



National Day of Saudi Arabia



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LATE KING ABDUL AZIZ AL-SAUD



HISTORIANS are unanimous that King Abdul Aziz (1880-1953), the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is among the century's most prominent leaders. English, French, American, German as well as Arab historians have authored several books about the unique personality of King Abdul Aziz which won him world acclaim. He was motivated by a clear thought which overwhelmed his mind and soul. To restore the glory of his ancestors and serve the religion. To fulfill his dreams he devoted to studying and memorizing the Holy Quran. A number of scholars taught him religious subjects, Arabic language, history and other topics.

At the same time he focused on mastering the skills of knighthood and warfare, turning into a daring knight and courageous fighter. Allah so willed that he should remain on his horse back for almost 31 years until he achieved his greatest victory by establishing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It started in 1902 (1319 H) when he left Kuwait at the head of a 60-man force on his way to Riyadh, which he recaptured depending on Allah, the Supreme, and the people's loyalty to him and his father. Therefrom, he continued his 'Jihad' (Holy Struggle) in the way of Allah for 31 years, during which he was able to lay the foundations of a vast state enjoying security, justice and stability under the banner declaring "there is no God but Allah and Muhammad (pbuh) is His Messenger".

A MULTI-FACETED MAN WITH HIGH OBJECTIVES: Among the most important objectives King Abdul Aziz had worked hard to achieve, was the implementation throughout his Kingdom of the Islamic Sharia, advocating justice, love and the establishment of a righteous society whose members unite to realize their collective interests and achieve modernization while preserving their values and the tenets of their religion. As a result of the implementation of the Islamic Sharia,

King Abdul Aziz established an unparalleled state of security and stability throughout his Kingdom which is considered even today, a basic characteristic of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. **MILESTONES:** Undoubtedly, late King Abdul Aziz was a multi-faceted man. As he successfully waged his military and political battles, he also conducted the battles of construction and economic development with equal success. Thus laying down the first

foundations of the comprehensive development and renaissance enjoyed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia today. Although the country's financial resources were too meagre, compared with the requirements and aspirations, this did not prevent Abdul Aziz from immediately launching the construction of his state, using available resources. The most important aspects of this construction were:

1. Ensuring security, justice and stability; and protecting the lives and properties of pilgrims and visitors of the Holy Places, and the Kingdom in general, effectively uprooting all attempts aiming at disturbing these achievements.
2. The rehabilitation of Bedouins who used to roam the country in search of water and grazing land. King Abdul Aziz built small villages called 'Hijaz', in which he accommodated continuous travel and motivating them to take up farming and education in their new communities.
3. King Abdul Aziz believed in education as the only means for achieving the development of the country. Hence, he was keen to establish schools and send some of the Kingdom's youths on scholarships abroad to receive higher education in various specializations.
4. The foremost priority for King Abdul Aziz was to establish modern means of communications and transport for his vast country. He started to construct roads and introduce modern means of communications to link distant cities and villages of the country.
5. King Abdul Aziz also paid attention to agriculture and tapping water resources, establishing a large agricultural project in Al-Kharj region, south of Riyadh, which utilised spring waters for agricultural purposes using engineering techniques.
6. As part of his attention to introduce various means of transport, he built a railway line linking the Kingdom's Eastern Province with the capital city of Riyadh.

In brief, King Abdul Aziz left the doors of his country wide open for useful modern technology, thus laying the foundations for the rapid development accomplished by the Kingdom. He passed away in 1953 (1373 H) after a heroic and glorious life, characterised by 'Jihad' for the cause of Islam, unification of the country and laying the strong foundations of the Kingdom.

KING FAHD BIN ABDUL AZIZ The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques



BORN in Riyadh in 1924, Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz was proclaimed King on 13th January 1982.

In December 1986 King Fahd assumed the title of "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques". In course of a decree, he stated that this title was more in keeping with his mission in life and was more suitable to previous glorifying titles.

King Fahd has played a prominent role in the development of Saudi Arabia. He is gifted in his own right and has lived up to all expectations, having been given increasing responsibility throughout his life. His father late King Abdul Aziz, had often sent him on official missions abroad. Even as a young man he displayed remarkable qualities of leadership and had a great thirst for knowledge. He possesses a strong personality and this has enabled him to carry through the development of the country into a modern nation. He saw at first hand how his father had handled government affairs, made decisions on policy matters and death with the general public. During the reigns of his father and brothers, King Fahd had taken responsibility on many and various issues. In 1953 he was appointed First Minister for Education and had a profound influence on the development of education in the Kingdom.

