

National Day of the State of Kuwait



MESSAGE

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatu

Today, Kuwaitis at home and abroad celebrate the 41st National Day with great fervor and enthusiasm on the one hand and with deep anguish on the other. The former is on account of the happy return after a prolonged illness of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, to his beloved homeland among his beloved people. The latter is on account of those "PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE" the innocent sons of the soil for whom our heart cries in anguish as they are still held in captivity as prisoners of war in Iraq. Kuwait once again urges world conscience to address itself to this humanitarian issue and to exert pressure on the ruling regime in Iraq to free them immediately and unconditionally. We in Kuwait deeply appreciate the continued support of our Bangladeshi brothers on this human tragedy. The invasion of Kuwait will remain a dark spot in the history of the Gulf and the subsequent triumph of truth and justice brought about by the international coalition, of which Bangladesh was a member too, will remain a stern lesson for those who have scant respect for world opinion.

Dear Friends,

Over the years, Kuwait has made great strides in socio-economic development under the sagacious guidance of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of Kuwait and the judicious leadership of His Highness Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait. The country which has been selected as the Arab Cultural Capital for the year 2001, now ranks among those, which enjoy a very high standard of living, and its currency remains one of the strongest in the world. Democratic freedom with an elected parliament and a free press and social justice are strong features of this welfare state.

It is a matter of great pride for every Kuwaiti that the farsighted and sagacious leadership of the State of Kuwait, exploited the gift of Allah not only for the welfare of its people but also for the development of many friendly countries. As enshrined in the Holy Quran, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, ensured that the wealth of Kuwait be shared by its other less fortunate brotherly countries. In light of the Amiri desire, many Arab, Asian, European and African countries benefited from the benevolent policy of Kuwait. Bangladesh is one of those brotherly countries whose friendship the people of Kuwait value and cherish. History as well as the unfolding events of the present is a testimony to this special bond between our two countries.

As members of the Islamic Ummah, our two countries share a common perception and outlook on matters of international and regional interest. The seeds of this fruitful relationship were sown in the early 70s when the two established diplomatic relations. The understanding and the cooperative ventures between the two countries serve as the pillars on which the foundation of a strong relationship has been laid and consolidated over the years under the pragmatic and farsighted leaders of our two countries.

The friendship between the two peoples and the countries stood the test of time particularly during Kuwait's ordeal as a consequence of a treacherous aggression. Kuwait's strength in repulsing this aggression emanated partly from the consistent and resolute stance of its friends like Bangladesh who stood by international legitimacy.

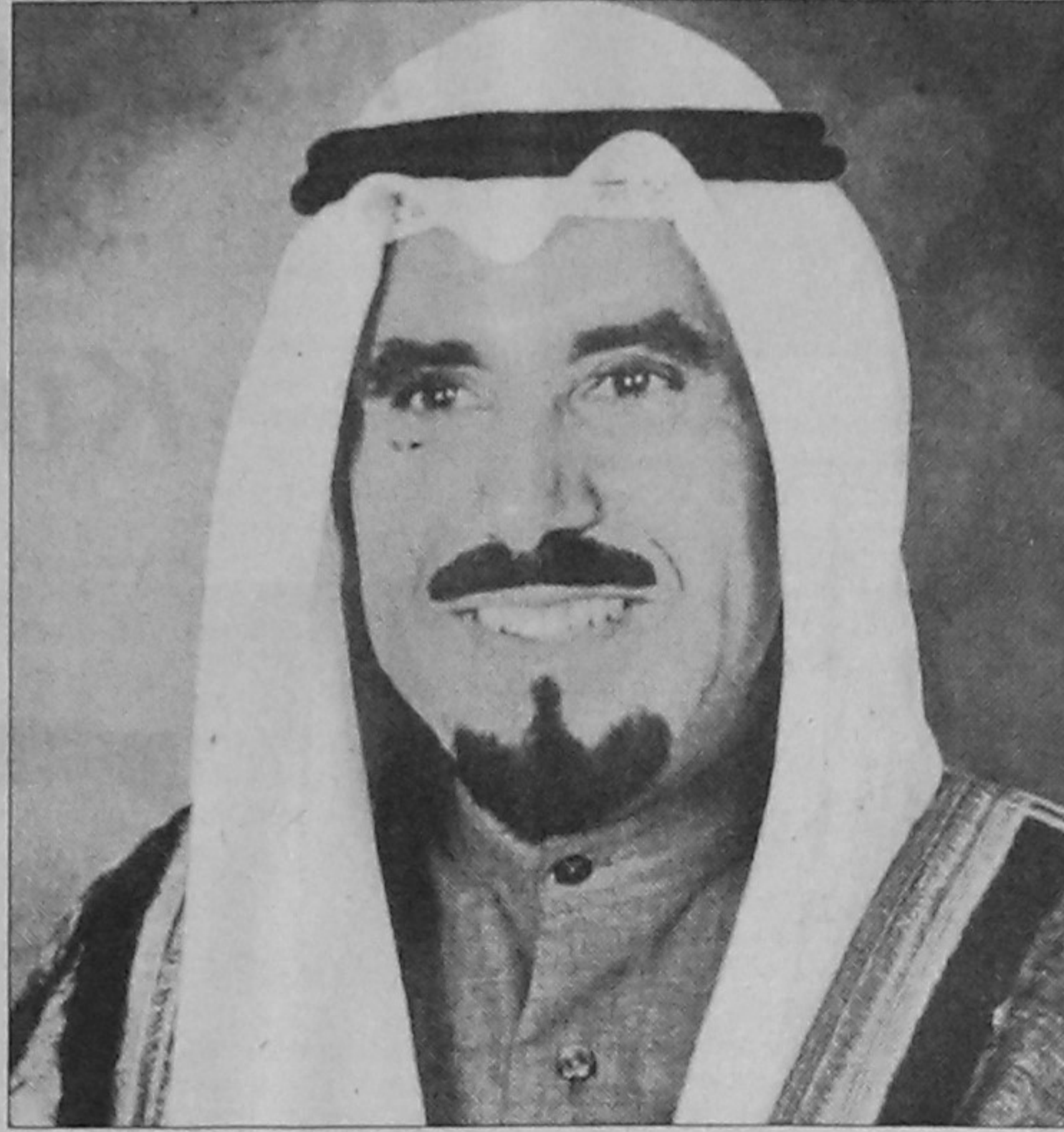
Kuwait will continue to support the development activities in this country both through official and private assistance. I am happy to note that the Bangladeshi work force in Kuwait has increased greatly and I take pride in saying that they are contributing their best in the development work in Kuwait.

