



Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz

King Abdul Aziz: His Achievements

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Education was not the King's only concern; he built roads, opened hospitals and introduced modern government. Simultaneously King Abdul Aziz paid attention to the Kingdom's position among the nations of the world and sought to enhance it on the Arab, Islamic and international levels. He entered into treaties and established relations with all nations. Saudi Arabia was a founder member of the United Nations Organization whose charter the Kingdom signed in San Francisco in 1945. King Abdul Aziz took on and vigorously defended the just causes of the Arab and Islamic worlds.

A PROTAGONIST OF WORLD PEACE: The Kingdom was a founder member of the Arab League that saw the light in 1944. King Abdul Aziz stood side by side with Arab states struggling to rid themselves of colonialism and foreign interference. He put all his weight behind the Palestinian cause and his famous meeting with American President Roosevelt in 1945 and the exchange of letters with him about Palestine

are notable examples of his efforts on behalf of the people of Palestine and the struggle for their legitimate rights and their usurped homeland. He sought to secure world peace by ensuring justice and human rights for all.

AMONG THE GREATS: Arab and foreign historians have placed King Abdul Aziz among the world's great leaders. Volumes have been written eulogising his heroism, his many talents and his unique personality. He was all of those things: a great and pious leader and an astute politician. He passed away on 2 Rabi Al-Awwal 1373 H (9 November 1953), an event that saddened not only his people, but those of the Arab and Islamic worlds and, indeed the world at large.

The people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as they enjoy today the fruits of his labour and shelter under his great legacy, they remember with pride their leaders' striving and his victories. His sons, who trod the same path, have succeeded in achieving what he strove so valiantly for, that is, advancement, peace and prosperity.

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large, he paid many visits to Arab and Islamic countries in Africa and Asia as well as to states in Europe and the Americas.

AS 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 Al-Munawwarah. From these leading positions, King Fahd, through long experience and unique talent, was able to organise and steer the internal and external policies of the Kingdom. He deputised for King Khalid, when he headed the Saudi delegation to the Arab

King Fahd: Pioneer of Progress

Summit held in Baghdad in 1978 as well as that which was held in Fez in Morocco in 1980, when he put before the conference his regional peace proposals known as the "Arab Peace Project." He also headed the Kingdom's delegation to the conference held in Mexico in 1981 to discuss the world's economic problems and find solutions for the relationship between the haves and the have-nots which was attended by most of the world's heads of state.

AS KING: Upon the death of King Khalid on 21 Shaaban 1402 H (13 June 1982 AD) the ruling family and the Saudi people pledged allegiance to Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz as the fifth king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, President of the National Guard, was proclaimed Crown Prince. On the same day King Fahd appointed the Crown Prince Abdullah as Deputy Prime Minister, and the Minister of Defence and Aviation, and the Inspector General Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz as Second Deputy Prime Minister. Since then, Saudi Arabia has achieved many success in various sectors of the national life, maintaining the Kingdom's utmost security and stability under the able guidance of the Custodian of the two holy mosques. There has been a qualitative transformation in the system of government with the promulgation of the four new laws, namely, the Basic Law of the Government, the Shura Council Statute, Regional Administration Statute, and the Statute of the Council of Ministers.

EXPONENT OF ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY: The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd worked tirelessly to foster one of the pillars of Saudi policy, namely, Islamic solidarity. The call for Islamic solidarity was materialised through Islamic summits, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the World Muslim League and many other channels were Islamic Unity is a prime objective. The Kingdom hosted the historic third Islamic Summit Conference at Makkah and Taif in 1981 AD. There are many examples of King Fahd's efforts to develop cooperation among the Muslims. His intervention in the dispute between the leaders of Afghanistan, his material help to the suffering Muslims of Bosnia, his efforts to make peace among the Somalis and end civil war in Somalia are apt examples of his ability to mediate in disputes. King Fahd has always supported Islamic

centres and societies and contributed to the building of schools, mosques, universities and hospitals. Besides, the help provided by the Kingdom to developing countries over the past two decades amounted to more than 71 billion dollars in the form of soft loans and grants. The recipients were more than 70 countries, 38 of which were in Africa, 22 in Asia and 10 other countries elsewhere.