In 1963 he became Minister of the Interior and helped to modernise and develop ministries, founding schools and institutions to train the police forces and other ministry staff. He also established the school of modern languages, the athletics college, the trainer driving school, the police academy (now known as the King Fahd Security Academy), the international firing range and the military training academy. In 1964 he was appointed Second Deputy Premier in addition to his other responsibilities, and he chaired several sessions of the Council of Ministers.

In 1975 King Khalid appointed him Crown Prince and First Deputy Premier, which gave him added responsibilities. The institutions under his control included the Supreme Councils for Petroleum and Minerals, Universities, the Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, Youth Welfare, and the Hajj (Pilgrimage).

When King Khalid died on 12th June 1983, Prince Fahd succeeded him and appointed Prince Abdullah bin Abdelaziz as Crown Prince and First Deputy Premier, with responsibility of the National Guard.

King Fahd also appointed Prince Sultan bin Abdelaziz (Minister of De-

fence and Aviation and Inspector General) to be Second Deputy Premier. On his accession to the Throne, King Fahd's main concern was the implementation of the development plans which have been of much great benefit to the country's achievements. On the international scene, King Fahd is noted for his wisdom, sensitivity and moderation, especially in the Arab and Islamic world. During his reign, Saudi Arabia has achieved great prominence in world affairs.

ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY: King Fahd has worked hard to achieve Islamic solidarity, especially at Islamic summits, the Islamic Conference Organisation and the Muslim World League and other organisations. In 1981 the Third Islamic Summit was held in Mecca and Makkah Al-Mukarramah near the Al-Kaba (the Sacred House of God).

The King's promotion of Islam and his encouragement of greater cooperation among Islamic countries to rein-

force their ties have been considerable. He has visited most Arab and Islamic countries, and these visits have improved harmonisation and solidarity. He is also an avowed supporter of Islamic centres and societies, in line with the policy of the Kingdom. Expansion of the two Holy Mosques at Makkah and Madinah at a cost of about sixty billion riyals under his direct guidance have earned him world wide acclaim.

A MEDIATOR: King Fahd has played a leading role in attempting to resolve Arab problems and issues. He has visited Arab capitals and has taken part in summits and conferences. He has also acted as a mediator in disputes among Arab countries to resolve their differences.

The most important issue remains the Palestinian cause, and King Fahd has been involved for more than a quarter of a century in fighting for the rights of the Palestinian people and to explain the justice of their cause to other world leaders.

He has been closely involved in seeking a lasting solution to the Middle East problem, and has put forward an eight point peace plan. This was approved in September 1983 by all Arab states during the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference in Fez, Morocco, and adopted by the Islamic Summit Conference in Casablanca, Morocco. Many world leaders regard the King Fahd peace plan as a firm basis for achieving peace and stability in the region.

With regard to Lebanon, King Fahd has made every possible effort to bring the warring factions together to seek a peaceful solution, and he has also given humanitarian and economic aid. In 1989 he convened the Taif Reconciliation Conference which restored calm to Lebanon.

King Fahd, in conjunction with other Arab countries in the Gulf and the Arab League, formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a powerful body aimed at strengthening co-operation between member countries and establishing an Arab shield. The GCC has been effective in confronting dangerous incidents such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Saudi Arabia put its full weight behind the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of the rule of law among nations.

MAN OF PEACE: Saudi Arabia is an active member of the United Nations, and takes pride in being a founder member. The Kingdom is committed to strengthening the organisation and its agencies, and supports it with economic and political aid.

Saudi Arabia's prominent position in the world is appreciated by many nations, especially by the countries that encompass more than one billion Arabs and Muslims. In spite of changes on the international scene, the Kingdom's position has been strengthened over the past decades by official visits King Fahd has paid to a large number of countries. Saudi Arabia has constantly aimed at establishing solid relations with other countries, and the King has taken a firm stand to overcome political and economic crises. A typical example is his historic role in regulating oil prices and production volume by OPEC member states. His influence in the oil industry has been a vital factor in the stabilisation of prices. He has always taken into account the need for world peace and the interests of other states. His wisdom, sensitivity, sense of justice and desire for peace have prompted world leaders to proclaim him 'The Man of Peace' for decades.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A Profile

THE Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has achieved sincere acclaim of the developing world for its spectacular economic and social growth which resulted from its well-thought-out development plans. Expressing optimism about this

continent at a crossroads between the ancient continents of Africa, Asia and Europe. It is bordered to the North by Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait, and by Oman and Yemen to the South. To its East is the Arabian Gulf. Bahrain, Qatar and the United

