



National Day of Saudi Arabia



Special Supplement

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King Abdul Aziz : His Glorious Achievements

THE Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was built on the oneness of God and submission to the judgement of God's Holy Book and the Traditions of His Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Its quest for a better life took off, racing time and setting records, so that within few short decades it took its prominent place in the world of today.

King Abdul Aziz built a vast state occupying four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula and called it in 1351 H. (1932 AD) "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia". He named it, having unified its component parts and brought the people together in peace, with justice and security. He set this day, the first day of the sign of Libra, 23 September to be the National Day of his Kingdom. A day the nation has celebrated every year, recalling with pride the deeds of the Great Founder.

King Abdul Aziz followed in the footsteps of the leaders of the two Saudi states that rose and fell in this region. The first Saudi state emerged in the middle of the eighteenth century through the alliance of the ruler of Diriyah, Imam Muhammad bin Saud with the Islamic reformer Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab. The aim of the alliance was to spread true Islam and purify the faith and rid it of the superstitions and heresies that attached themselves to it over centuries of ignorance. The first fruit of that era was the unification of the disparate regions, the gathering of the tribes and the acceptance of the rule of God's law. A just society living in peace over vast areas of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. Eventually, the State came under the pressure of foreign interference and wars, leading to its demise and the return of the Peninsula to its former chaotic self. It pained Abdul Aziz, who settled with his family in Kuwait to see the chaos and disintegration in his land. He



swore to regain his heritage at all cost. Thus, it was on 5 Shawwal 1319 H (15 January 1902 AD) that he succeeded in recapturing Riyadh which turned out to be the springboard for the unification of the country. He fought battle after battle, and strove for the next 31 years to bind the nation together and proclaim, with God's help, the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The people of the Peninsula saw the nobility of his cause and flocked to his banner. They were led from one victory to another, until the

time of fulfilment, when the dream of unity, security and stability was made manifest. **Staunch Belief in God:** Abdul Aziz, driven by a staunch belief in God, an iron will and an instinctive understanding of the needs and aspirations of his people, succeeded in overcoming obstacles and laying the foundation of the young state under banner of "There is no divinity but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God." He then set about the task of building the structures of a modern state. He began to open

the doors to a bright future for his people. One of his first acts was to implement a scheme to settle nomadic bedouins into settled communities, he called 'Al-Hijra', to which he brought instructors, teachers and experts in many fields. He began to release to productive potential of the people, being careful to heed the needs and aspirations of all the people of the Kingdom.

The security of the Hajj (pilgrimage) roads was one of his main objectives. Pilgrims to Makkah and visitors to the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah feared for their lives when undertaking those journeys. He rid the roads of miscreants and secured a safe passage for travellers to the holy places.

Special Attention to the Holy Places: King Abdul Aziz paid special attention to the holy places. During his reign, Al-Haram Mosque in Makkah was renovated and vastly improved while the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah saw a substantial enlargement to accommodate the ever increasing number of visitors.

King Abdul Aziz was the first to call for Islamic solidarity. He believed in the unity and cooperation between the peoples of the Muslim world, for the good of humanity as a whole. He set up the first Islamic Conference in Makkah in 1346 H. (1926 AD).

His young state had an intimation of good fortune when oil was discovered in the Eastern Province in 1938. Then the meagre income from oil helped the Kingdom to accelerate development in the country. Many projects came to fruition, such as the rail line connecting the capital Riyadh with the Eastern Province, opened in 1371 H. (1951 AD). The establishment of a national airline in 1945; the inauguration of broadcasting; and several others up and down the country.

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King Fahd : A Pioneer of Progress

THE spectacular development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the leadership of the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz is considered as a story of achievements which laid the foundation of future advances and set a solid economic base that propelled the nation into the forefront among the productive and exporting nations. The overall economic development also enabled the Saudi society to catch up with the best in the world through scientific and educational advances, particularly during his tenure of office as the Minister of Education. History will record many initiatives of this distinguished Arab and Muslim leader which were good for the citizens of the Kingdom as well as for the Arab and Muslim worlds. Serving the causes of world peace and fostering international understanding are main objectives at the heart of his efforts in the international arena. The concentrated efforts and regular initiatives of the Kingdom towards this end testify to his wise leadership. Conscious about his responsibilities towards the Muslim World, his efforts have contributed to end many conflict among Muslims and relief of many tragedies that befall them. The role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in bolstering Islamic solidarity and narrowing differences among Muslims — a guiding principle of Saudi policy since the days of the founder King Abdul Aziz — is an Islamic tenet enjoined so as to serve the unity of the Muslim World.

Early Years: The Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd was born in 1923 and grew up close to his father, late King Abdul Aziz, the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He received his early education at the hands of selected tutors and then he joined the Saudi Scientific Institute in Makkah which was primarily devoted to the teaching of religion and the Arabic language. He was known at an early age to be fond of attending his father's audience chamber. This helped to develop his personality and acquire the qualities of leadership. His father saw his early promise, his diplomatic sense, his early maturity and his prudence. He gave him some responsibilities,



the first of which was, in 1945, membership of the Saudi Arabian delegation to the opening sessions of the United Nations, headed by the late King Faisal, who was then Prince Faisal, the Foreign Minister.

