadh. All poets and folklore groups in the kingdom will be invited to participate in the festival.

A large number of books are also in course of preparation or translation.

Literary clubs

At the start of A.H. 1395, a group of writers suggested to the General Director for Youth Sponsorship that the Okaz fair should be revived, in a modern style suitable for a modern Islamic community, and that literary clubs should be established. With the agreement of the Director and the Supreme Council, this idea was submitted to the late King Feisal and received the royal approval, which was announced by the director in the course of a national poetry festival.

The response was immediate and literary clubs were promptly established in Medina, Riyadh, Taif, Jeddah and Jizan. The General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship gave each of these clubs a foundation grant of 250,000 riyals, and a subsequent annual subvention amounting in some years to as much as one million riyals.

REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING LITERARY CLUBS

The feeling of writers that they can achieve more collectively than by uncoordinated individual efforts.

A feeling on the part of many writers that it should be easier for them to publish their works and that their material situation in general could be improved.
The belief of the state that serving Arab literature includes serving the Holy Koran, which is the constitution of the country and the source of its legislation.

The desire of the state that development shall be comprehensive and embrace all aspects of intellectual and social life.

The state's awareness of writers as an intellectually vigorous social group who can guide public opinion in a way beneficial to Islam and the Muslims, inasmuch as the writer's mission has from the earliest times been based on the dissemination of the highest ideals.

**THE IMPACT OF THE CREATION OF THESE CLUBS**

The creation of these clubs had a very positive effect at the local, Arab and world levels. At the local level, the literary clubs provided a large number of writers with greatly enhanced opportunities of publishing their output and making their voices heard. At the Arab and international levels, the clubs made contact with literary circles in the Arab world and abroad. These circles gave an enthusiastic welcome to the idea, as a pioneering experiment the need for which had long been felt. The welcome was endorsed by the World Writers' Congress, held in Barcelona, where the Saudi Arabian representative, Dr Abdullah al-Zeid, explained the objectives which the state was pursuing in establishing these clubs, and the support which the clubs were able to give to writers in their work.

In addition, the clubs have engaged in various activities designed to promote culture, religion and literature, ranging from lectures on spiritual and kindred topics to seminars dealing with social conditions in the light of Islamic concepts. The clubs also publish the works of established and emerging writers, and organize poetry, short-story and essay-writing competitions, Koranic memorization contests and other events.

**FORMS OF ACTIVITY, WITH STATISTICS**

*Printed material produced by the literary clubs*

The literary clubs have encouraged numerous writers to publish their work. The writers have benefited from this materially and in other ways, because the club prints the writer's work at its own expense, and then gives the writer all the printed copies, except for 200 copies which are presentation copies. The writer then markets the book, or often the club markets it on his behalf. Statistics for the number of books published by the literary clubs in different cities are as follows: Taif: eighteen, including three collections of poetry; Medina: eighteen, including nine collections of poetry;
Jeddah: twelve, including three collections of poetry; Mecca: five, including two collections of poetry; Jizan: eleven, including three collections of poetry; and Riyadh: one book a month, in a series called ‘Iqra’.

Lectures and seminars

Literary clubs in different cities have organized lectures and seminars on topics of interest to Saudi students and the nation as a whole. Some statistics for these events are: Medina, upwards of thirty; Mecca, approximately ten; Jeddah, seventeen; Jizan, fourteen.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The literary clubs also engage in other forms of activity, which are summarized below:

Poetry, short-story and essay-writing competitions; Koranic memorization contest. Valuable prizes are awarded to the winners, and winning texts are published in booklet form.

Expanding libraries, providing valuable reference material and equipping reading rooms so as to attract students, researchers and the general public.

Making video recordings of lectures and seminars for showing at appropriate times.

Making contact with students; encouraging the development of talented students; helping outstanding students to overcome any problems.

Press conferences and literary meetings; contact and co-operation with the press, in view of the close links between journalism and literature.

Since all the arts are closely linked, some clubs, including those of Medina and Taif, have taken part in exhibitions of visual arts.

Some clubs have participated in events designed to educate the general public. For example, the Medina and Taif clubs participated in the national ‘Road Traffic Week’.

Concern with history and with antiquities, because these are closely related to literature, particularly in this part of the world. The Medina Club has set aside a hall for history and antiquities.

Participation in genuinely constructive projects. For example, the Taif club associated itself with the call to set up a branch of the King Abdul-Aziz University in Taif.

