

RELIGIOUS, JUDICIAL, HAJJ AND UMRAH SERVICES

34.1 RELIGIOUS SERVICES

34.1.1 Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the cradle of revelation and Islam. The two Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah are destinations of pilgrims who assemble from all over the world to perform Hajj and Umrah. Ever since its inception, the Kingdom has been guided by Islamic teachings and principles, and this commitment is emphasized in the Basic Law. Hence, caring for the Holy Places has been a top priority of the successive development plans, which consistently sought to develop the two Holy Mosques so as to facilitate the performance of Hajj and Umrah.

Under the Eighth Development Plan, several mosques were built in all regions of the Kingdom, in response to population growth, urban development, and the expansion of call (Daawa) activities. Large numbers of the Holy Quran were printed and distributed around the world, and numerous Islamic books were translated. Workshops, lectures and seminars on various topics of interest to the Islamic world were held, and qualified advocates were dispatched. Furthermore, the Kingdom took the initiative of calling for dialogue among followers of religions and civilizations, and contributed at the highest levels to dialogue activities that were welcomed by the world community.

The Ninth Development Plan aims to continue to develop and improve the efficiency of all aspects of religious services, in order to keep pace with demographic changes and urban expansion. Moreover, activities to combat extremism and benefit from international openness, while maintaining Islamic traditions and values will be enhanced, as will be the dialogue with followers of other religions and cultures. In addition, the Ninth Development Plan aims to restructure religious endowments

(Awqaf), on the basis of a comprehensive strategy aimed at developing the Department of Awqaf and enhancing its role in social development.

This part of the chapter presents the current conditions of religious services, and the developments that took place under the Eighth Development Plan. It also reviews the key issues and challenges that need to be addressed under the Ninth Development Plan, assesses projected demand, the future vision and reviews the objectives and policies set for the sector under the Ninth Development Plan.

34.1.2 Current Conditions

34.1.2.1 Expansion of the Two Holy Mosques

Expansion of the Holy Mosque in Makkah under the Eighth Development Plan increased its absorptive capacity. Total area increased to 413 thousand m² by the end of the Plan, and work is underway to further enlarge it by about 632 thousand m², for the total area to become 1.04 million m², with a capacity of more than 2.25 million worshipers.

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A number of development projects were implemented in the Prophet's Holy Mosque in Medina to increase its absorptive capacity to more than one million worshipers. 250 sunshades were installed, covering 143 thousand m² surrounding all four sides, and utilities, parking and other services were added.

34.1.2.2 Caring for the Holy Quran

Over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan, the King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Quran in Madinah produced some 54 million copies of the Holy Quran, translations, books on the noble tradition of the Prophet (Sunna), and the Prophet's biography. In addition, there was great interest in learning the Holy Quran, and several national and international recital, exegesis and intonation contests of the Holy Quran were organized.

34.1.2.3 Caring for Mosques

Over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan, 4,500 mosques were established; bringing the total number in 2008 to more than 95 thousand. In addition, 449 mosques were rehabilitated in all regions (Table 34.1.1).

Under the Plan, committees were formed to select imams and muezzins according to criteria that give priority to qualified students of the Holy Quran and that emphasise moderation in behaviour and approach. In addition, several courses to train mosque staffs were held.

Table 34.1.1
Services of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments,
Call and Guidance
2008*

Region	Mosques (Jami')	Community Mosques (Masjid)	Ministry Branches	Awqaf Assets	Ministry Offices in Governorates	Quran-Learning Charities	Call (Daawa) Centres
Riyadh	3600	15300	1	357	19	28	8
Makkah	4320	9000	1	1052	11	18	6
Madinah	1900	2700	1	289	6	8	1
Qassim	2160	7200	1	78	10	14	3
Eastern Region	970	3420	1	186	11	4	2
Asir	2560	7530	1	2390	11	19	2
Tabuk	540	3060	1	22	5	8	1
Hail	1080	5220	1	356	3	9	1
Northern Borders	450	2520	1	3	2	4	1
Jazan	1800	8460	1	287	13	16	2
Najran	1000	2340	1	38	6	5	1
Baha	1260	3600	1	1990	6	10	1
Jawf	360	2880	1	57	2	5	1
Total	22000	73230*	13	7105	105	148	30

* Including mosques in stations and farms.

Source: Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance.