ROLE IN ARAB WORLD:

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd played a prominent role in dealing with the problems of the Arab World. He has visited all the Arab States more than once and participated in many meetings and conferences. He is a bold interlocutor and campaigner for peace and amity between Arab States. He stood by every Arab cause. The history of the Palestinian issue is a witness to his defence of the rights of the people of Palestine and his efforts to explain their legitimate claims to the world leaders for more than a quarter of a century. To ensure security and stability in the region without sacrificing legitimate Arab rights, he put forward a solution to the Middle East problems. That was the initiative that carried his name, and was later transformed into decisions adopted by the Arab Summit Conference in Morocco in 1982 and came to be known as the "Arab Peace Project". His initiative was received favourably not only in the Arab and Islamic spheres but throughout the world. The initiative was also adopted by the Islamic Summit Conference of Casablanca and formed the basis for the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991. The Lebanon crisis that erupted in 1975 received the conciliatory effort of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the fruits of which was the convening of the reconciliation conference of Lebanese parliamentarians held in Taif in Saudi Arabia in 1989. This conference helped to restore calm to the Lebanon and heal the wounds of conflict and division. The Kingdom continues to provide the Lebanon with political and economic support to overcome the legacy of the civil war.

When the sisterly State of Kuwait suffered Iraqi aggression on 2 August 1990, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd took up his well known stance that made possible the return of freedom to Kuwait. The Kingdom played host to the Government and the people of Kuwait during the

crisis as well as helping Kuwaitis abroad. Saudi Arabia also accepted thousands of Iraqis fleeing the tyranny of the Iraqi regime.

GULF CO-OPERATION:

King Fahd has said, "With the blessings of God, we have succeeded in establishing with our brothers in the Gulf, a strong and effective circle within the circle of the Arab League. The Arabian Gulf Co-operation Council. It is to be a model for the level of co-operation among Arab brothers and a prop that will strengthen the Arab League, deepen Arab relationships and a shield protecting the Arabs from harm." As was hoped by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the Council has proved its effectiveness in meeting the challenges of recent events in the Gulf Region, especially during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Gulf Co-operation Council took far-reaching steps in co-operation and co-ordination among the member states in matters of security, military affairs, economy, education and information. It has become a homogeneous unit that embodies the hopes and aspirations of the people of the region and those of the Arab and Islamic world.

MAN OF PEACE: Under the able leadership of King Fahd, the Kingdom has had distinguished contributions, consistent with its international standing in the politics and economy of the world. Its Arab and Islamic position is the focus of the attention and respect of more than a billion Arabs and Muslims. Changes in the international scene have helped to enhance the Kingdom's importance in world affairs and visits of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to a number of states had a bearing on the strengthening of relations with those states. The King has an outstanding record in confronting political and economic crises. His stance on oil pricing and OPEC production quotas have earned him the regard of the entire world. A stance that helped to consolidate world stability and foster world peace and earn for the King the title "Man of the Peace". He has always been anxious to deal with exploding crises with wisdom and calm consideration and see them from the point of view of universal good as well as from that of Arab and Islamic interest. His far-reaching vision earned him "Man of the Year" title for many times through polls conducted by the media in a number of countries.

