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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Saudi Shi'ites protest, support Bahrain brethren (Reuters)

DUBAI (Reuters) - Saudi Shi'ites marched in the kingdom's oil-producing east on Wednesday, demanding the release of prisoners and voicing support for Shi'ites in nearby Bahrain, an activist and witnesses said.

One Saudi Shi'ite activist said hundreds attended several protests including one in the eastern region's main Shi'ite centre, Qatif, to show their backing for Bahraini Shi'ites who are protesting against the Sunni royal family.

Bahraini forces used tanks and helicopters to drive protesters from the streets on Wednesday, clearing a camp that had become a symbol of the Shi'ite Muslim uprising and drawing rare criticism from their U.S. allies.

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