34.1.2.4 Development of Endowments (Awqaf)

Over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan, 1,088 Awqaf assets were accounted for and recorded, bringing the total in 2008 to 7,105. Efforts also continued to identify endowed assets and ascertain their title deeds. In addition, development and investment of endowed assets continued through various means, including: long-term leasing, establishing endowment investment funds, and partnering in development projects using the value of the assets concerned. Suitable investment assets were purchased to substitute endowed assets that have been removed in the public interest, and real-estate properties in the regions of Makkah and Madinah and Qassim were bought for investment from the surplus proceeds of endowments.

Awqaf libraries were supplied with reference books and periodicals, manuscripts were maintained, some libraries restored, several libraries opened in mosques in cities and governorates, women libraries were established, and qualified women to provide services to female researchers and students in these libraries were provided. Computers were introduced into Awqaf libraries, a network linking them together and with public libraries was established, and a website was set up for them. Moreover, forums, conferences and exhibitions were held in these libraries, and businessmen were invited to contribute support to them.

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34.1.2.5 Urging Compliance with Islamic Ethics

Under the Eighth Plan, numerous activities and programmes urging virtue and compliance with Islamic ethics were implemented, including activities by the Council of Call and Guidance, its general secretariat and its preparatory committee. These activities addressed a number of important issues, such as: the danger of misleading religious edicts (fatwas) and how to combat them with argument and evidence, means of combating intellectual invasion of Muslims, manifestations of deviation and how to address them, maintenance of security and preservation of the achievements of the country, and call (Daawa) institutions and their role in exposing erroneous, corrupting claims, etc.

The Institute for Imams and Preachers, in cooperation with the Mosques, Call and Guidance Agency, continued to implement numerous activities and programmes, including organizing lectures for imams and preachers, developing advocacy in youth welfare programmes, and utilizing sports clubs, in order to promote guidance and counselling programmes.

The General Presidency for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice contributes to urging adherence to good conduct, noble Islamic morals, guidance and advice. During the Eighth Development Plan, the Presidency further built its competencies and capabilities through several special training programmes for its employees. By the end of 2008, the number of facilities under the supervision of the Presidency was 474, including 13 branches in the administrative regions, 13 centres in the cities, 100 centres in the governorates, and 348 centres in administrative centres.

34.1.2.6 Institutional and Organizational Development

A number of agencies provide religious services. The Presidency of the Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque is responsible for looking after and maintaining the two Holy Mosques, in addition to preaching, raising awareness and guidance activities. The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance is responsible for overseeing, caring for and maintaining mosques (Jami') and community mosques (masjid) throughout the Kingdom; overseeing the learning of the Holy Quran and the Prophet's noble tradition (Sunnah); the call (Daawa) to God; supervising King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Quran; organizing national and international Holy Quran learning contest; and developing the charitable endowments (Awqaf), investing their resources and managing their assets. The Department of Scientific Research and Ifta' is responsible for issuing and disseminating religious edicts (Fatwas), in addition to undertaking and circulating scientific researches and studies.

Under the Eighth Development Plan, in an effort to develop the performance of the administrative units of the General Presidency for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, the Ministerial Sub-

Committee of the Ministerial Committee for Administrative Organization applied the approved new experimental organizational map to the administrative structure of the Presidency.

34.1.3 Issues and Challenges

34.1.3.1 Excess and Extremism

Islam is a religion of moderation and temperance. It abhors extremism, which is harmful to all aspects of economic and social life, impedes progress and stability of society, and distorts the perception of Islam by non-Muslims. Islam also forbids deviances from the right path and violent behaviour. The Ninth Plan aims to continue efforts to demonstrate the tolerance of Islam, and its rejection of fanaticism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations. Moreover, it aims at strengthening and consolidating moderation, protecting society from deviant thoughts and modes of behaviour, through outreach and counselling programmes designed to make youth aware of the threat of extremism, guide them to the correct path, and instil in them the sublime principles and values of Islam; all in cooperation and coordination with all parties concerned.

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34.1.3.2 Development of Endowed Assets

Awqaf are enduring charities that need to be continually developed so that they meet their goals. Moreover, they are a major component of the social sector of the economy. In spite of the achievements made, there is still a need for additional enhancement and promotion of the role of Awqaf in development.

