

King Abdul Aziz : Among the greats

KING Abdul Aziz built the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the strong foundation of 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. Saudi Arabia's quest for a better life took off under his leadership, racing against time the setting new economic records. And consequently within a few decades the Kingdom took its legitimate and prominent place in the comity of nations.

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, 23 September, to be the National Day of his Kingdom. The Nation celebrates this day every year and recalls with pride the deeds and achievements of its 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 Ibn Saud with the Islamic reformer Sheikh Muhammad Ibn 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 condition. The situation pained Abdul Aziz who was living with his family in Kuwait. He swore to regain his heritage at all cost. At last on 5 Shawwal 1319 H (15 January 1902 AD) he succeeded in recapturing Riyadh which turned out to be the springboard for the unification of the country. He fought battles after battles, and strove for nearly 31 years to bind the nation together and proclaim the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The people of the Peninsula saw the nobility of his cause and flocked together under his banner.



Late King Abdul Aziz

Strong Belief in God: Abdul Aziz, driven by a strong belief in God, strong will and an instinctive understanding of the needs of the hour and aspirations of his people, succeeded in overcoming obstacles and laid the foundation of the young state under the 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-Hijir' to which he brought instructors, teachers and experts in many fields. He began to release the productive potential of the people, being careful to heed the needs and aspirations of all the people of the Kingdom.

The security of 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 took stern measure against the miscreants and secured a safe passage for travelers to the Holy places.

Attention to 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 co-operation 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

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King Fahd: A pioneer of progress and man of peace

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 befell 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



The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Fahd

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. Initiation 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 education facts of the Kingdom to-day. There are more than 22,000 schools, more than 40 lakh students of both sexes, seven universities, numerous specialized colleges and institutes.

AS INTERIOR MINISTER: When he took over as the Minister of Interior in 1962, he set about reorganizing it to meet the demands of a modern society. He saw through his experience as Minister of Education that science and organizational 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.

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MESSAGE

TODAY, September 23, 2002 coincides with the 72nd year of the Great Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This occasion, in fact, is considered to be a Glorious Day in the history of the Nation.

On this Day, we recall with pride and dignity the memories of our great leaders. On this Day, His Majesty late King Abdul Aziz Bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud, founder and architect of the Nation, had succeeded in unifying the whole Arab Peninsula and gave it the name of "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" and placed it under the lofty banner of Monotheism (La Illaha Illallahu Mohammadar Rasullallah).

His Majesty, late King Abdul Aziz, who is considered to be one of the towering personalities of modern history, finally succeeded, through a strenuous journey of struggles, to reunite and re-build the state of Saudi Arabia.

The first emergence of Saudi Arabian state occurred in the seven-teen century when Imam Mohammad Bin Saud, first founder of Saudi state, with the support of Sheikh Mohammad Bin Abdul Wahab, had given a clarion call for preaching the ideal Islamic Sharia. May Allah bless them with his mercy.

In spite of extreme difficulties and many challenges that His Majesty late king had to face in order to unify the nation and get it back on the right track (third phase of unification) he was miraculously successful in maintaining the fabric of the entity of the society and enhancing its bonds. It may be mentioned here that the society was then passing through 'dark days' witnessing internecine fighting and conflicts. But His Majesty late King with his even-handed justice and able administration united the society and firmly connected the whole people with the injunctions of the Holy Quran and the teachings of the Prophet of Allah as their constitution.

After His late Majesty, the charges and the banner had been carried by his able, sincere and devoted sons His Majesty King Saud, His Majesty King Faisal and His Majesty King Khalid. May Allah bless all of them with his eternal blessings. After Their Majesties, the charge is now being shouldered by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz. May Allah save him. The Kingdom during the blessed era of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has achieved leaps in respect of modernization as well as social developments, which were

acknowledged by the enemies even before the friends. During his glorious time, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has been able to see the completion of the great expansion of the Two Holy Mosques - a unique project that has been so dear to him. The Two Holy Mosques now expanded are able to accommodate largest possible numbers of Umra and Hajj pilgrims who have appreciated his untiring efforts towards the expansion of the Two Holy Mosques.

