

Kuwait National Day Special

Honoring old roots and growing ties

HASAN MOHAMMAD ZAMAN
AMBASSADOR OF KUWAIT



Feb. 25 marks the 58th anniversary of the Independence of the State of Kuwait and the 28th anniversary of the Liberation from the brutal invasion by the former Iraqi regime. On this blissful occasion,

I am honored to relay the warm wishes of His Highness the amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the government and people of Kuwait to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and people of Japan.

Kuwait's strategic location at the head of the Arabian Gulf helped it play a pivotal role along the major trade route of the Old World. Archaeological evidence has found

the oldest seafaring boats in the world to originate from this country, placing Kuwaitis among the first seafarers and maritime traders. These characteristics shaped Kuwait's society with regard to freedom of expression, openness, mutual respect, and most importantly, consensus politics and consultation between the ruler and the citizens, which became formalized in the constitution enacted in 1962, becoming the pillar of Kuwait's thriving democracy.

Building on these strengths, Kuwait committed itself to pursuing a foreign policy based on peaceful diplomacy to establish relations of friendship and mutual respect with all nations, while emphasizing the importance of eradicating wars, eliminating poverty and contributing to international peace.

Kuwait was admitted to the United Nations on May 14, 1963. Through its non-permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council during the 2018-2019 period, Kuwait has been pursuing a balanced and reasonable policy with a focus on strengthening international security and stability; promoting the role of the security council in conflict prevention and resolution by peace-

ful means; assisting in building national and regional capabilities; promoting international response to humanitarian crises; supporting United Nations efforts in combating terrorism and extremism; and supporting its peace-keeping and peace-building initiatives.

In parallel with this, Kuwait has one of the most comprehensive foreign assistance programs among high-income developing nations, providing development assistance and humanitarian aid to countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. In 1961, it established the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to extend financial and technical assistance to developing nations. Thus far, the fund has provided a total of 972 soft loans worth \$21.5 billion to 106 countries.

In recognition of Kuwait's contributions, several countries stood for Kuwait's rights and fought for its liberation from the Iraqi invasion in 1990, particularly Japan through its supportive position and tremendous contribution from the beginning of the invasion until liberation. This stance will always be engraved in the hearts and minds of every Kuwaiti.

Kuwait's benevolence was also rewarded in 2014 when the U.N. recognized the amir as a humanitarian leader and Kuwait as an international humanitarian center.

On the economic front, as Kuwait is home to 6 percent of the world's proven oil reserves, the country is a major exporter of petroleum and petroleum byproducts. However, to cater to the demands of a new world economic environment, the government formulated "Kuwait Vision 2035," a policy proposal that articulates the amir's aspirations to "transform Kuwait into a financial and trade hub, attractive to investors, where the private sector leads the economy, creating competition and promoting production efficiency, under the umbrella of enabling government institutions."

To this end, the government launched a national development plan organized around seven areas of focus designed to achieve the vision of a new Kuwait. The areas include

enhancing Kuwait's regional and global presence; modernizing its infrastructure system; quality education, integration of persons with disabilities and elderly, youth empowerment and redressing labor market imbalances; public administration reforms; development of public health care; creating a knowledge economy and diversifying the production base; and development of a sustainable living environment.

The government has simultaneously been undertaking significant institutional reforms and established highly specialized entities to turn Kuwait into an attractive investment and business-friendly destination.

On a bilateral level, Japan has been Kuwait's strategic partner going back to before independence, and our long-standing ties have two central pillars. One is a shared desire to further strengthen our cooperation in the political, economic, investment, environment and cultural spheres. The other is a resolute belief in human rights and a common goal of creating a world of peace, security and prosperity for all nations regardless of race, religion or ethnicity.



Facing the Arabian Gulf, the city of Kuwait is now a major tourist attraction. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

Based on these values, our relations have been steadily growing in clear realization of the mutual agreements reached during the state visit to Japan by the amir in March 2012, and the official visit to Kuwait by Abe in August 2013, in parallel with other significant reciprocal visits and close exchanges between businesspersons and officials from various sectors.

Today, our comprehensive partnership is multileveled and spans many areas, including oil, infrastructure, technical training, scientific research and people-to-people

exchanges. Bilateral trade has been increasing and reached ¥997.53 billion (approximately \$9.06 billion) in 2018. Japan has been one of Kuwait's main trading partners, and Kuwait has been Japan's fourth-largest source of crude oil.

With this in mind, I am confident that our comprehensive partnership with Japan will continue to strive in the coming years for the benefit of our respective countries and to promote peace and sustainable development around the world.



The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre is a multipurpose public facility. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

Partnership extends to more fields of cooperation

EISUKE MORI
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-KUWAIT
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan-Kuwait Parliamentary Friendship League, let me extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of Kuwait on the 58th anniversary of your National Day and the 28th anniversary of the liberation.

I would like to express my great respect for your country in establishing a democratic national system and achieving remarkable economic growth since its founding. I would also like to express my admiration of Kuwait's great contribution

to stabilizing the Middle East.

Kuwait is a major provider of crude oil and other fossil fuels to Japan, where energy sources are scarce. We consider Kuwait as one of our most important

friends among many allies. In addition to the ties centered on energy sources, Kuwait and Japan have recently held increasing exchanges on education and environment. This is great news; these exchanges will further elevate bonds between our countries.

Speaking of bonds, I would like to express my gratitude for your country's immense support after the Great East Japan Earthquake that struck Japan in 2011. Words cannot express how much Kuwait's support contributed to restoring the devastated areas. Thank you so much.

Through exchanges such as those between members of the parliaments in Japan and Kuwait, I promise the Japan-Kuwait Parliamentary Friendship League will do its utmost to further strengthen the friendly and mutually beneficial relations between our two countries.

