



Saudi Arabian Prince Miteb bin Abdullah at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France (file)

# Saudi prince freed in \$1bn deal: official

**Riyadh**  
Senior Saudi Arabian prince Miteb bin Abdullah has been freed after agreeing to pay over \$1 billion to settle corruption allegations against him, a Saudi official said on Wednesday.

Miteb, 65, son of the late King Abdullah and former head of the elite National Guard, was among dozens of royal family members, high officials and senior businessmen rounded up this month in a crackdown on graft.

The official, who is involved in the crackdown and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Miteb was released on Tuesday after reaching "an acceptable settlement agreement". The official said he believed the agreed sum to be the equivalent of over \$1 billion.

"It is understood that the settlement included admitting corruption involving known cases," the official said, without giving details.

According to the official, Prince Miteb was accused of embezzlement, hiring ghost employees and awarding contracts to his own firms, including a deal for walkie talkies and bulletproof military gear. Prince Miteb is the first senior figure known to be released among those detained. Around 200 people in total have been questioned in the crackdown, authorities said earlier this month.

The allegations, which include kickbacks, inflating government contracts, extortion and bribery, could not be independently verified.

Saudi authorities, who

estimate they could eventually recover around \$100 billion of illicit funds, have been working on reaching agreements with suspects detained at Riyadh's luxurious Ritz Carlton hotel, asking them to hand over assets and cash in return for their freedom.

Apart from Miteb, the Saudi official said that at least three other suspects had finalised settlement agreements and that the public prosecutor had decided to release several individuals.

The prosecutor has decided to put at least five people on trial, the official said without disclosing their identities.

The fate of billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, chairman of investment firm Kingdom Holding and one of Saudi Arabia's most prominent

international businessmen, was not known.

Two Saudi sources told Reuters that Prince Alwaleed

has so far refused to reach a settlement and had asked for access to his lawyer in order to fight allegations against him.

Relatives, his lawyer and officials in his office could not be contacted to comment. (Reuters)

## CAT FESTIVAL

DT News Network  
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Bahrain's first ever cat festival, Meow Day 2017 will be held on 1st December from 4 to 10pm at the pavilion in Adhari Park.

The festival, organised by 1984 PR in collaboration with Directions PR and Events, which is sponsored by Lulu Hypermarket, will offer visitors several feline-themed activities, including a beauty pageant and a "cat race" for cat owners who have opted to bring their cats following a pre-festival registration and approval process.

Bahrain Rescues, a group of active animal rescuers in the Kingdom, will also be present



Representative picture

at the festival with a number of cats up for adoption.

Dr. Nonie Coutts Veterinary Surgery, Advanced Veterinary Clinic, Pets Cabana, and Black Power Pets Store will be exhibiting their pet products and services at the festival. In addition, there will be several artists offering visitors the rare chance of drawing their cats and selling other cat-themed arts and crafts, while Bahrain

Writers' Circle, a group of local writers and poets, will be providing custom-made poetry and short stories on request.

Other festival activities include a screening of funny cat videos, trivia quiz with prizes, and face painting for kids.

For more information follow Instagram: @meowdaybh or visit Facebook page: fb.com/meowdaybh.

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