Addressing this issue requires restructuring the affairs of Awqaf to put them in an institutional framework, as well as developing a comprehensive strategy with specific programmes covering all relevant aspects of their affairs. Most notably, there is a need for inventorying all Awqaf assets throughout the Kingdom, as well as for developing effective mechanisms to invest these assets and other resources and improve their economic efficiency. All this requires capable administration and qualified economic and finance competencies.

34.1.4 Demand Forecasts

Future demand for religious services is estimated on the basis of anticipated population growth and associated demographic developments, in addition to urban developments in the various regions; taking into account the current conditions of facilities and assessing the need for repairs or replacement over the coming period.

Estimates of the demand for religious services under the Ninth Development Plan point to the need for establishing about 400 mosques (Jami') and 600 community mosques (Masjid), fencing off about 165 venues for feast prayers, establishing 13 call (Daawa) centres, opening 29 outreach centres, re-building about 500 mosques (Masjid and Jami'), and constructing 34 administrative buildings (Table 34.1.2).

Table 34.1.2
Demand Forecast of Religious Services
by Region
Ninth Development Plan

Region	mosque (Jami')	Mosque (Masjid)	Administrative Buildings	Imam Housing	Fencing off Feast Prayers Venues	Call (Daawa) Centres	Outreach Centres	Rebuilding Mosques (Jami')	Rebuilding Mosques (Masjid)
Riyadh	55	70	5	26	25	1	0	26	40
Makkah	40	60	5	20	15	1	18	20	35
Madinah	30	60	3	20	10	1	1	20	25
Qassim	35	60	3	20	15	1	0	20	25
Eastern Region	35	60	3	20	15	1	4	20	25
Asir	35	60	3	20	15	1	1	20	25
Tabuk	20	40	2	10	10	1	1	10	15
Hail	15	30	2	8	7	1	0	8	20
Northern Borders	15	20	2	8	7	1	1	8	15
Jazan	50	60	3	20	19	1	1	20	30
Najran	30	30	1	10	10	1	1	10	15
Baha	15	20	1	8	7	1	1	8	15
Jawf	25	30	1	10	10	1	0	10	15
Total	400	600	34	200	165	13	29	200	300

Source: Ministry of Economy and Planning.

34.1.5 Development Strategy

34.1.5.1 Future Vision

The future vision of religious services is embodied in the Kingdom's determination, Government, people and institutions, to raise the efficiency and effectiveness of religious services, in harmony with the tolerant values and sublime ethical principles of Islam and the established virtues of tolerance and moderation. Moreover, Awqaf shall provide major support to economic and social development plans and programmes, in accordance with the role entrusted to them by Islam, particularly contributing to combating poverty and need, epitomizing the principle of social synergy and solidarity; which requires developing Awqaf to achieve these noble goals.

34.1.5.2 Objectives

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The key objectives set for religious services under the Ninth Development Plan are:

- Promoting recital and learning by heart and publication of the Holy Quran.
- Calling (Daawa) for following the path of God with wisdom and good preaching.
- Caring for and maintaining Houses of God.
- Strengthening the role of Awqaf in economic and social development.

34.1.5.3 Policies

Achieving the key objectives of the religious services under the Ninth Development Plan will be through the following policies:

- Continuing and enhancing the publications of King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Quran and promoting Quran and the Prophet's noble tradition (Sunnah) education.

- Supporting associations involved in learning the Holy Quran and Sunnah.
- Organizing annual national and international Holy Quran and Prophet's noble tradition (Sunnah) contests.
- Strengthening efforts to present the high ideals and sublime values of Islam, aimed at deepening love among all people and achieving justice and peace in the world.
- Highlighting the efforts of the state in support of humanitarian issues in Islamic and friendly countries.
- Encouraging young Muslims to recite and learn the Holy Quran by heart.
- Building and maintaining Houses of God and caring for their appearance and the quality of their services.
- Continuing efforts to inventory and list Awqaf assets and ascertain their legal deeds.
- Expanding investment of Awqaf assets and managing their recourses.
- Continuing efforts to qualify and improve the capabilities of preachers, in order to enable them to present the tolerant and moderate image of true Islam, and develop standards for evaluation of their performance.

34.1.6 Financial Requirements

The financial allocations for the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance under the Ninth Development Plan amount to SR 21.5 billion.