First Minister of Education: He was appointed Minister of Education of the newly established ministry in 1953. Thus becoming the first head of a formal education ministry in the history of the Kingdom. He began by drawing up a far-reaching education policy, the fruits of which are still being enjoyed by the people of Saudi Arabia. The objectives of his education policy included: (1) Making all stages of education available to each and every citizen throughout the country; (2) Unification of higher education through the establishment of universities. The first of which was King Saud University set up in Riyadh in 1957, the first university in the Arabian Peninsula; (3) Increasing scholarships for foreign educational

facilities to enlarge the pool of qualified Saudis available to staff the Kingdom's education system and serve in government departments; (4) Seek eventually to achieve self-sufficiency in the number of Saudi teachers in all stages of education. Fahd's objectives in education have all been achieved. The success of his policy is exemplified in the educational facts of the Kingdom today. There are more than 22,000 schools, more than 40 lakh students of both sexes, seven universities, numerous specialised colleges and institutes and sprawling fully-equipped university cities.

As Interior Minister: When he took over the minister of Interior in 1962, he set about reorganising it to meet the demands of a modern society. He saw through his experience as minister of education that science and organisational discipline are necessary to raise standards of performance. One of his early initiatives was the

establishment of the College for Internal Security Forces (now King Fahd Security College) for training of the security personnel in theoretical, practical and military sciences at university level. He also established a number of institutes for training non-commissioned officers and other ranks. During his stewardship, the Ministry of Interior took on responsibility for national security, the Coast Guard, Civil Defence, Criminal Affairs, Municipal Affairs, Regional Emirates and all their supporting establishments.

As Head of Delegations Abroad: He headed the Kingdom's delegation to the 33rd session of the Council of the Arab League held in Casablanca in 1959 and the extraordinary session convened in Shatara in Lebanon in 1960. He also headed the Saudi delegation to the first session of the summit of Arab heads of government held in Cairo in the same year. He was appointed as Second Deputy Prime Minister in 1967, in addition to his portfolio of interior ministry, which gave him an opportunity to preside over meetings of the Cabinet. In 1970 he led the Saudi delegation to Britain for negotiations about the future of the Arabian Gulf in the wake of Britain's decision to evacuate the area. He also headed the Kingdom's delegation to the Conference of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) held in Algiers in 1975. To foster relations between the Kingdom and the world at large, he paid many visits to Arab and Islamic countries in Africa and Asia as well as to states in Europe and the Americas.

A Crown Prince: When Fahd became Crown Prince and was appointed Prime Minister on 25 March 1975, the late King Khalid entrusted him with further responsibilities. He presided over the high councils and commissions of the most important sectors in the Kingdom. They included the High Council for Petroleum and Minerals, High Council for the Universities, the Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, High Council for Education Policy, High Committee for Hajj, and the Royal Commission for the Development of Al-Madinah

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AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE



Asst. Ambassador Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah. The people of Saudi Arabia are observing, within and

outside, the Kingdom, the auspicious National Day today, September 23, 1999, in traditional warmth, spirit of dedication and sacrifice. It is a right occasion to recollect past achievement and think about the future progress of the nation. The National Day is also a fitting occasion to recall the sacrifices and singular achievements of King Abdul Aziz who laid a very strong foundation of the Kingdom through his innumerable wise and pragmatic steps which are still considered to be the pillars of the state. The ideals left by him, particularly his unfaltering allegiance to Islam, are the greatest source of inspiration for those who are at helm of affairs and the common men. It is fascinating

to note that this year's National Day is all the more a significant event because it coincides with the centenary celebrations observed in 22nd January.

The National Day also provides an opportunity to acknowledge, with gratitude, the unmatched wisdom, ability, political acumen, magnanimity and farsightedness with which the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz have been running the affairs of the state with the ultimate goal of reaching the benefits of a modern welfare state to all citizens. Indeed, the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz had set, exactly in keeping with the spirit of his father's ideals, the Kingdom's goal very

clear when some years ago he declared: "The goals of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is to hold firm to the Islamic Shariah, and to apply it in all affairs of the Kingdom, by using all resources bestowed by Allah." Such an assurance from the Head of the State, who voluntarily gave up ostentatious mundane titles and adored the humble title of "The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques," has increased the confidence of the people who are most cooperative and deserving.

By the Grace of Allah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is on the final stage of implementation of its 6th Development Plan (1995-2000 AD) at an expenditure of 200 billion dollars, general objectives of which rightly include: preservation of Islamic values, maintaining the country's security and social stability, encouraging private sector participation, etc. According to an official estimate, Saudi Arabia has so far spent more than 1200 billion dollars during last three decades through implementation of five-year development plans.

While observing the National Day it is also a great pleasure for me to find that during all these years the bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh have been "excellent". In view of the close cooperation between the two brotherly countries in the bilateral and international fields, it may be said without any fear contradiction that the fraternal and brotherly ties have stood the test of time. The cordial and sympathetic ties that now happily exist between the two governments and peoples may be traced to the age-old historical, religious and cultural bonds. Incidentally, we may recall that the Saudi grant of 400 million SR for construction of 400 cyclone shelters in the coastal areas of Bangladesh is a 'milestone' in strengthening the bilateral relations between the two countries. It is also a matter of great satisfaction for the people of Saudi Arabia that the Kingdom has been the largest importer of manpower from Bangladesh. According to one estimate more than 10,50,000 persons have so far (up to July 1999) gone to Saudi Arabia with work permits. Besides, about 30,000 people perform Hajj from Bangladesh every year and the number of pilgrims are on the increase regularly.

It is our firm belief that sincere cooperation between the two brotherly countries in various international fora will certainly advance the cause of the Islamic Ummah, in the days ahead. Long live Saudi-Bangladesh brotherhood and affinity.

Asslamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatu.

Abdullah Omar Barry
Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh

We extend our heartiest felicitations to His Highness the King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, the Government and the Brotherly People of Saudi Arabia on their glorious National Day



Custodian of the two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz



Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, The Crown Prince and Deputy Premier and Head of the National Guard



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