

### Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive

Recently the Saudi Foreign Ministry announced that a royal decree had been issued, allowing women to drive in the Kingdom from June 2018. This is a landmark step for the ultra-conservative country.

Saudi Arabian women have been celebrating the news that they will finally be able to drive. Currently, they still need either a male member of their family, or a male chauffeur, to get around. Many women have previously been jailed for trying to drive in the Kingdom.

The gains will be enormous for the oil rich country, as women will now not need to spend vast amounts of their salaries on hiring male drivers, so their spending power will thus increase.

For years, activists inside the country, and outside it, have been campaigning the Saudi authorities to allow women to drive a car. The change of heart will have huge implications for the country. It will allow Saudi women the freedom to do what most other women do, in practically every country in the world.

Opponents of women being allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia have suddenly gone very quiet. Saudi women, however, are expecting a backlash from extreme Islamists in the Kingdom.

So why has the Saudi government done this now? One reason is economic stagnation. The country needs to start diversifying itself away from its huge dependency on oil. It needs women to help do this.

Saudi Arabia is beginning to slowly reform its economy. This is largely thanks to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who in June 2017 was appointed by his father, to spearhead a plan, to reform and transform the country's economy by 2030. This includes more women in the work place. Saudi women can look forward to more autonomy, and the freedom to compete in more sports.

Saudi Arabia still has numerous curbs on women that are strictly enforced by the religious police.

### SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about Saudi Arabia. Go round the room swapping details with others.

### LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

### READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

### SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

**1) The article** – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

**2) The article** - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

**3) Article quiz** - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

### Student A questions

- 1) Where is Saudi Arabia?
- 2) What is 'a royal decree'?
- 3) What will women be able to do now?
- 4) What had activists been doing?
- 5) What have opponents said?

### Student B questions

- 1) Name the prince.
- 2) What has the prince been tasked to do?
- 3) What are religious police?
- 4) What is Saudi Arabia currently dependent on?
- 5) Why has the Saudi government had a sudden change of heart?

## Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs.* On the board write as many words as you can about '**Saudi women given freedom to drive**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs* – Think of three things about Saudi women. Write them below. Discuss!

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Add three more changes that might benefit Saudi women in the future. Talk about them!

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

### SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 3 - IDEAS

*In pairs/As a class* - Think of three suggestions you would give to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to reform the Saudi economy by 2030. Write them below. Talk about them. *3 mins.*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

### DISCUSSION

#### Student A questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) What will the current Saudi male chauffeurs do when Saudi women are able to drive themselves?
- 3) How much change is needed in Saudi Arabia?
- 4) Where does the oil come from in your country?
- 5) Would you like to go to Saudi Arabia for a holiday? Explain.
- 6) Do you know anyone who lives and works in Saudi Arabia?
- 7) What jobs might be suitable for Saudi women to do once they can legally drive a car?
- 8) Do you have economic stagnation in your country?
- 9) What is the future like for Saudi Arabia?
- 10) What have the opponents of women drivers in Saudi Arabia said?

### SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

*In groups.* One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive.*

- 1) A Saudi woman.
- 2) A Saudi businessman.
- 3) A religious Islamist.
- 4) A woman with western values.

**The teacher** will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

### SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

*In pairs* - *Student A* is for women driving in Saudi Arabia. *Student B* is a religious extremist. You are against women driving in Saudi Arabia. *3 mins.*

### SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

*Allow 5-10 minutes* – As a class.

### Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive

**The teacher** can moderate the session.

### DISCUSSION

#### Student B questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Why is Saudi Arabia still so repressive against women?
- 3) Does the price of oil affect the Saudi economy? Explain.
- 4) What jobs can foreigners do in Saudi Arabia?
- 5) Can Saudi women look forward to more autonomy?
- 6) Why do Saudi men have so much hold over their women still?
- 7) What advice would you give a Saudi woman?
- 8) Could allowing Saudi women to drive help boost the Saudi economy?
- 9) Will Saudi Arabia be able to diversify away from oil, in order to create new jobs?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

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**GAP FILL: READING**

**Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive**

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Saudi Arabian women have been celebrating the news that they will finally be able to drive. Currently, they still need either a male member of their family, or a male (2)\_\_\_, to get around. Many women have previously been jailed for trying to drive in the Kingdom. The gains will be enormous for the (3)\_\_\_ rich country, as women will now not need to spend (4)\_\_\_ amounts of their (5)\_\_\_ on hiring male drivers, so their spending power will thus increase.