The continued exchange of visits by officials and leaders of the two countries indicate the value and importance the two countries attach to their bilateral relations.

On this occasion, I wish to extend my best wishes for peace and prosperity of the brotherly people of Bangladesh. I look forward to the continued growth and consolidation of the cooperative relation between our two fraternal countries to our mutual benefit.

Long Live Kuwait and Long Live Kuwait-Bangladesh friendship.
Allah Hafiz

Mr Ali Hussain SHAI-Sammak
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Amir of the State of Kuwait



His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salim Al-Sabah
Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait

Foreign policy of Kuwait

THE cardinal principle on which the foreign policy of Kuwait is based has been enunciated by His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait when he declared that, "Kuwait lives under the protection of Islam as its religion, Arabism as its homeland, cooperation as its strategic path, tolerance as its motto, fraternity as its guidance, constitution as its modus operandi, justice as its rule, progress as its responsibility and peace as its goal".

The objective of Kuwait's pursuit of diplomacy is based on a pragmatic and balanced approach and is conducted in accordance with the government's philosophy and the interest of the State. Kuwait adheres to a policy, which is characterised by clarity, straightforward and quiet diplomacy. It strives to strengthen cooperation with all countries on the basis of mutual respect and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. It advocates the use of peaceful means in resolving all problems between States in accordance with the principles of right and justice, away from conflicts, sphere of influence and international blocs. At the same time, Kuwait's policy is concerned with the safeguard of her independence and sovereignty and her freedom of political decision. This policy stems from her belief in a common Arab destiny towards the development of relations with its fraternal Arab States. Hence, Kuwait plays a significant role in the progress of the Arab League and its bodies and gives her wholehearted support to the Palestinian cause, which is at the core of Arab cause.

Kuwait is an ardent advocate of Pan Arabism and its policy and interest in the Arab world is motivated by its strong adherence to the principles of Arab nationalism. Indeed, for Kuwait, Arab solidarity is not an outfit to be put on and off to suit its interest. It is blood in the veins, a candle in the heart, heri

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Kuwait—a partner in progress

KUWAIT and Bangladesh are two brotherly countries bound by a common social cultural and religious heritage.

As members of the Islamic Ummah, the two OIC member countries share identical views and perceptions on various international and regional issues.

Both draw their ideological strength from their complete faith in Allah and His religion Islam which have complemented their effort to forge a world order bordering on international legitimacy and a rejection of the principles of using force terrorism and aggression to bring about any change in the status quo which could lead to instability, insecurity and chaos.

Being members of the United Nations, they adhere to the principles of respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of a member State of the United Nations as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of any country.

The commonality of principles and perceptions on various perspectives of historical and international significance as well as certain identical features of statehood have enjoined the two nations in a strong bond of fraternity and friendship which have stood the test of time.

Spanning over a period of about two decades and a half since Kuwait first accorded de jure recognition to Bangladesh on 4 November 1973, relations between Kuwait and Bangladesh have undergone a three-phase evolution.

The first phase was between 1973 to 1975 which saw the establishment of diplomatic relations and a mutual effort to boost it. The state visit to Kuwait by the erstwhile Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in November 1974 laid the groundwork for future Kuwait-Bangladesh cooperation.

The second phase was between 1975-1996 and it was a period of growth and consolidation. President Ziaur Rahman visited and stopped over in Kuwait a number of times during his role as a mediator in the Iraq-Iran war. His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait visited Bangladesh in 1980 marking the high tide in Kuwait-Bangladesh relations.