34.2 JUDICIAL SERVICES

34.2.1 Introduction

Availability of a comprehensive, efficient judicial system is the most important element of the regulatory and institutional environment of modern societies, for it offers to the community security, stability and protection of rights and preservation of justice. Under the Eighth Development Plan, there was rising demand for the judicial services provided by the Ministry of Justice, the Board of Grievances, the Bureau of Investigation and the Public Prosecutor. In addition, in order to develop judicial services and procedures further, the Law of the Judiciary and the Law of the Board of Grievances were passed. Furthermore, and in recognition of the importance of an efficient judiciary in the development process and in support of reform and development, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz' initiative of allocating some SR7 billion for the development of the judicial system was announced.

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The Ninth Development Plan aims at completing the implementation of the requirements of the judicial and the Board of Grievances systems; in particular, providing appropriate facilities and competent, specialist human capabilities and capacities, as well as strengthening managerial and technical capabilities. The Plan also aims at strengthening the capacity of the Bureau of Investigation and the Public Prosecutor, supporting them with qualified manpower and the necessary facilities and infrastructure.

This part of the chapter presents the current conditions of judiciary services, and the developments that took place under the Eighth Development Plan. It also reviews the key issues and challenges that need to be addressed under the Ninth Development Plan, assesses projected demand presents the future vision and reviews the objectives and policies set for the sector under the Ninth Plan.

34.2.2 Current Conditions

34.2.2.1 Judicial Services

Under the Eighth Development Plan, driven by the growth of economic activity, there was rising demand for many judicial services, such as administrative, commercial and financial transactions; dispute resolution; and protection of the rights of individuals and institutions. To meet this growing demand, 3 new appellate courts were added; as were 4 new general courts, bringing the total of the latter courts to 278, in addition to the other facilities that consist of: the Supreme Council of Magistracy, the Supreme Court, 6 appellate courts, and 29 specialized courts. In addition, more facilities are being built, including 8 complexes of legal departments in each of Buraydah, Hail, Tabuk, Jizan, Skaka, Khamis Mushayt, Dammam and Najran.

In addition to the main headquarters in Riyadh, the facilities of the Board of Grievances consist of one Appellate Court and seven administrative courts in seven regions. Six other administrative courts are being established in the remaining regions.

In an effort to facilitate judicial proceedings, seminars and workshops were held to discuss various relevant issues. Moreover, modern technologies were utilized to archive documents and facilitate other administrative work. In addition, new legal pleading offices started operation. These are offices where fact sheets, appointments, and preparation of adversaries are carried out in one hall in each court, thereby better organising workflow and saving time and effort.

34.2.2.2 Notaries Public

Driven by increased economic activity under the Eighth Development Plan, there was growing demand from diverse individuals and institutions for the services of notaries public. To meet this growing demand, the Ministry of Justice established more notaries public in various regions, bringing the total to 139. In addition, development to facilitate procedures by automating offices using the latest

technologies continued. Thus in 2008, more than two million Islamic bonds (sukuk) were issued, compared with about 1.6 million in 2004. Furthermore, the courts, which, alongside their main work, issue sukuk in areas that do not have notaries public, issued in 2008 a total of 130 thousand sukuk.

34.2.2.3 Investigation and Prosecution

The Bureau for Investigation and Prosecution carries out its tasks through its headquarters in Riyadh, 13 branches in the regions, and 77 investigation and prosecution departments in the governorates. In accordance with the law and regulations, the Bureau investigates crimes, prosecutes before judicial bodies, appeals rulings, supervises execution of criminal sentences, and monitors prisons and detention centres. It also examines cases of crimes committed abroad, if Saudi judicial bodies have jurisdiction over such cases under international regulations or international treaties to which the Kingdom is a party.

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The total number of cases investigated and prosecuted over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan was about 457 thousand, an average annual rate of 114 thousand. The number went up from about 92 thousand in 2004 to about 119 thousand in 2008. With regard to monitoring and inspection of correction and detention homes, the Bureau examines cases of prisoners and detainees to ensure their access to their rights and it oversees the correct application of sentences.

34.2.2.4 Raising Manpower Efficiency

Over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan, the total number of judges went up from 663 in 2004 to 715 judges in 2008, while the total number of notaries public went up from 305 in 2004 to 413 in 2008. As part of efforts to expedite the development of judicial services, Royal Decree No. 9715 / m b of 2007 stipulated the creation of 447 judicial jobs, in addition to a corresponding number of auxiliary administrative jobs.