For years, (6)\_\_\_ inside the country, and outside it, have been campaigning the Saudi authorities to allow women to drive a car. The change of heart will have huge (7)\_\_\_ for the country. It will allow Saudi women the (8)\_\_\_ to do what most other women do, in practically every country in the world.

**implications / vast / freedom / chauffeur / salaries / royal decree / oil / activists /**

(1)\_\_\_ of women being allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia have suddenly gone very (2)\_\_\_ . Saudi women, however, are expecting a (3)\_\_\_ from (4)\_\_\_ Islamists in the Kingdom.

So why has the Saudi government done this now? One reason is economic (5)\_\_\_ . The country needs to start diversifying itself away from its huge dependency on oil. It needs women to help do this.

Saudi Arabia is beginning to slowly (6)\_\_\_ its economy. This is largely thanks to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who in June 2017 was appointed by his father, to spearhead a plan, to reform and transform the country's economy by 2030. This includes more women in the work place. Saudi women can look forward to more (7)\_\_\_ , and the freedom to (8)\_\_\_ in more sports.

**autonomy / reform / stagnation / compete / extreme / backlash / opponents / quiet /**

**GAP FILL: GRAMMAR**

**Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive**

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Saudi Arabian women have been celebrating the news that they will finally be able to drive. Currently, they (2)\_\_\_ need (3)\_\_\_ a male member of their family, or a male chauffeur, to get around. (4)\_\_\_ women have previously been jailed for trying to drive in the Kingdom. The gains will be enormous for the oil rich country, as women will now not need to spend vast amounts of (5)\_\_\_ salaries on hiring male drivers, so their spending power will (6)\_\_\_ increase.

For years, activists inside the country, and outside it, have been campaigning the Saudi authorities to allow women to drive a car. The change of heart will have huge implications for the country. It will allow Saudi women the freedom to do (7)\_\_\_ (8)\_\_\_ other women do, in practically every country in the world.

**most / what / many / their / that / still / thus / either**

Opponents (1)\_\_\_ women being allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia have suddenly gone very quiet. Saudi women, however, are expecting a backlash from extreme Islamists (2)\_\_\_ the Kingdom.

(3)\_\_\_ (4)\_\_\_ has the Saudi government done this now? One reason is economic stagnation. The country needs to start diversifying itself away from its huge dependency on oil. (5)\_\_\_ needs women to help do this.

Saudi Arabia is beginning to slowly reform (6)\_\_\_ economy. This is largely thanks to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who in June 2017 was appointed by (7)\_\_\_ father, to spearhead a plan, to reform and transform the country's economy (8)\_\_\_ 2030. This includes more women in the work place. Saudi women can look forward to more autonomy, and the freedom to compete in more sports.

**by / it / so / in / of / his / why / its**

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### GAP FILL: LISTENING

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are expecting a backlash from extreme Islamists in the Kingdom.

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### WRITING/SPELLING

#### WRITING / SPEAKING

**1) On the board** - In pairs/As a class, list **20 different things about Saudi Arabia**. Talk about each of them. *Five minutes*.

**2) Sentence starters** - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) Saudi Arabia \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Saudi women \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) I think \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Write down 50 words about: *Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive***. Your words can be read out in class.

**4) Homework** - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: ***Saudi Arabia agrees to let women drive***.

#### SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) practically
- 2) government
- 3) opponents
- 4) implications
- 5) quiet
- 6) suddenly
- 7) extreme
- 8) backlash
- 9) stagnation
- 10) economic

#### SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

**Pass = 12**  
**Good = 15**  
**Very good = 18**  
**Excellent = 20**

- 11) dependency
- 12) beginning
- 13) spearhead
- 14) transform
- 15) autonomy
- 16) compete
- 17) religious
- 18) numerous
- 19) landmark
- 20) conservative

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