AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH FOR REPUBLIC DAY RECEPTION

29 January 2025

H.E Dr Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushahri, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy of the State of Kuwait and Chief Guest of today's event,

Dignitaries from the State of Kuwait,

Ambassadors, High Commissioners and members of diplomatic corps,

Friends from media,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namaskar! Good evening! Mas'aa Al-Kheir!

A very warm welcome to all of you for joining us today to celebrate the 76th Republic Day of India. My special thanks to H.E Dr Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushahri, the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for gracing the occasion.

At the outset, I express gratitude to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad

Al-Sabah for their patronage and support for a strong India-Kuwait partnership.

Distinguished Guests,

26 January 2025 marked the 75th anniversary of our Republic Day, the day when the Constitution of India was adopted. In the 75 years that have passed, India has been able to achieve to a large extent the promises that we made ourselves to the Constitution. This envisaged securing justice, liberty, equality and equity to all its citizens. And while it advanced the progress and prosperity of our nation, it also strengthened the unity and integrity of our country. We have been able to do this in a democratic framework drawing from the pluralistic and consultative social fabric of our society.

Excellencies & Distinguished Guests

In line with the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India H.E Narendra Modi to make India a developed nation by 2047, we have embarked on this journey with strong conviction and in the backdrop of our past achievements. The Indian developmental story therefore continues to attract the attention of the international community. I would like to highlight some important facets of today's India -

- Largest democracy on earth with a stable political regime ;

- World's most populous country with 65% of population under 35 years of age that makes it world's largest working population;
- 5th largest global economy and poised to become 3rd largest soon;
- First in lowest manufacturing costs globally;
- Preferred global foreign investment destination with FDI of USD 710 bn in the last 10 years;
- World's 3rd largest Startup Ecosystem *(with 115 unicorns; 1 unicorn in India out of 10 globally);*
- Global Pharmacy of the world ;
- 4th largest renewable energy installed capacity of over 200 GW;
- 50% of all global digital payments take place in India on real-time basis;
- Extraordinary pace of infrastructure development – from 70 airports in 2014 to 150 airports in 2024, 28 kms of highways and 12 kms of railway track are being constructed every day;
- 6th largest globally in patent filing *(103000 patents last year)* and so on.

Distinguished guests

When it comes to Indian foreign policy, it is a reflection of our ancient philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' meaning 'the world is one family'. We have consistently supported peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy. We are privileged to speak for the global south and have been a reliable development partner for them. India has also been a first responder in times of crises for them and for others. Our two yardsticks of foreign policy are national interest and

global good, which is reflected in our range of memberships in multilateral and plurilateral groupings from Quad to BRICS to SCO to BIMSTEC and so on. In recent years, India has championed many pro-planet global initiatives with like-minded countries, including the International Solar Alliance of which Kuwait recently became a signatory, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the Global Bio-Fuels Alliance. Indian foreign policy is, in essence, designed to foster closer global cooperation and understanding.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our bilateral relations with the State of Kuwait are indeed historical and time-tested. Bilaterally and multilaterally, there is a good understanding of each other's interests. The historic and successful visit of Prime Minister of India H.E Narendra Modi to Kuwait in December 2024 has opened a new chapter in our bilateral relations with Kuwait. We convey our deepest appreciation to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait for his kind gesture of conferring the highest national award of Kuwait 'The Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer' on Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. One of the most substantive outcomes of the visit was the elevation of our bilateral relations with Kuwait to that of a 'Strategic Partnership'. Another significant outcome was the signing of the MoU on Defence Cooperation. Our trade and investment ties continue to grow, with India being one of the top trading partners of Kuwait. Many Indian companies are executing infrastructure projects in Kuwait and many Indian products and services are available in Kuwait. The Tata Motors owned Range Rover and Jaguar cars on display in the foyer are an example.

Similarly, there are many Kuwaiti businesses which are deeply entrenched in the Indian business eco-system. Our investor-friendly regime and high-growth economy awaits to welcome more. The number of Indians who call Kuwait their second home has crossed 1 million now. These numbers speak of the warmth and cordiality of our relations. We look forward to greater engagement with Kuwait, both at Government and people-to-people level, in the coming times. We are also confident that India-GCC relations will be further strengthened under Kuwait's GCC Presidency.

I will now like to say a few words in Hindi for members of the Indian community present here.

Distinguished members of the Indian community

You continue to be the vital and living bridge of our relations with Kuwait. As we look forward to greater cooperation with Kuwait, your role will also grow in equal measure. I can share with you that the leadership of Kuwait conveyed very positive sentiments to Hon'ble Prime Minister about your contribution to the development of Kuwait and their expectation of your similar role in future.

Friends,

Before concluding, I also wanted to share an important recent development in India-Kuwait relations. For the first time, Government of

India has awarded one of its highest civilian awards 'Padma Shri' to a Kuwaiti national, Sheikha Shaikha Ali Jaber Al-Sabah for her role in promoting yoga in Kuwait and the region. This was announced on the eve of this Republic Day. My heartiest felicitations to Shaikha A J Al-Sabah on this recognition, who is present here today with us.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank all stake-holders who are playing such a key role in taking India-Kuwait relationship to greater heights. I thank you all once again for your august presence today and, in particular, the Hon'ble Minister of Electricty, Water and Renewable Energy. And last but not the least, my Embassy team for making today's event possible.

Long live India-Kuwait friendship!

Haiya Asadaqa alhindia – alkuwaytiya lil abad

Thank you