In closing, I wish for peace and prosperity in your country.

Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to the State of Kuwait on the Occasion of the 58th Anniversary of National Day and the 28th Anniversary of Liberation Day



CEO PAK JAPAN GROUP OF COMPANIES
CHAUDHRY ASIF MAHMOOD

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Thank you Kuwaiti People and Kuwait Fund for helping the world.

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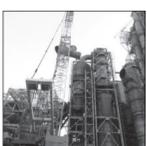
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WE EXTEND OUR
CORDIAL FELICITATIONS
TO THE AMIR
AND THE PEOPLE OF
THE STATE OF KUWAIT
ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION
WISHING FOR THE FURTHERANCE
OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN
KUWAIT AND JAPAN



JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY
Chairman: Yasushi Kimura




Top: Souk Sharq is a shopping mall in the city of Kuwait. Above: Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway is a bridge that stretches across the Bay of Kuwait. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT




Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to
H.H. The Amir, H.H. The Crown Prince, H.E. The Prime Minister
and The People of The State of Kuwait

On the Occasion of the
58th National Day of Kuwait, and 28th Anniversary of Liberation



Kuwait Petroleum Corporation
(Far East) (K.S.C.) Japan Branch

Kuwait National Day Special

Bilateral support flourishes

YASUSHI KIMURA
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY



As a representative of the Japan-Kuwait Society, I would like to wish everyone my heartfelt congratulations on this 58th anniversary of Kuwait's National Day, including His Highness, the Amir

of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness, Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah; His Excellency and Ambassador of Kuwait to Japan Hasan Mohammad Zaman; and the dear citizens of Kuwait.

Kuwait has established five-year national development plans with the aim of transforming its current oil-dependent economy into a core component of the region's financial and economic sectors by the year 2035. Investment is expected from Japan and other countries in each phase of these plans. Accordingly, the first five-year development plan was formulated in 2010 with focus placed on creating a legislative system to attract investment from other countries during a five-year period that lasted from 2010 to 2015. A tax treaty and investment agreement came into effect with Japan, followed by the decision to abolish the offset program as per the request of the Japanese companies involved. During this period, the Kuwait Direct Invest Promotion Authority was also founded to draw and encourage overseas investment.

The second five-year development plan was formulated in 2015 with priority on improving infrastructure. Past endeavors have included energy-related projects such as modernizing existing oil refineries and establishing new refineries, as well as large-scale domestic infrastructure improvement initiatives, including transport projects

and harbor development. These endeavors have led to reliable improvement in Kuwait's investment environment.

As for the next five-year plan from 2020 to 2025, focus will be placed on cultivating private enterprises. Kuwait anticipates receiving cooperation from Japan — including in non-investment fields — to promote this plan, such as when Japan was requested to share information about its small-to-medium enterprise policies at the Kuwaiti-Japanese Businessmen's Committee held in Tokyo in November. According to the International Monetary Fund forecast as of October, these national development plans were expected to achieve 2.3 percent gross domestic product growth in 2018 and 4.1 percent growth this year for Kuwait. The IMF also predicted growth of 2.9 percent in 2023.

While Kuwait is welcoming overseas investment, it is also investing in other countries. Zaman took up his post as ambassador of Kuwait to Japan in December. The ambassador has indicated his desire to propose and expand upon investing in Japan, which he sees as an attractive investment destination with political and economic stability. The Japan-Kuwait Society also hopes to provide cooperation in any possible fields.

Japan and Kuwait established diplomatic relations in 1961 and have built a friendly relationship over many years. In terms of governmental exchange, the amir of Kuwait visited Japan as a state guest in 2012, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe traveled to Kuwait in 2013. Subsequently, Kuwait's prime minister visited Japan in May 2016; Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Kono visited Kuwait in 2017; and His Excellency Marzouq Al-Ghanim, the speaker of the National Assembly of the State of Kuwait, visited Japan last year.

In the private sector, the Kuwaiti-Japanese Businessmen's Committee — which held its first meeting in 1995 — put on its 22nd meeting in Tokyo in November.

Kuwait provided significant aid after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, including a donation of 5 million barrels of crude oil. Aquamarine Fukushima in Fukushima Prefecture is just one of the facilities that has been restored thanks to this assistance. The 10th International Aquarium Congress was held there in November for 500 participants from 35 countries, and I would once again like to thank Kuwait for its support.

Such mutual exchanges in both the public and private sectors have allowed our two countries to develop firm ties. Going forward, I believe Japan can provide major assistance through contributions in the areas of technology, infrastructure support and cultural expansion, which will also help to further strengthen the relationship between Japan and Kuwait.

Since its founding in 1965, the Japan-Kuwait Society has worked to encourage understanding of Islamic and Arab culture in Japan and enhance friendly relations between the two nations by holding Arabic lessons and various types of cultural exchange projects with Kuwait. We will continue such activities to further develop mutual understanding between Japan and Kuwait and contribute to the ideologies of friendship and goodwill.

In closing, I would like to remark on His Excellency Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi, the former ambassador of Kuwait to Japan, who left his office in October. As the ambassador of Kuwait to Japan since 2007, he made significant contributions to enhancing relations between Japan and Kuwait over the course of 11 years, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to him for his great efforts. I have high hopes not only for the future activities of his successor, but also for Kuwait's prosperity and the friendly relationship between Japan and Kuwait.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

HEARTIEST GREETINGS
AND CONGRATULATIONS
TO THE STATE OF KUWAIT
ON THE 58th ANNIVERSARY
OF NATIONAL DAY
AND 28th ANNIVERSARY
OF LIBERATION



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and
Congratulations
to the State of Kuwait
on the Occasion of
the 58th Anniversary of
National Day and
the 28th Anniversary of
Liberation Day*



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