The exchange of visits led to long term economic cooperation particularly in the agricultural and power sector. The friendship stood the test of time during the brutal invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The Government of President Hossain Mohammad Ershad and the brotherly people of Bangladesh committed total support to the just cause of Kuwait. The 1994 visit to Bangladesh by His Highness Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait was a strong reflection of the close and fraternal relations between the two countries. The visit was not only a follow up of the visit made earlier by Begum Khaleida Zia when she was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, but also a demonstration of the profound appreciation of the Kuwaiti people for the principled stand taken by Bangladesh during the ordeal faced by Kuwait as a result of the treacherous aggression as well as the importance, and value that Kuwait attaches to its relations with Bangladesh. The visit led to the expansion of economic and other forms of cooperation. Kuwait pledged a loan of US \$200 million to help finance the infra-structural development projects of the Bangladesh government particularly in energy sector.

These mutually harbored reciprocal sentiments were aptly demonstrated time and again over the past several years.

The impetus to Kuwait-Bangladesh ties was given further boost through Kuwaiti involvement as a development partner of Bangladesh which spans over two decades. Kuwaiti Participation in the Bangladeshi development effort is effected through three different mediums. These are:

1. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED);
2. Kuwait Joint Relief Committee (KJRC);
3. Popular Committee of Kuwait;
4. Islamic World Committee;
5. The Revival of Islamic Heritage Society;

All Kuwaiti Official assistance is channeled through KFAED which has provided sixteen long term soft loans to Bangladesh amounting to KD. 74,005 million which is equivalent to US Dollar 279,219 million.

Kuwait Fund's operation in Bangladesh, began in June 1975. The first project financed by the Fund carried a value of KD. 6.376 million equivalent to BDT. 36 million. The project was for power supply for irrigation scheme stage 1. Since that time, 16 soft loans have been provided to Bangladesh.

Further, in 1980, on a directive from the Amir, Kuwait maintained a deposit of US Dollar 100 million with Bangladesh Bank. In the same year, Kuwait gifted to Bangladesh a Boeing aircraft to help the national carrier of Bangladesh to expand its fleet. Kuwait is financing the construction of two bridges in Shikarpur and Doarika to connect Barisal with the capital city as well as to improve the socio-economic condition to the South-Western part of Bangladesh and a road connecting Dhaka with Jafflong through Sylhet.

Last year Kuwait pledged an additional loan of US Dollar 125 million to Bangladesh for implementing 4 new projects in energy and transportation sectors. The projects are:

1. Greater Chittagong Power Distribution Project;
2. Construction of Dopedopiya Bridge on Barisal-Patuaakhali Road;
3. Construction of Sangu Bridge on Chittagong-Banshkhali Road;
4. Expansion of Dhaka of Joydevpur Railway Line;
5. Kuwait plans to finance the construction of two flyovers in Dhaka soon.

Most non-government assistance come through the Kuwait Joint Relief Committee (KJRC) which is a conglomerate of several Kuwaiti Islamic Charitable Organisations including the Kuwait Zakat House which implements all the projects of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs. KJRC's network of operation extends to forty-three districts of Bangladesh. Besides financing the constructions of mosques and madrasahs, KJRC has undertaken a number of projects, which specifically aim at improving the socio-economic life of the most down trodden segment of the rural society. These projects are as follows:

1. Housing Projects;
2. Income generating programme
3. Safe Water Project (tube wells)
4. Agriculture programme (distribution of seeds, fertilizers);
5. Orphan Project;
6. Relief and Rehabilitation programme;
7. Medical Assistance programme;

Under the Housing Project, KJRC has so far constructed five self-reliant clustered villages in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Bogra, Bagerhat and Feni for the destitutes.

Through the income-generating programme, KJRC helps impart vocational training to unemployed youths. It provides sewing machines and rickshaw vans to earning members of different families while others are provided with small shops or poultry farms.

With a view to making safe drinking water available to the people in remote villages, KJRC has undertaken a massive tube well installation scheme covering thirty districts.

KJRC distributes seeds and fertilizers to poor farmers who have no ability to pay for them.

An amount of Tk 7,50,000 has been spent so far on construction of mosques and educational institutes. Kuwait-Bangladesh Maitri Hall, a dormitory for female students of Dhaka University has been built with KJRC fund.

KJRC runs an orphan sponsoring programme in over 40 districts which has so far cost them over 7,00,00,000. It is also running a large orphanage complex in Jessore.

In times of natural calamities, KJRC undertakes massive relief and rehabilitation work in the affected areas. During last year's unpre-

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Our Warmest felicitations to the Brotherly People and the Government of The State of Kuwait on the occasion of their 41st National Day and 11th Liberation Day



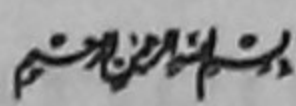
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May Bangladesh-Kuwait friendship and cooperation Continue to grow for the Mutual Benefit of our two peoples.



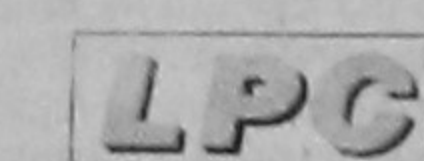
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