To develop human capacities and capabilities, several training seminars for judges and notaries public were held, in collaboration with the Higher Institute of Justice. In addition, courses on financial and business issues were held, in collaboration with the Institute of Banking of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), and other specialized courses were held at the Institute of Public Administration and a number of other institutes in the Kingdom and abroad.

The number of judges of the Board of Grievances went up from 184 in 2004 to 303 judges in 2008. By the end of 2008, the total number of employees at the Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution was 4,087, and all were Saudis. About 2,469 staff members of the Board were trained over the first four years of the Plan, and 61 officers were sent to postgraduate studies in the Kingdom. Furthermore, in order to enhance competency and performance, a network linking all departments of the Bureau together is being established, and databases are being unified.

34.2.2.5 Institutional and Organizational Development

Under the Eighth Development Plan, there was significant progress of judicial services. The Law of the Judiciary and the Law of the Board of Grievances were issued by Royal Decree No. M / 78 of 2007. The two systems and their implementation mechanisms supplement preceding judicial systems, such as: the Law of Criminal Procedure, the System of Proceedings before Sharia Courts, and the Law Practice System. Together, they constitute a comprehensive structure, and an important institutional and regulatory development step towards keeping abreast of economic and social development and meeting their requirements.

The new Law of the Judiciary classified courts into three levels: the Supreme Court, Appellate Courts, and First-Degree Courts. The latter were also classified into five types of court according to specialisation: general courts, criminal courts, personal status courts, commercial courts, and labour courts.

The Law of the Board of Grievances instituted it as an independent administrative judicial body, and stipulated the establishment of an

Administrative Judicial Council, in addition to the formation of three courts; the High Administrative Court, the Administrative Courts of Appeals, and Administrative Courts. The Law identifies the powers, responsibilities and competencies of these courts.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice commenced the first phase of the application of the real estate registration system, which was approved by Royal Decree No. M / 6 of 2002, and which is aimed at preserving and protecting private and public property rights.

34.2.3 Issues and Challenges

34.2.3.1 The Judiciary Hierarchy

Regulations of the Board of Grievances and judicial systems established institutional and regulatory frameworks which provided the foundations for building a competent judicial system able to meet the requirements of economic and social development. However, to achieve the desired objectives, it is necessary to provide the requisite physical, administrative and human resources. Available data indicate that judicial services are in need of judges, notaries, and other competent personnel, in addition to the requirements of the specialized courts established under the new system of qualified personnel in various judicial specializations.

34.2.3.2 Suitable Buildings for Judicial Services

Provision of judicial services at the desired level requires facilities compatible with facilitation of processes and procedures. Only 17% of the premises of the Ministry of Justice are owned by it, the rest are leased and often do not meet the requirements of judicial services.

34.2.3.3 Specialized and Supervisory Jobs

The rapid growth of the number of investigation and prosecution cases and the increased control over prisons and detention centres over the past years resulted in deficits in the manpower needed to carry out

investigation, prosecution, control and inspection, and oversight of application of sentences. The provisions of the Code of the Criminal Procedure stipulate several tasks that should be undertaken by investigators within specified time periods, which has increased the work burden of investigation personnel. Hence, the next stage requires enhancing the capacity of the agency by adding manpower, intensifying qualification and training programmes to improve productivity of all personnel, and providing infrastructure and support programmes to improve efficiency.

34.2.3.4 Facilities of Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution

Currently, most of the investigation and prosecution premises are rented and do not provide conditions appropriate to the nature of work, which affects both productivity and efficiency. Providing an appropriate work environment requires establishment of departments that meet the requisite conditions.

34.2.4 Demand Forecasts

34.2.4.1 Judicial Services

To keep pace with the rising demand for judicial services, judges, lawyers, notaries, other support personnel, and various facilities need to be provided and distributed over all regions, according to the volume of judiciary adjudication cases. This volume is determined by several factors, including population growth, economic and social developments, and efficiency of the institutional and regulatory environments.

Estimates of expected demand for judicial services under the Ninth Development Plan and the requirements of implementing the new system of justice indicate a need for establishing 7 new appellate courts, 29 new general courts, 58 new specialist courts, as well as 33 new notaries.