The pioneering work done by the Mecca Club includes holding a camp at Mina with a branch at Arafat. A number of Saudi and other Arab writers and scientists were invited. The club plans to expand the camp so as to include more than one hundred scholars and writers from the kingdom as guests whom the club will invite to go on the pilgrimage at its expense.
Following the decision of the General Director for Youth Sponsorship, the Department of Popular Arts was created on 9 Safar A.H. 1395 to foster, study and classify and disseminate the popular arts. It is responsible, *inter alia*, for the following:

- Reviving the popular heritage in vocal and instrumental music.
- Sponsoring talented young people and developing their talent.
- Participating in international festivals, meetings and congresses; representing the kingdom both at home and abroad.
- Assisting the information media and helping to make their programmes in the field of popular arts successful by providing first-rate material.
- Establishing and operating centres for the popular arts in the various regions of the kingdom.
- Collecting and studying Saudi folk-songs and folklore.

In pursuit of these objectives, the kingdom has participated in many congresses held at the Arab level, including those organized by the League of Arab States in Cairo, Algiers, Baghdad, Rabat and Tunis. It has also taken part in a number of festivals held in Arab and foreign countries:

- Second Festival of Youth, held in Libya in A.H. 1395; Popular Arts Festival held in Algiers in A.H. 1395; Eighth International Festival, held in Tunis in A.H. 1397; Saudi Cultural Week, held in Morocco in A.H. 1397; Third Festival of Arab Youth, held in Baghdad in A.H. 1397; Second Tunisian Festival, held at Carthage in A.H. 1397; and German Festival of Popular Arts, held in A.H. 1398.

The General Directorate for Youth Sponsorship is now engaged in creating the Arab Centre for the Revival of the Artistic Heritage, following a recommendation by the Conference on the Visual Arts, held in Damascus in A.D. 1975, that such a centre should be established in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in co-operation with the Arab Organization for Education, Science and Culture.

The royal assent to the establishment of the centre was given in proclamation No. 4091, issued on 14 Safar A.H. 1396, which also defined the centre’s area of competence and its objectives and responsibilities.

Essentially, the purpose of the centre is to safeguard the integrity and contemporary relevance of the visual arts, foster the individuality of the Arab artist and counteract the influence of Western tendencies. Its specific objectives include: (a) revival of the historic artistic heritage throughout the Arab world; (b) carrying out research and studies on the various aspects of creativity in the artistic heritage of the Arab world, with emphasis on the
positive aspects of that heritage; (c) organizing educational gatherings for
Arab artists to strengthen their links with one another and with their
heritage throughout the Arab world.

Assistance to Cultural Associations:
the Philately Association

The department provides cultural associations with assistance to enable
them to develop their programmes and to draw up their plans each year in
accordance with the general guidelines and principles laid down by the direc-
torate. It also assists them with guidance and supervision in implementing
their plans and tackling the problems they encounter so that they may be
in a better position to achieve their objectives both at home and abroad and
to represent the kingdom worthily in Arab, Islamic and international
gatherings. The associations in question include the Saudi Philatelists’
Association, which has the following aims:
Using this hobby as a means of spreading knowledge of the great achieve-
ments of the country and its progress.
Encouraging amateur philatelists and facilitating co-operation among them.
Helping its members to make the best use of their free time.

THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION

Helping its members to engage in stamp collecting and acquiring stamps in
accordance with the statutes of the association.
Arranging seminars and lectures and carrying out research and study in the
field of philately.
Preparing documentary films and talks; issuing publications in the
kingdom and abroad.
Holding philatelic exhibitions in the kingdom and abroad.
Participating in international organizations and conferences connected
with the objectives of the association.
Helping to organize philatelic associations in youth organizations.
Providing a library, so as to encourage members to meet and relax at the
association’s headquarters.
Planning excursions and camps and organizing competitions among
members of the association.

The Okaz fair

For the Arabs of the pre-Islamic period, Okaz was a sort of general market,
and also a fair in the full modern sense of that word. It was an organized
linguistic and literary meeting. There were judges, to whom the poets of
each tribe submitted their work. The things which the judges approved were held in high esteem; the things which they criticized were put aside. The market was also a commercial market for the entire Arab peninsula and the surrounding area.

