

Al Qaida clerics distributing revised editions of Koran

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August 27, 2007

ABU DHABI — Qatar has banned the import and distribution of unauthorized Korans. Officials said the Islamic Affairs Ministry has ordered mosques and clerics to use only Korans and other Islamic text approved by the government, Middle East Newsline reported.

They said Al Qaida-aligned clerics have employed Korans revised to promote the doctrine of Islamic war against the West.

"This is one of several measures by the ministry to ensure that no copies of the Koran that contains mistakes would be circulated in the country," Mohammed Bin Hamad Ajlan

Al Kuwari, director of inspections at the ministry, said.

Officials acknowledged that Korans revised by Al Qaida-aligned clerics have been distributed in Qatar. They said some of chapters in the Islamic text were removed. The Qatari daily Al Sharq reported that an unidentified Qatari national has financed the publication and distribution of the revised Korans. The newspaper quoted Qatari sources as saying that many

such Korans had been sent to the Gulf emirate.

Officials, who cited similar initiatives from other Gulf Cooperation Council states, said the Islamic Affairs Ministry has warned mosques and clerics not to accept donations of Korans without official

permission. They said the ministry has established a panel to examine Korans to ensure that they had not been revised.

Al Kuwari said Qatar would ban the import of Korans unless they had been examined and approved by his ministry. He said Doha has already blocked shipments of Korans from unidentified countries.