

Saudi Arabia To Participate In Miss Universe

Why In News

- Saudi Arabia has achieved a significant milestone by officially entering the **Miss Universe pageant** this year for the first time. The global event is set to take place in Mexico on September 18.



All You Need To Know

- Saudi Arabia officially joined the Miss Universe pageant with **Romy Alqahtani** as the Islamic country's **first-ever representative**.
- This is another step for Saudi Arabia, which has been shedding its conservative cloak under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud.



- **Rumy Alqahtani, a 27-year-old model**, shared on Instagram that she would be the first participant from the country in the international beauty pageant. "This is the first participation of Saudi Arabia in the Miss Universe competition," Rumy wrote on Instagram.
- This is the **first time that Saudi Arabia** will be participating in the Miss Universe beauty pageant, Along with the photos, she wrote, "I am honoured to participate in the Miss Universe 2024 competition."



- This is the **first participation of Saudi Arabia** in the Miss Universe competition," she wrote in Arabic on Instagram.
- According to the Khaleej Times, born in Riyadh, Alqahtani is no stranger to the spotlight. She has joined numerous global pageants, with the latest one being Miss and Mrs Global Asian in Malaysia a few weeks ago.
- Last year, **Miss Nicaragua Sheynnis Palacios** was crowned Miss Universe 2023.
- For the first time, a **contestant from Nicaragua** became the winner of the contest while Antonia Porsild from Thailand and Moraya Wilson from Australia secured the second and third positions respectively.



Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's Reforms

- Saudi Arabia, long known for its conservatism, is currently undergoing a transformation under the leadership of 38-year-old Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, an avid 'Call of Duty' player.



- The Crown Prince is often seen in a full-faced beard, dressed in a traditional Arab robe, and sandals. As the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, Saudi Arabia has historically maintained strict social and religious control.
- However, recent months have seen a loosening of these tight restrictions.

- This shift has garnered attention worldwide, particularly with the lifting of constraints on women, allowing them to drive, attend mixed-gender events, and apply for passports without male guardianship.
- Moreover, **Saudi Arabia, known for its stringent** alcohol prohibition, has agreed to permit non-Muslim diplomats to purchase alcohol.