Manpower estimates indicate that about 715 additional judges and 690 additional notaries will be needed. Moreover, a new Supreme Administrative Court, 3 appellate courts, and 5 administrative courts are required for the new Board of Grievances, with an estimated number of judges of about 460. With these additions, there will be under the Ninth Development Plan 8.8 judges per 100 thousand population, up from 4.2 at the end of the Eighth Development Plan.

Table 34.2.1 shows the estimates for all categories of courts by administrative region under the Ninth Development Plan.

Table 34.2.1
Forecast of the Number of Courts
by Category and Region
Ninth Development Plan

Region	2009			2014			Additions under the Plan		
	Appellate Courts	General Courts	Specialist Courts	Appellate Courts	General Courts	Specialist Courts	Appellate Courts	General Courts	Specialist Courts
Riyadh	1	55	5	1	58	13	0	3	8
Makkah	1	38	6	1	42	12	0	4	6
Madinah	–	14	2	1	23	6	1	9	4
Qassim	1	24	1	1	25	5	0	1	4
Eastern Region	1	27	7	1	30	15	0	3	8
Asir	1	44	2	1	47	8	0	3	6
Tabuk	–	9	1	1	10	4	1	1	3
Hail	–	14	1	1	17	4	1	3	3
Northern borders	–	7	0	1	7	3	1	0	3
Jazan	–	24	1	1	25	5	1	1	4
Najran	–	6	1	1	7	4	1	1	3
Baha	–	12	1	1	12	4	1	0	3
Jawf	1	4	1	1	4	4	0	0	3
Total	6	278	29	13	307	87	7	29	58

Source: Ministry of Economy and Planning.

34.2.4.2 Investigation and Prosecution

Economic, social and cultural developments under the Eighth Plan were accompanied by the emergence of previously unknown practices related to IT systems, money laundering and other economic issues. Several laws were issued criminalizing some such acts, and charging the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution with the responsibility for prosecuting them. This calls for developing the facilities and capabilities of the Bureau to enable it to perform its tasks efficiently and effectively.

Demand forecasts indicate that the Bureau will need to add 6 category A branches, 21 category B Departments, and 12 departments in cities.

34.2.5 Development Strategy

34.2.5.1 Future Vision

Development of judicial services in line with the judicial system, the Law of the Board of Grievances, and the Law of the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution, through establishing more appellate courts, general courts, criminal courts, specialist courts, and administrative courts in each administrative region to strengthen judicial capacity and efficiency in all regions; and development of investigation, prosecution, and inspection services, in order to ensure preservation of rights.

34.2.5.2 Objectives

The main objectives of judicial services during the Ninth Development Plan are:

- Developing and increasing the provision of judicial services in all regions.
- Enhancing the efficiency of social and economic judicial services.

- Developing and increasing the provision of investigation, prosecution, and inspection services in all regions.

34.2.5.3 Policies

Achieving the objectives set for the sector is contingent upon implementing the following policies:

- Increasing the number of Sharia and specialized courts, as provided for by the new Law of the Judiciary and the Law of the Board of Grievances
- Increasing the number of notaries public departments.
- Increasing the number of investigation and prosecution departments.
- Streamlining and facilitating procedures and methods of work.
- Increasing the number of judges, notaries public, and registrars, in order to satisfy the increasing demand for judicial services.
- Increased utilisation of modern technology in the courts, notaries public, and investigation and prosecution departments.

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34.2.6 Financial Requirements

Under the Ninth Development Plan the financial requirements are:

- Total financial requirements for judicial services are SR16.5 billion.
- Total financial requirements of the Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution are SR5.5 billion.

34.3 HAJJ AND UMRAH

34.3.1 Introduction

The Kingdom regards as an honour entrusted to it by God the services and facilities it provides to pilgrims and Umrah performers in Makkah and Madinah in a manner befitting the sanctity and status of the cradle of revelation and the launching of the message of Islam and peace to the world carried by the blessed Prophet. Under the Eighth Development Plan, the Holy Places were expanded significantly, the expansion of the Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque and the comprehensive development of bridges to the stone casting paths (Al-Jamrat) were monumental achievements that enabled pilgrims and visitors to conduct their worship and rituals comfortably and easily.