Cultural Heritage of Saudi Arabia

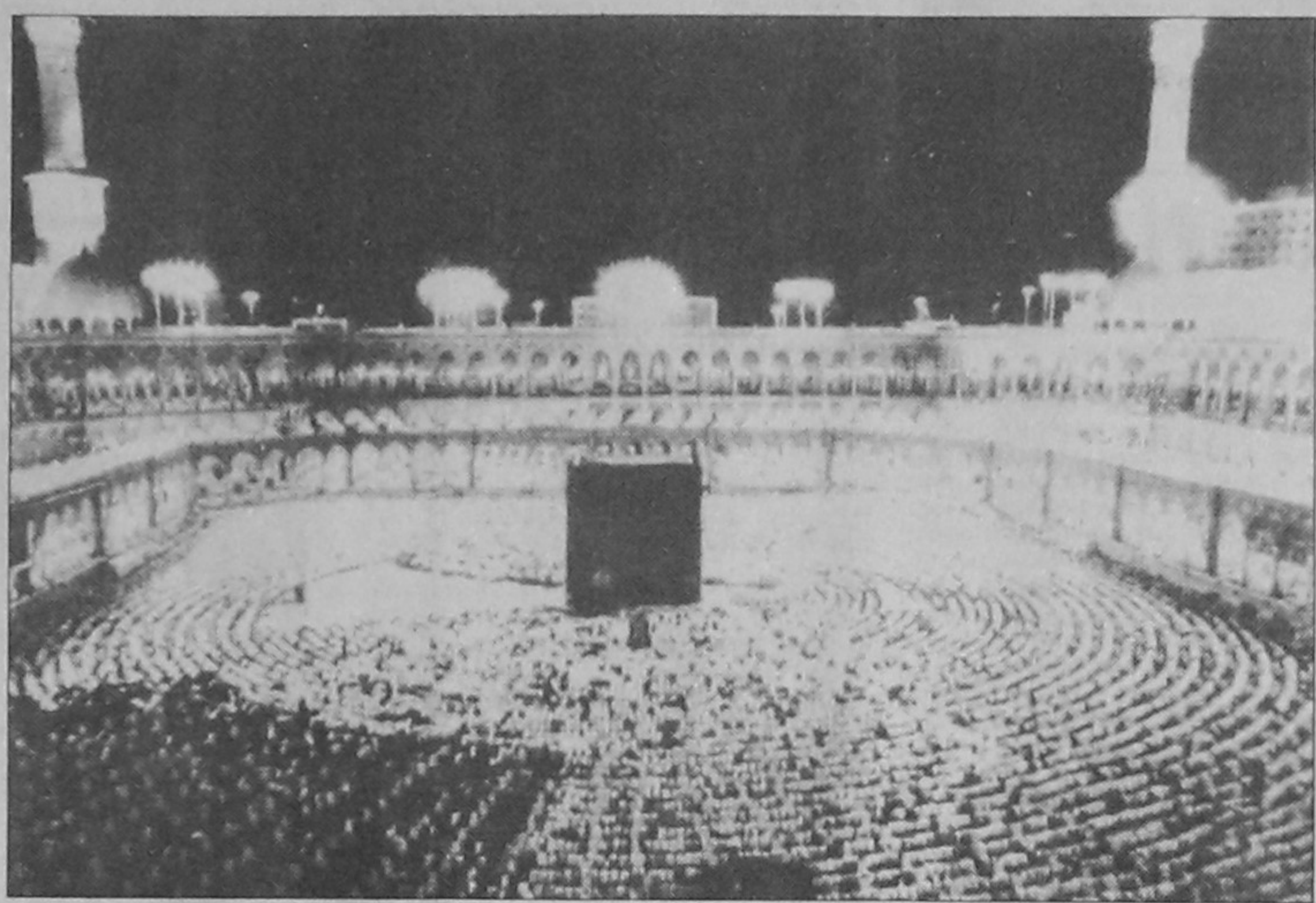
FOR thousands of years, the people of the Arabian Peninsula have been at the geographic, commercial and cultural crossroads of the world. As early as 3,000 BC, the people of the western region of the peninsula were part of a far-reaching commercial network extending to South Asia, the Mediterranean and Egypt. Trade flourished, with merchants of the peninsula acting as the vital link between India and the Far East on the one side and Byzantium and the Mediterranean states on the other. Interaction with other cultures of the East and West over the centuries enriched the ancient traditions and culture of the people of Arab peninsula.

The advent of Islam in the Arabian peninsula in the 7th century AD further strengthened the region's cultural heritage. Within a century, Islam spread west to the Atlantic Ocean and as far east as the Indian sub-continent and China. With Makkah as its core, the Islamic world witnessed a flowering of culture, the sciences and the arts unparalleled in human history. For more than 14 centuries, Muslim pilgrims from around the world have travelled to Islam's holiest sites in Makkah and Madinah, helping further enrich the culture of the people of the peninsula.

With the formation of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, the founder King Abdul Aziz Bin Abdul Rahman al-Saud directed his efforts to preserving and perpetuating Arab traditions and culture. His singular dedication to this cause was emulated by his sons and successors at a crucial time when the nation was entering an era of rapid economic development.

That Saudi Arabia has successfully preserved and strengthened its cultural heritage while achieving the spectacular economic development and modernization of the past few decades is testimony to the resilience of Saudi culture and the nation's determination to cherish and protect it. Today, amid the bustle of the 20th century life in modern Saudi society, contemporary Saudi writers look to the past for inspiration. Popular musicians incorporate ancient rhythms and instruments into their modern music and painters capture traditional scenes.

The accelerating pace of development in the 1970s, however, led Saudi leaders to take additional steps to preserve the nation's cultural and artistic heritage. In 1974, the General Presidency of Youth Welfare was established. One of its main functions is to strengthen an understanding and respect



A general view of the Holy Mosque at Makkah

for the nation's culture and arts among the youth. In 1975, the Department of Museums and Antiquities was formed in the ministry of education. Today, in addition to the National Museum in Riyadh, there are 11

museums throughout the Kingdom. Thousands of Saudis, particularly the younger generation, visit these museums daily to become better acquainted with their heritage.

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS:

Saudi Arabia's emphasis on preserving its cultural heritage is facilitated by a variety of institutions throughout the Kingdom. First and foremost is the nation's appropriate education. Continued on page 20



Hearty felicitations and warm greetings to the Government and brotherly people of **Saudi Arabia** on the auspicious occasion of **SAUDI NATIONAL DAY**

As the day unfolds we wish the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia peace, progress and a brilliant future in the years to come



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