Following instructions from His Highness Prince Feisal Ibn Fahd Ibn Abd ul-Aziz, the General Director for Youth Sponsorship, steps are now being taken to revive the Okaz fair. Studies have been carried out in preparation for holding the fair during the present five-year plan, and ensuring that the facilities and installations provided have, as far as possible, a genuine Arab and Islamic character. Efforts are also being made to identify the sites of ancient ruins connected with the fair, and to bring to light any noteworthy features. A museum is being established with examples of furniture, tools and other objects from the pre-Islamic period, such as cooking vessels, equipment for camels and horses, baskets, tents, kubbás (shrines), ornaments, etc., and with an audio-visual programme illustrating, with authentic objects and a commentary in classical Arabic, the conditions that prevailed in those days and some of the stories which have come down to us about the fair. A number of groups representing the various folk arts will be chosen from the different parts of the kingdom to perform at the fair, and examples of poetry and other texts in which Okaz is mentioned will be copied on to panels and prominently displayed.

As well as the Okaz fair, other popular fairs will be revived, such as those of the Habasha in Tihama, Dumat al-Jandal in Jauf, and al-Mashqar in al-Ahsa’. Each of these fairs will be held once every three years, and invitations will be restricted to writers and poets from within the kingdom. As for the Okaz fair itself, it will be held every year as an occasion for the entire Arab world. An illustrated booklet currently in course of preparation gives a concise account of everything connected with the fair, including references to the poets and preachers in the past who are known to have had a connection with it.

A large number of prizes will be awarded for literary works in various genres submitted by the Saudi and other Arab poets and scholars invited to attend the fair, a principal criterion being that the works selected must be in harmony with the spirit and character of the occasion. These prizes will be named after famous Arabian figures both past and present.
Ministry of Information

The Ministry of Information does important work in disseminating culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the daily and periodical press and through the radio, which covers the entire kingdom and the surrounding region as well as beaming short-wave transmissions to many parts of the world. A significant role is also played by the television service through its cultural programmes and series aimed at expanding viewers' horizons in many areas of interest, and in particular through its adult education and literacy programmes. In addition, the Ministry of Information prepares information publications and educational works in co-operation with other government departments.

General Directorate for the Press

The General Directorate for the Press is the body in the Ministry of Information responsible for external information activities involving the press, films, pictures and books both inside the kingdom and abroad. Its task, which increases steadily in scope and importance, is to reflect an up-to-date positive and objective picture of the policy and achievements of the kingdom in all fields. The staff of the Directorate provide facilities for the work of foreign visitors and journalists, and supply them with information covering all aspects of life in the kingdom.

The General Directorate for the Press carries out its public information tasks by issuing books, leaflets, information sheets, films, slides, pictures and posters, all of which it distributes widely both at home and abroad. The domestic distribution list includes universities, foundations, cultural and research centres, schools, individuals, the foreign community and foreign companies operating in the kingdom. Abroad, the material is distributed to His Majesty's Embassies, the offices of the Saudi Press Agency, military and educational attachés, Saudi nationals studying abroad, opinion-forming
centres in the capitals of the world, and cultural and information organizations. The material is also used to reply to the numerous requests for information received from individuals all over the world.

The directorate works constantly to improve and expand the flow of information concerning the economic and social development of the kingdom. To this end, it engages in the following activities:

- It collects information relating to the kingdom, its objectives and its activities in various fields. This information, which is collected from all sources, is used in planning and executing projects.
- It promotes scientific innovation to raise the level of the information media with reference *inter alia* to methods of use, distribution within the kingdom and abroad, and the impact of monitoring techniques.
- It establishes broad objectives to guide it in its work: (a) spreading knowledge of the work of the state in various fields in the light of the Development Plan; (b) publicizing the Comprehensive Development Plan, its objectives and projects; (c) helping citizens to participate in development; (d) co-operating with the sectors involved in the different areas of the Five-Year Plan (culture, education and youth, production, services) so that the national information effort can be co-ordinated with the work of these sectors in the field of economic and social development.

In addition, the directorate encourages Saudi writers in particular, and Arab and foreign writers concerned with the kingdom and its policies in general. This encouragement takes the form of the purchase in quantity of books which can be useful for cultural and information purposes, after careful study of their contents. These books are then distributed on a wide scale and help to disseminate both general culture (the promotion of which is one of the objectives of the state) and specialist knowledge connected with the history, geography and heritage of the kingdom by enabling a large number of organizations, schools and clubs to set up cultural and information libraries.

Outside the kingdom, the General Directorate for the Press provides information by distributing its output of information material abroad, and by participating in conferences and seminars held abroad which are connected with its work.