The Ministry of Hajj cares for pilgrims and Umrah performers within the framework of a comprehensive system involving several agencies, foremost among which are the Hajj Supreme Commission and the Hajj Central Committee. The Ministry also coordinates with officials in Islamic states and states with Muslim minorities and with Hajj missions to ensure that performers and visitors conduct their rituals comfortably and smoothly.

This part of the chapter presents the current conditions of Hajj and Umrah services, and the developments that took place under the Eighth Development Plan. It also reviews the key issues and challenges that need to be addressed under the Ninth Development Plan, assesses projected demand, presents the future vision and reviews the policies, objectives and targets set for the sector under the Ninth Plan.

34.3.2 Current Conditions

34.3.2.1 Overall Performance

Over the first four years of the Eighth Development Plan, the Ministry of Hajj supervised services provided to about 7.5 million pilgrims, a rate of 1.9 million pilgrims per year, in addition to more than 12

million Umrah performers, a rate of 3 million annually. The Ministry also supervised the activities of pilgrim guides in Makkah and Madinah; the agencies registering pilgrims at the Kingdom's entry points; the General Automobile Association; the local pilgrims services establishments; the Umrah services companies; the accommodation inspection committee; and the committees monitoring the activities of all organizations serving pilgrims both from within and from outside the Kingdom.

34.3.2.2 Development of the Holy Places

Under the Eighth Development Plan, organization and services at the Holy sites in Makkah improved steadily. The stone casting (Al-Jamrat) bridge and surrounding area project was implemented, to enable pilgrims to perform the rituals of casting stones easily and smoothly. Other projects designed to provide convenience to pilgrims and facilitate performance of rites include: expansion in use of sophisticated tents; continuing the terracing of parts of the mountains to accommodate the largest number of pilgrims; developing the water stations and reservoirs of the Holy Places; instituting an automated system for grouping pilgrims at the departure stage, through electronic connections with the General Authority of Civil Aviation and Saudi Arabian Airlines; developing centres to guide lost pilgrims in Arafat, and establishing guide centres in Madinah. In addition, a centre for grouping pilgrims was established on the Makkah-Jeddah highway, a standard model for services at points of entry was adopted, and regular communication and coordination with government agencies and private organizations involved in the affairs of Hajj and pilgrims was maintained.

Moreover, work continued on the development of transport services and facilities in the Holy Places to accommodate the projected increases in the number of pilgrims and Umrah performers visiting the Holy Mosque. Work began on the Haramain High Speed Rail Project, which will link the Two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Madinah via Rabigh and Jeddah.

34.3.2.3 Improving Performance of Agencies Responsible for Providing Hajj and Umrah Services

Under the Eighth Development Plan, efforts to develop the performance of agencies responsible for providing Hajj and Umrah services continued. Several committees were formed to monitor and evaluate the performance of domestic pilgrims companies and institutions in the Holy Places and various regions, to ensure their readiness and commitment to contractual conditions with the Pilgrims and Umrah performers. Moreover, the capacities of these committees were enhanced by trained manpower, and Royal Decree No. M / 58 of 2005 approving the internal pilgrims service system and its executive regulations contributed to the service efficiency.

A number of programmes aimed at raising the efficiency of manpower in providing Hajj and Umrah services were implemented, including 11 training programmes that trained 625 participants at the Hajj and Umrah Employees Training Centre, and training more than a thousand employees of the Ministry of Hajj at the Institute of Public Administration. A number of specialist workshops were also organized to improve and develop service levels.

34.3.2.4 Institutional and Organizational Development

In coordination with other relevant agencies, the Ministry of Hajj supervises services provided to pilgrims from arrival at ports of entry, during their stay in the Holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, until their departure. In addition, the Ministry supervises activities of pilgrim guide institutions and agencies; the General Automobile Association; transport companies of pilgrims and Umrah performers; internal pilgrimage services and the development of service establishments licensed for this work. It also participates in the work of the Supreme and Central Hajj committees and in the preparation and implementation of pilgrim grouping; and coordinates with all government agencies involved in Hajj and Umrah services, in order to consolidate efforts to provide service and comfort to pilgrims.

Council of Ministers Resolution No. 56 of 2009 approved the Organizational Manual of the Ministry of Hajj, which was put together by the Ministerial Committee for Administrative Organization. The Manual, which covers the Ministry of Hajj and its three branches in Makkah, Madinah and the district of Jeddah, was part of the enhanced administrative reform efforts by the Kingdom.

