

Upending royal succession, Saudi king replaces crown prince with son

21/06/2017 09:46 by admin

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia's King Salman today appointed his 31-year-old son Mohammed bin Salman as crown prince, upending the line of succession in the kingdom by removing previous prince Mohammed bin Nayef. In a series of royal decrees issued Wednesday and carried on the state-run Saudi Press Agency, the monarch stripped Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, who was first in line to the throne, from his title as crown prince and from his post as the country's powerful interior minister overseeing security.

Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been named Crown Prince

As interior minister, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef was responsible for the country's counterterrorism operation and was a well-known figure in the US as well as other countries.

"Relieving Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of his posts of Crown Prince, Deputy Premier and Interior Minister. Selecting Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz as the Crown Prince and appointing him as the Deputy Premier with his continuation as the Minister of Defense," the Royal order, posted on Saudi Press Agency's Twitter account said.

The newly announced Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who also serves as defence minister and oversees a vast economic portfolio, had previously been second in line to the throne, though royal watchers had long suspected his quick rise to power might accelerate his inheriting of the throne.

The young prince was little known to Saudis and outsiders before Salman became king in January 2015. He had previously been in charge of his father's royal court when Salman was the crown prince.

The Saudi monarch, who holds near absolute powers, quickly awarded his son expansive powers to the surprise of many within the royal family who are more senior and more experienced than Mohammed bin Salman, also known as MBS.

- (With AP inputs)