Information about the kingdom is distributed abroad by the following methods: (a) receiving press delegations, organizing programmes designed to acquaint them with the progress and development of the country and providing them with all relevant information; (b) classifying data relating to development in the kingdom so that they may be available to visitors in a scientific and objective form; (c) linking external information drives to the pilgrimage seasons and other special occasions; (d) supplying the foreign press with studies and background material on the progress and development of the kingdom.
Radio service

The Saudi Radio Service is regarded as one of the kingdom’s most important media of information and communication, in view of its ability to cover the whole of this enormous country and also much of the surrounding region.

The importance of the radio service is clear from the vital mission it is called upon to perform: the mission of supporting solidarity among Muslims, unifying their ideas and strengthening them against any intellectual assault designed to encroach on Islamic doctrines.

The modern age is characterized by rapid communications, helped by modern technical developments. This has led to a shortening of distances and to the instantaneous transmission of information by pictures and by sound. The Saudi Radio Service has benefited from these advanced techniques, and acquits itself worthily of its task of serving the Saudi listener at home, and the Arab and Islamic listener abroad.

The first radio service in the kingdom was established in A.H. 1368. Radio transmissions began on 8 Zu’l-hijjah of that year (October, A.D. 1949). Until A.H. 1384, radio broadcasting was limited to the studios in Jeddah. The average number of programmes broadcast was then not more than seven a day.

This later rose to fifteen programmes, some daily and some weekly. In Ramadan of A.H. 1384, transmission began from the Riyadh Radio Service, at an average rate of sixteen daily and weekly programmes. At the present time, there are fifty-five weekly programmes broadcast from Jeddah and thirty-four daily programmes, while sixty-two weekly programmes and twenty-eight daily programmes are broadcast from Riyadh. The two services link up to broadcast shared programmes, which average 30 per cent of general broadcasting. They also link up for political programmes such as news bulletins, news background programmes and programmes of special interest such as sports programmes.

A recent innovation is the direct broadcasting by the two services of press articles each morning, so that the listener can hear what is in the daily papers very soon after they appear.

There follows a list of the radio programmes broadcast by Jeddah, Riyadh, the ‘Islamic Call’ Radio Service and the ‘Holy Koran’ Radio Service, together with the relevant information about these programmes.

**GENERAL PROGRAMME**

As we have already observed, transmissions were at first limited to the Jeddah studios. There was only a general programme, limited to seven daily or weekly programmes. Today, both the Riyadh and Jeddah services have a general programme, lasting twenty hours in both cases. Transmissions begin at six in the morning and continue until two the following morning. As we have said, the two services link up to broadcast shared
programmes representing 30 per cent of their general programmes. These shared programmes include news bulletins. The two services are also linked throughout the season of the pilgrimage and during other official occasions.

The material broadcast by both services in the general programme includes religious programmes, drama programmes and cultural and popular programmes. There are also special items for children, housewives, students, the armed forces, the security forces and the National Guard. The proportions of the various programmes are as follows: religious programmes, 16 per cent, news programmes, 15.4 per cent, other programmes, 37.6 per cent, and song and drama programmes, 31 per cent.

PROGRAMMES DIRECTED TO SPECIAL AUDIENCES

These programmes are broadcast in five languages, and are directed towards Muslims in various parts of the world. They were created on the basis of the Radio Service’s mission, in the context of the fight against destructive ideas, intellectual aggression and heresy. International events in general, and events in the Islamic world in particular, show repeatedly that Muslims are today living through a crucial and dangerous period, in which the centres of power in the world are struggling against each other, using all the techniques of confrontation and every kind of manoeuvre in order to establish intellectual dominance. It is vital for the Radio Service to resist these tendencies, and it therefore broadcasts programmes aimed at explaining to Muslims everywhere the facts about these dangerous attempts to influence them, and at strengthening their hold on those aspects of the Islamic religion which can protect them against all subversive and destructive ideas. These programmes are broadcast in five languages: Indonesian, Urdu, Persian, Swahili and Turkish.

‘ISLAMIC CALL’ RADIO SERVICE

The ‘Islamic Call’ Radio Service has grown from eight weekly and four daily programmes to seventeen weekly and nine daily programmes. It broadcasts from 11.55 to 1.35 by the sunset time-reckoning system (i.e. from just before sunset until the end of the evening call to prayer). The proportions of the programmes are as follows: religious programmes, 29 per cent, cultural programmes, 41 per cent, news programmes, 15 per cent, theatrical programmes, 15 per cent.