All Saudis speak Arabic. English is taught in all levels of education. **Climate:** The climate of Saudi Arabia varies with the

different topographical features of the country. In general, however, the climate of the Kingdom can be considered as hot. *Continued on Page 14*



growth, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, says: "We have to move ahead with the process of development that has been initiated in various fields, thanks to God and to the efforts provided by the citizens of this generous country. This would allow us, Insha Allah, to complete what we have started in accordance with the five-year plans that have achieved their goals so far with great success. The Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz while speaking about the secret of success maintains: "The State's policy is to mobilize all the resources available to achieve different programmes of social and economic development, those programmes which aim at the promotion of the citizens' standard of living in rural as well as in urban areas and the fulfilment of social well-being for all." In course of an Eid-ul-Azha statement in April this year their excellencies observed: "We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia do our best to help the pilgrims perform their devotions in comfort and at their ease. We owe to God the success with which we have met in our endeavours to provide our brothers, the pilgrims, with the kind of facilities they need most in order to be able to perform their devotions."

Area: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia covers 80% of the total area of the Arabian Peninsula. Its area is approximately 2,240,000 sq. km. **Topography:** The topography of the Kingdom is varied. There is the fertile plains, the rocky plateaus, the valleys, the high mountains and the vast desert. This diverse landscape has led to an unequal distribution in terms of population in different regions of the Kingdom. **Flag:** It is of green colour. Its width is two-thirds of its length and it carries the following inscription called 'tawhid' or 'creed of monotheism'. There is no god but God, Muhammad, is the Messenger of God. An unsheathed sword symbolizing justice follows the inscription below. The flag of the Kingdom is the only one in the world that can never be flown at half-mast because of the inscription of 'Tawhid'. **Emblem:** The emblem of the Kingdom is represented by two crossed swords with a palm tree at the top. The palm tree symbolises prosperity and growth while the swords represent 'justice', power and safety. **Population:** According to the census of 1992, the total population of Saudi Arabia is 16,939,294. **Language:** Arabic is the official language of the Kingdom.

MESSAGE

Today, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia observes its National Day with usual warmth, grandeur and solemnity. The Day provides an auspicious occasion for the nation to express its gratitude to Almighty Allah, the Merciful, for enabling Saudi nationals to maintain the process of progress in all sectors of the economy. It is also worthwhile to recall that the sacrifices of late King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud have been a perennial source of inspiration for all of us to materialise his dreams of a happy and prosperous Saudi nation.

According to an official estimate, Saudi Arabia has spent more than a trillion dollars over the past 25 years for overall economic development. During the last five development plans (1970-1995) Government spending alone totalled over 1,031 billion dollars (SR 3,869 billion). As a welfare state, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provides free medical care and free educational facilities up to the highest level.

Besides developing its own economy, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made generous contributions to various development projects in the Arab, Islamic and friendly countries. As many as 70 countries of the world have benefited from the Kingdom's liberal foreign aid programme which totalled more than SR 250 billion during the past two decades.

Despite occasional strains due to the Gulf War effects and low prices of oil, Saudi Arabia has made substantial progress in recent times. The Kingdom's on-going 6th development plan (1995-2000 A.D.) aims at spending 200 billion dollars by 2000 A.D. during which average growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will be around 4 per cent. During the plan period 659,900 job opportunities will be created.

It is a matter of gratification that Saudi Arab-Bangladesh relations have been excellent since the very beginning of the ties. With the induction of a new democratic government under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, a new chapter of fraternal relations has opened up. Indeed, it was a matter of utmost pleasure and satisfaction for the people and leaders of the Kingdom who have made clear to Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Bangladesh about the great reservoir of goodwill that they have for the most deserving brothers and sisters of Bangladesh. In fact, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz during his audience with Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assured all cooperation with her government and even made a rare gesture through an observation that the two fraternal Muslim countries constituted one nation.

In view of the age-old historical, religious and cultural ties, which reflected in our day-to-day bilateral relations, one may justifiably say that the relations between our two countries have withstood the test of time. Perhaps, one unique factor that has played a significant role in bringing the two Muslim countries closer is that Saudi Arabia is the home of the two holy

mosques which are visited every year by thousands of Bangladeshis for Hajj, Umrah or any other purpose. Because of this close fraternal ties between the two countries, Saudi Arabia has had always extended prompt assistance, mostly in the form of grants, whenever Bangladesh suffered from natural calamities.