34.3.3 Issues and Challenges

34.3.3.1 Performing Rituals and Worship

Pilgrims and Umrah performers come from all over the world. They hail from varied nationalities and cultures; speak various languages; and come from several different social, economic, and educational backgrounds. Some lack correct understanding of the rituals of worship, or behave in an inappropriate manner in dealing with the Holy Places or in the uses of their facilities, which may cause inconvenience to other pilgrims.

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To address this challenge, there is a need for raising, through guidance and direction programmes, the awareness of pilgrims, Umrah performers and visitors; either during their performance of rituals or before they leave their countries. This requires continuous coordination and close cooperation with all the agencies involved, such as the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance; pilgrim guides institutions; and missions accompanying international pilgrims. The Ministry also needs to enhance coordination with the Hajj missions to organise workshops on proper performance of rituals, and ensure that before they come to the Holy Places, pilgrims are familiarized with the correct religious rites and provided with appropriate guidance material.

34.3.3.2 Developing Pilgrims Transportation

Congestion on modes of transport from and to the Holy Places represents both a challenge and an impediment to expanding capacity. Transport is still limited to buses and small private vehicles. The

increasing number of these vehicles and their slow movement caused by traffic jams lead to environmental pressures; principally, air and noise pollution. Hence, it is necessary to develop inside and outside the Holy Places a transport system that constitutes an adequate long-term solution. In particular, there is a need for developing fast electrical modes of transport in Makkah and other Holy Places.

34.3.4 Demand Forecasts

The number of pilgrims is expected to increase from about 1.97 million pilgrims in 2009, including about 1.78 million international pilgrims, to about 2.07 million pilgrims in 2014, of whom about 1.87 million are international pilgrims, reflecting an average annual growth rate of total pilgrims of 0.96%, and of international pilgrims of 0.99%.

The number of Umrah performers is forecast to rise from about 3.05 million pilgrims in 2009 to about 3.15 million pilgrims in 2014, an average annual growth rate of 0.65% (Table 34.3.1).

Table 34.3.1
Forecast of the Number of Pilgrims and Umrah Performers
Ninth Development Plan

Description	(in thousands)		
	2009	2014	Average Annual Growth Rate under the Plan (%)
Pilgrims from abroad	1780	1870	0.99
Domestic pilgrims	192	199	0.72
Total number of pilgrims	1972	2069	0.96
Number of Umrah performers	3050	3150	0.65

Source: Ministry of Hajj.

34.3.5 Development Strategy

34.3.5.1 Future Vision

Continuing to develop the Holy Places, expand facilities, and employ the latest technologies in their management, to enable pilgrims to perform the Hajj and Umrah rituals easily, smoothly and contentedly, in a clean and safe environment.

34.3.5.2 Objectives

The key objectives of the Hajj and Umrah services under the Ninth Development Plan are:

- Implementing the directives of the State regarding serving pilgrims and Umrah performers and providing the appropriate atmosphere for them to perform the rituals in safety and contentment.
- Raising the level of services provided to pilgrims and Umrah performers from arrival to land, air or sea ports of entry, during their stay in Makkah and Madinah, until their departure.
- Educating pilgrims and Umrah performers and familiarising them with regulations, rights and duties to enable them to perform rituals easily and smoothly.

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34.3.5.3 Policies

Achieving the above objectives is contingent upon implementing the following policies:

- Enhancing coordination with internal and external pilgrims institutions as regards developing the services provided to pilgrims.
- Developing guidance and grouping control centres, and increasing the numbers of guidance centres in Makkah and Madinah and other Holy Places.

- Intensifying awareness, counselling and guidance programmes to pilgrims prior to arrival at Makkah and Madinah and the Holy Places.
- Continuing coordination with the Hajj Central Committee, Islamic Hajj missions and other related government agencies, in order to provide pilgrims and Umrah performers with the best possible services.
- Continuing coordination with the relevant authorities to develop modes of transport.
- Developing the necessary and appropriate mechanisms to the requirements of each season, in order to ensure that appropriate services are provided to all pilgrims.

34.3.6 Financial Requirements

The financial allocations to the Ministry of Hajj under the Ninth Development Plan amount to SR3.2 billion.

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