

## SR652m projects for E. Jeddah

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JEDDAH - The Emir of Makkah, Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, has announced a range of new development projects for eastern Jeddah which includes bridges, drainage networks, a land discount initiative and homes and services for low income citizens.

The projects - which form part of orders issued by King Abdullah, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and approved by the Ministerial Committee under the chairmanship of Prince Naif, Second Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior - are estimated to cost SR652 million.

At a joint press conference with Jeddah Mayor Engineer Adel Fakeih held Sunday, Prince Khaled said an international company will come up with a vision for the districts of eastern Jeddah that fits in with the 21st century.

He said that during the deliberations of the Fact-Finding Committee, over 120 people were invited, including consultancies and government authorities, to a four-day workshop to discuss their vision for developing eastern Jeddah. The recommendations from this consultative workshop were the basis for the decisions of the Ministerial Committee.

Asked about the trenches and excavations in Jeddah, Prince Khaled said: "There is a development plan by the Jeddah Mayoralty to end this and it will be implemented soon."

As for the role of businessmen in the development process, the Emir said: "All the projects rely on Allah first and then on the participation of the public and private sectors. Among the decisions of the committee is that all government land should be approved for development. They will be offered to businessmen in all the regions of the Kingdom."

He said seven bridges will be constructed in the vicinity of the Al-Haramain Road. Sanitation drainage canals will also be built. He pointed out that the area targeted for development is located between Al-Haramain Road and the new ring road.

Answering a question, Prince Khaled said the planned districts east of the highway "have been studied by a number of authorities and that within the next three weeks the final and new boundaries of the planned districts will be announced".

Prince Khaled added that people who own buildings on land, for which they do not have title deeds, will be allocated an alternative plot of 650 square meters free of charge. Land over this size, up to 900 square meters, will be sold at half the market-related price. Land over 900 square meters will be sold at the full price, he said.

The Emir said three monitoring centers will be established in the north, middle and southern parts of the area to monitor for encroachments. He said any new illegal construction on government-owned land will be demolished immediately. As an extra precaution, aerial photography of these areas started several months ago.

Saudi Gazette reported last month that government has cleared a staggering 220 million square meters of land which had been encroached upon in the city.

Among the most encroached areas and land includes the Hada Al-Sham Road, the eastern forest in Jeddah, wetlands and extension of Falastin Street to the east, in addition to land which belongs to the Industrial Cities Commission in southern Jeddah.

### Compensation

Meanwhile, also at Sunday's press conference, Jeddah's mayor said compensation will only be paid out to those with legal title deeds. "There will be no compensation for encroachers, who do not hold title deeds," he stressed.

Fakeih also disclosed that he has received studies conducted by the Saudi Geological Survey concerning the construction of three dams. Fakeih added that a canal will be constructed east of the second ring road, linking it to the sea in the north and south of the governorate, to protect the area from floods.

### Projects budget

Fakeih estimated that the budget will be SR652 million for the various projects and studies on developments in eastern Jeddah.

The projects include the maintenance and reinforcing of existing flood canals. This will see the extension of the eastern canal to Sharm Obhur; and reinforcing the southern canal's bed and walls and linking it to the sea.

There will also be urgent solutions implemented for the valleys of Qows, Mashoob and Ghulail.

Fakeih said a digital map is being prepared for all plots of land whether it has title deeds or not. This will be for the whole area. Also, a general plan will be prepared for eastern Jeddah by an international consultant.

He added that the Ministerial Committee has asked the Ministry of Justice to issue title deeds for open land located east of the highway for the Jeddah Company for Urban Development.

The company will be tasked with a number of other development projects in Jeddah, including the rehabilitation of the seafront and the Historical Area.