The aforesaid sacrifices, efforts, developments and flourishing were not only limited to the Kingdom but also went beyond its border to reach the brotherly and friendly countries through help and assistance. It may be mentioned here that the grants given by Saudi Arabia to the People's Republic of Bangladesh comes to more than one billion US Dollars that have been used in the building of multi-purpose cyclone shelters in the coastal areas and other different projects in Bangladesh.

I wish that with the blessings of Allah the bonds of friendship between the Kingdom and Bangladesh would witness more and more development and flourishing in the days ahead.

I would like to conclude with an earnest prayer to Almighty Allah to bring back this happy occasion for many years to come to Saudi people and the Islamic Ummah under the dynamic leadership of The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz and His Royal Highness Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz.



Abdullah Bin Mohamed Al-Obaid Al-Namla
Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh

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Saudi Arabia's 7th Five Year Development Plan

THE Kingdom's seventh socio-economic development plan (2000-2004) has been formulated on the board principles of free market economy and guided by the teachings of the true faith of Islam. During a very short span of time the Kingdom has attained remarkable achievements in all social and economic fields. Thanks to the far-sightedness of the founder of the state, late King Abdul Aziz, who laid the foundation for the Kingdom's renaissance and development. The rise in the living standards and improvement in the quality of life, coupled with a peaceful and stable security environment, and continuing robust economic performance and social stability, are testimonials to the progress achieved by Saudi society.

The beginning of the Seventh Development Plan happily coincided with the Kingdom's centenary as well as with the beginning of the twenty-first century, that is, starting of the third millennium. The new era is likely to bring about a host of changes and creates many challenges at the local, regional and international levels. The Seventh Development Plan naturally laid emphasis on strengthening the Saudi Economy to confront the challenges of the new era. The Plan adopts a set of economic policies that fit into a long-term perspective designed to develop human resources, raise the efficiency of manpower, and increase employment through generation of new jobs and replacement of non-Saudi manpower. The long-term perspective also involves qualitative improvement in state-owned services such as education, health, social and municipal services, as well as expansion in the provision of water, electricity, transportation and telecommunication services with a view to keeping pace with increasing demand. To hasten quick development, special emphasis is placed on the privatisation programme as the Kingdom's strategic option is for increasing private

sector participation in the socio-economic development process.

General Objectives

The general objectives and strategic bases of the 7 plan emphasize the safeguarding of Islamic values and confirming Allah's Shariah (God's Divine Law), upholding national security and social stability, continuing with the development and utilisation of Saudi human resources, providing basic services to citizens including education, health and social care services, diversifying the national economic base, encouraging the private sector, completing infrastructure development in conformity with the growing demand for such facilities and realizing comprehensive and balanced growth throughout the Kingdom's regions.

The details of the General Objectives of the Seventh Development Plan as approved by the Council of Ministers are as follows:-

- (1) To safeguard Islamic values by duly observing and endeavoring to confirm and disseminate Allah's Shariah (God's Divine Law);
- (2) To defend the Faith and the Nation to uphold the security and social stability of the Kingdom; and to deepen the values of national loyalty and belonging;
- (3) To improve the services provided to Haj and Umrah performers so as to facilitate easy performance of religious rights and support economic stability;
- (4) To provide an appropriate range of services to enable the individual citizens to become more productive and capable of positive contribution, and to expand the provision of basic services to citizens in education, health and other services;
- (5) To develop human resources and continually ensure an increasing supply of manpower; upgrading its efficiency through trainings to meet the requirements of the national economy, and replacing non-Saudi manpower with Saudis;
- (6) To promote cultural and international activities to keep pace with

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Our heartiest felicitations to the government and the brotherly people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the occasion of their National Day

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