‘HOLY KORAN’ RADIO SERVICE

This service broadcasts six daily and ten weekly programmes from Riyadh. It transmits in two sessions: a morning session from six until eight, and an evening session from six until two the following morning. Its pro-
grammes are made up as follows: recitations of the Koran, 75 per cent, and discussions, theology, commentary on the Koran, lectures and studies, 25 per cent.

From Jeddah, eight daily programmes and seven weekly programmes are transmitted, also in two sessions: a morning session from six until eight, and an afternoon session from four in the afternoon until eight at night. The programmes are made up in the same way as those of the ‘Holy Koran’ Radio Service from Riyadh. The two radio services exchange certain programmes.

EUROPEAN PROGRAMME
IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

From Riyadh thirty-five weekly programmes are broadcast in English, with seven daily programmes and nine serials averaging two episodes a week. Transmission is in two sessions: a morning session from eight until four in the afternoon and an evening session from nine until twelve at night. The frequency is 245.05 metres in the medium wave band. In French, thirty weekly programmes are broadcast, with one daily programme and four serials averaging two episodes a week, on the same medium wave-length.

From Jeddah thirty weekly programmes are broadcast in English, with six daily programmes and five serials averaging two episodes a week. In French, eleven weekly programmes are broadcast, with one daily programme and four serials averaging two episodes a week. Transmissions are on 188 metres in the medium-wave band, and 35.3 metres in the short-wave band. The proportion of cultural programmes varies from 8.3 per cent to 12.4 per cent of the total programme.

Television service

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Television Service began transmission on 19 Rabia I, A.H. 1385, corresponding to 17 July, A.D. 1965. Transmissions were from two stations set up in Riyadh and Jeddah, broadcasting at a power of 2 kilowatts, with each station covering an area ranging from eighty to one hundred square kilometres in the city and its environs.

During the ten years which followed the start of transmissions, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Television Service made great strides forward, widening the area of transmission and increasing the number of stations. Young Saudis were trained and qualified to do the necessary engineering and technical work in these stations and to prepare the programmes. The hours of broadcasting were increased, as was the proportion of locally produced television programmes of various kinds. Newscasts and televised information services in general also developed both qualitatively and quantitatively.
By the end of that period, there were five stations in the kingdom. There were two technically identical stations in Riyadh and Jeddah; two others, also identical, in Medina and al-Qasim; and a fifth in Dammam. This station in Dammam is the largest in terms of area of coverage, strength of transmission, and quality of equipment.

During the same period, relay stations were established, so that it was possible for transmissions to reach most parts of the Western region—including Mecca and Medina—as well as much of the rest of the kingdom.

Throughout this time, the programmes broadcast by the television service improved in quantity and quality. The hours of broadcasting increased from an average of ten to over fifty hours a week, not counting occasional extra broadcasting time for the relaying of important occasions and sporting events, the ceremonies of the pilgrimage, etc.

With the increase in broadcasting, the number of Saudi nationals working for the television service in one capacity or another increased from 64 people in A.H. 1385 to 428 in A.H. 1395.

The Saudi Television Service was keen to benefit from the enormous advances in the use of artificial satellites for international transmission and reception. As a result, it has made considerable progress, and now has a television system which is unique of its kind. This system corresponds to the particular nature of conditions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, resulting from its position as the centre of the propagation of Islam and the guardian of the Islamic Holy Places: its vast area, extending over more than two-thirds of the Arabian peninsula, from the Arabian Gulf to the Red Sea; the wide dispersal of its inhabitants over the territory of the kingdom, in settlements and in desert areas; as well as various other conditions unique to the kingdom which have influenced the development of the television service during the first period of its existence.

Between A.H. 1395 and 1397 a number of projects were carried out and improvements introduced with the aim of widening the range of television transmissions, in accordance with the previously mentioned objective of bringing television broadcasts to most parts of the kingdom and the neighbouring regions. These projects for increasing the range of transmissions included the Abha' station, with a range extending 70 kilometres to the group of villages at al-'Abis, 145 kilometres to Jizan and 207 kilometres to Najran.