Incidentally, I may mention that a largest number of Bangladeshi workers are employed in Saudi Arabia as a result of which Bangladesh has benefited by earning a lot of foreign exchange through the remittances from the repatriates in Saudi Arabia.

It is our earnest hope that Saudi-Bangladesh relations will grow from strength to strength in the coming days for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly Muslim nations. And in view of the current global situation, it is expected that the two countries will sincerely cooperate with one another in various international forums, always keeping in view the interest of the Islamic Ummah.

Long live Saudi-Bangladesh brotherhood.



Abdullah Omar Barry
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Aid Programme

THE Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, one of the leading donors to the developing countries, has made generous contributions for various development projects in Arab, Islamic and friendly countries. According to one estimate, the Kingdom has spent more than SR 250 billion on foreign aid during the past two decades. As many as 70 countries of the world have benefited from the Kingdom's liberal foreign aid programme. Those countries included Palestine, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Somalia, Chad, Mali, Oman and Turkey. Besides, the Kingdom has financed Islamic projects in almost all countries of the world.

Grants to Bangladesh: On 29th April 1991 Bangladesh was severely hit by devastating cyclone. The Government of Saudi Arabia gave an outright grant of SR 400 million for the rehabilitation of the cyclone victims in the coastal areas. Long before that King Fahd ordered the dispatch of five Jumbo aircraft carrying tents and large quantities of food-stuffs and other relief materials for the victims of floods in 1988. The Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd has set an example to Saudi citizens and residents in extending humanitarian assistance to the victims of earthquakes and floods all over the world. As a great supporter of Bosnian Muslims, King Fahd has voted his readiness to sponsor 300 Bosnian families which would cost SR 2.25 million annually. King Fahd extended generous donations to cover the medical expenses of an ailing girl in London. The London-based 'Daily Star' awarded King Fahd its annual prize in 1993 in appreciation of his humanitarian efforts.

Writing off the Debts of Islamic LDCs: The Kingdom waived all debts of the least developed Islamic countries in December, 1991. The announcement of the writing off

the debts was made at the sixth Islamic Summit held at Dakar, Senegal. During the conference the Kingdom also urged the Islamic Development Bank to raise its capital to meet development requirements of member states and Muslim communities.

Highest GNP - Aid Ratio: Saudi Arabia provided sixty per cent of the total foreign aid given by OPEC members. According to an UNCTAD report, in terms of gross national product to aid ratio, the sums made available by the Kingdom to developing countries amounted to around 5.8 per cent of the country's GNP.

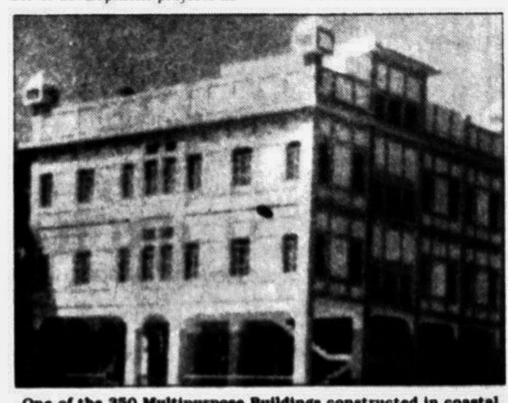
Major Contributor to IMF: Saudi Arabia is one of the major contributors to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It gave SR 12 billion to the fund in 1984 which is half the amount it wanted to borrow for re-lending to countries in financial trouble. This amount is apart from SR 37.6 billion the Kingdom gave to the fund previously as a loan.

Combating Drought: The Kingdom has financed a number of development projects in-

cluding hospitals, schools and wells in Yemen, Sudan, Morocco and Mauritania. It has spent more than SR 3.5 billion on projects aimed at combating drought in 32 African and Asian countries. The Kingdom provided food supplies worth SR 200 million to refugees in Africa in addition to cash assistance worth SR 122.5 million. It has given SR 37.6 million to eliminate river blindness in west Africa. Saudi Arabia constructed 3,600 wells in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia and Mauritania at a cost of SR 488 million. These countries have been suffering from drought for several years. Having saved millions of people and cattle from death, the programme has been one of the most successful relief works in the world.

Famine Assistance to Africa: As part of its assistance to the famine stricken African countries, the Kingdom provided SR 3.2 million, 1050 tons of wheat, 750 tons of maize and 500 tons of edible oil to Cape Verde. SR 5.79 million, 1460 tons of

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One of the 350 Multipurpose Buildings constructed in coastal areas of Bangladesh with Saudi grant of 187.40M Saudi Riyal.