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# ALJ center starts Japanese language course

K.S. RAMKUMAR | ARAB NEWS

JEDDAH: A Japanese course has been introduced following an increasing demand to learn the language from Saudi students and businessmen. The course is being held at the Abdul Latif Jameel (ALJ) Center for Continuous Learning.

"Many Saudis were keen to learn our language due to their heightened interest in our culture, so I was considering a proposal to introduce a course at the consulate. In the meantime, Mohammed Jameel, president of the Abdul Latif Jameel Group, told me he would himself take the initiative," Japanese Consul General Toshimitsu Ishigure told Arab News.

Ishigure, who interacted with

the students and instructors during a visit to the center, which is located behind the ALJ Group's head office, said at present 10 Saudis were taking the course that would continue up to March 30.

After that a second batch will be enrolled for the course lasting two and a half months, he added.

During his visit, Ishigure urged the ALJ center to organize a similar Japanese language course for women, especially as Saudi girls are interested in learning various aspects of the Japanese culture, such as manga, animation and ikebana.

Japanese manga, as comics are called in Japan, are featured on television and in newspapers and the most popular works have been introduced abroad.

Japanese animation films are



**NEW INTEREST:** Japan's Consul General Toshimitsu Ishigure, center, with some of the students and instructors of Japanese at the ALJ Training Center in Jeddah. (AN photo)

becoming popular locally as they are shown regularly on Arab television channels.

Ikebana is the traditional Japanese flower arrangement, which is known the world over.