New technical facilities have opened up a wide range of possibilities as regards the production and preparation of programmes, but the essential twin characteristics of public education and entertainment have been preserved throughout this period of development. The following is a breakdown of television programmes at the present time: religious and cultural programmes, 25 per cent, variety and song, 22 per cent, non-Arabic films and series, 8 per cent, dramatic programmes (local and Arabic), 15 per cent, children's programmes, 15 per cent, news and news programmes, 15 per cent.
Department of Culture and Education

The Department of Culture and Education was founded in A.H. 1371 and was at that time known as the Section for Military Schools. The only schools which it was responsible for administering were military schools at the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels, which prepared students for the King Abd ul-Aziz Military College. It acquired its present name in A.H. 1377 when these schools were wound up. Its responsibilities include:

Supervision of the implementation of the civil education policy in the army, according to the plan drawn up by the relevant bodies (the Ministry of Education and the General Directorate for Girls’ Education). The civil education in question comprises: (a) literacy instruction for members of the armed forces (initial and continuation courses); (b) boys’ and girls’ schools (elementary, intermediate and secondary levels) in most military areas; (c) night schools at all levels (elementary, intermediate and secondary) for armed forces personnel.

Acting as the connecting link between the Ministry of Defence and Aviation and the other educational bodies in the kingdom. These are the Ministry of Education; the General Directorate for Girls’ Education; the General Directorate for Religious Colleges and Institutes; and various universities in the kingdom.

Sending armed forces personnel abroad for higher and university studies, with the consent of the relevant bodies in the Ministry of Defence and Aviation, or arranging for them to study at universities in the kingdom.

Training literacy instructors (initial and continuation courses) from among the non-commissioned officers of the armed forces, so as to avoid the use of non-Saudis, in accordance with regulations on military security.

An idea of the role played by this department in disseminating culture and combating illiteracy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can be gained from
Ministry of Defence and Aviation

Table 4: Comparative figures for literacy instruction in Ministry of Defence schools and the various literacy schools in the kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year (A.H.)</th>
<th>Number of Saudi students in literacy schools</th>
<th>Number of students of literacy in schools for members of the armed forces</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1395/96</td>
<td>46,818</td>
<td>8,615</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1396/97</td>
<td>47,164</td>
<td>5,714</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following data. The department's schools play an important part in disseminating education and culture among the personnel of the armed forces. For example: during the years A.H. 1395/96 and 1396/97, these schools were responsible for as much as 20 per cent of all literacy instruction in the kingdom. This shows the extent to which the primary objective of the department—the elimination of illiteracy in the armed forces—is being achieved. See Table 4.

There has been a notable increase in the number of initial-course literacy classes, as is clear from Figure 6. This course, which helps to promote educational awareness in the Saudi Armed Forces, is central to the work of the Department of Culture and Education.

Fig. 6. Increase in the number of initial-course literacy classes during the school years A.H. 1390/91 to 1397/98.
Fig. 7. Students for the school years A.H. 1390/91 to 1397/98.
National Guard

Department of Culture

The Department of Culture of the National Guard was created on 1 Rajab, A.H. 1395. Its tasks include:

Establishing schools for units of the guard. Proposing the introduction of changes in the curriculum and the general plan, in accordance with the special environment of the National Guard and the circumstances of its personnel. The department also suggests new scientific material which can be added to the general plan.

Providing technical supervision of the schools and teaching staffs, including guidance in the choice of the best modern educational methods which will provide the maximum benefit for the student in the shortest possible time.

Carrying out technical and administrative assessments of the teachers and directors of the schools.

Preparing budgetary projections based on class and student numbers and registers of those successfully completing the various courses from literacy up to secondary level.

Supervising examinations, issuing the necessary instructions and directives and monitoring their implementation.

Collecting comprehensive information about all departmental personnel (civilians, persons under contract and members of the Armed Forces) including full details of salaries, allowances and any other financial matters.

Supplying schools with textbooks, furniture, equipment, stationery, teaching aids, etc., as necessary.

The military and technical schools were established in A.H. 1384 at Khasm al-'An, with a cultural section responsible for the academic side of the work, which took the form of special study courses.

In A.H. 1392 an elementary school and an intermediate school were
National Guard

opened in the building of the Khasm al-'An, military and technical schools, and since then the number of schools, classes and pupils has increased constantly, as can be seen from Table 5.

**TABLE 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number of classes</th>
<th>Number of pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1395</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1395</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1395</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secondary day-school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1395/96</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1396/97</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1397/98</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>2,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1397/98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intermediate night-school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secondary day-school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secondary night-school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>2,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secondary day-school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1398/99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Secondary night-school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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