

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Leading Kuwait on a path of peace and prosperity

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has shown an extraordinary flair for charting Kuwait's domestic and foreign affairs in a manner that has assured the

country continued progress on a path of peace and prosperity.

Since his ascension as Amir of Kuwait in 2006, and even before that as the country's foreign minister for over forty years, His

Highness the Amir, has taken thoughtful and judicious decisions that have resulted in the best outcome for the nation and its people. Although His Highness the Amir was a member of every government formed after Kuwait's independence in 1961 and held various official posts before and after that, it is as the country's long-standing foreign minister that he gained prominence on the world arena.

Known fondly among the global diplomatic community as a 'doyen of diplomacy', for his considerable experience in foreign policies and international negotiations, His Highness has successfully mediated solutions to seemingly intractable political problems in the region and beyond.

It was His Highness' strong personal rapport with diplomats worldwide and his strong standing with the diplomatic community that helped Kuwait garner overwhelming international support against the vicious Iraqi invasion of 1990. This support was reflected in the unanimous UN Security Council (UNSC) decision 670 on 2 August, 1990 that condemned the Iraqi invasion and called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

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Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the eleventh Amir of Kuwait, signing the Declaration of Independence.

Kuwait... a look through history

Kuwait with an area of less than 18,000 km² and a population of 4.1 million is among the smallest countries in the world. Though a small country, it has a history of human habitation that goes back to the time of early civilization in the region. Kuwait's recorded history goes back to the sixteenth century when it began existence as a small fishing village at the northern tip of the Arabian Gulf.

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“We cannot afford to stagnate, we must move forward. We have a duty to transform Kuwait into a center of hard work and innovation, a testament to progress and modernity.”

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Before & After the War

Mai Al-Nakib

How did the Gulf War influence your view of life?

For me and, I think, for others of a certain generation, there is a distinct 'before the war' and 'after the war'. I think of 'home' in much less defined or fixed terms than, perhaps, I once did. After the war, the idea of home came unhinged for me. Home is less rooted, less tangible. It's something I carry with me rather than something I take for granted. I don't want to romanticize the notion of displacement. I recognize how lucky I am — unlike so many of our neighbors in the region — to be a citizen of a place that is not unravelling. But to feel the way I do about home produces a restlessness that can be productive, especially for a writer. Writing becomes a kind of home.

In your opinion, how has the country progressed economically and politically since the war?

Kuwait had to rebuild much of its infrastructure after the invasion and it has managed to do that successfully, for the most part. It's been twenty-four years since the war. Twenty-four years of political and economic change that cannot be linked to that single, no doubt important, event. There are a wide range of factors — local, regional, global — that affect development and transformation. It goes beyond the scope of this short interview to unpack their complexities. What I can say is that in making economic and political decisions, insufficient attention has been paid to the environment and to the role



of education in structuring progress.

Do you think the younger generation appreciate the freedom gained after the invasion?

I'm not sure how important the invasion is to Millennials or how aware they are of its impact. I don't think the invasion is studied in school from a historical or socio-political perspective. From what I understand, it's covered in a rather general and nationalistic manner. This is a missed opportunity for young people to learn something of value from the past in order to avoid similar patterns in the future. However, I do not believe the invasion should be taught as a way to harbor continued resentment or anger against others. In general, I think young people always feel like they want more freedom, more opportunities. They may (or may not!)

Mai Al-Nakib is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Kuwait University. Her collection of short stories, *The Hidden Light of Objects*, will appear in paperback in April 2015 (Bloomsbury). It won the Edinburgh International Book Festival's First Book Award in 2014. She is currently on a book tour in the US, and will be presenting at the upcoming Emirates Airline Festival of Literature in Dubai, as well as at the Global Art Forum 9 in Kuwait. For information visit: [Facebook.com/maialnakib](https://www.facebook.com/maialnakib)

take a second to appreciate what they have in terms of national, social, political, or economic freedoms; again, it's hard not to compare Kuwait to other places in the region and to be thankful. But in general, the young want to push against restrictions and limitations toward their own versions of freedom. That's part of what it means to be young.

On the National and Liberation day, what is the most important memory you have of your life in Kuwait?

This is an impossible question to answer! I spent the formative years of my life in Kuwait and most of my key memories were made here. To be honest, I don't think it's possible for anyone to select a single most important memory and, even if it were, it would be difficult to share with strangers. A vivid memory I have in Kuwait is of playing in the ditches of what would become the Fifth Ring Road. I would spend hours after school climbing down into the ditches behind our house, wandering back and forth, pretending to be a soldier in the trenches of World War I. I must have been

about eight or so. I'm not quite sure what I knew about World War I, surely something I read about in a book. What strikes me now is how different Kuwait was then; it was a place where it was both safe and completely acceptable for a young girl to play alone for hours in a vast construction site. Another thing that has stayed with me about that time is how happy I felt to be alone in those ditches, to be allowed the space and time to explore and play and, above all, imagine other worlds.

I think that kind of empty space and open time might be missing from kids' lives today. Everything feels so overly structured and codified, which is a bit of a shame. For me, the memory of getting lost in my imagination as a kid in Kuwait is something I truly value and continue to draw upon in my creative work.

Do you have a message for Kuwaitis on the occasion of the National and Liberation Day?

To all residents of Kuwait — Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti alike — I wish you a happy holiday. Drive safely!

Viewpoint

National Day

Liberation Day Greetings

To the visionary rulers and residents
of this great country on the occasion of the
54th Kuwait National Day & 24th Liberation Day

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Before & After the War

Tareq Al Sane

Viewpoint

Please describe your life before the Gulf war?

Life in Kuwait before the Gulf war was secure and simple. People were more communal and stronger ties between citizens were more prevalent. Any spare time was dedicated to the family, having less entertainment options and activities - there was no need in spending time elsewhere. Work chores were simpler to deal with and people were more diligent with their jobs - with Kuwaitis working in every field and sector. Roads were more structured and organized and much easier to drive on.

We had a privileged life, not in the materialistic sense, but rather in education and knowledge base. We were international entrepreneurs equipped with a deep national pride for our country.

Could you please summarize your experiences in Kuwait during the invasion?

It all started with the first day of the invasion. I volunteered with the Kaifan Help Aid Community Society and took charge in maintaining the food supply and availability in each supermarket within Kaifan - spending my time from morning till night time to safeguard the supplies and ensure all neighborhood families are receiving their share of materials. This help aid society was composed of members of the opposition against the Iraqi troops. There were many times when we had to negotiate and fight with the troops to make sure they didn't deplete the supplies and from preventing

harm to citizens getting their rightful share. I was a member of this group up until September 21st 1990.

On that day, I was taken hostage at first at Faisal Al Sane's house (also taken hostages with his son and cousins), then they took some of us to an abandoned place behind Bibi Complex leaving us stranded for 3 days in the sun, tied up, until armed buses took us to Basra intelligence agency headquarters in Iraq. They took us to underground tunnels where there was no sunlight and the heat was unbearable to the point you can't breathe. It was a torture tactic - with the doors opening once every day to let an air draft in; sweat was dripping profusely and we almost suffocate every day. It feels like being in a treasure box, with the lack of oxygen slowly deteriorating our skin and bodily functions.

I was freed from prison almost four months later, by end of December.

How did the Gulf war influence your view of life? There were many losses and hardships but thankfully we got through it. We understand the pain that all prisoners of war have undergone and still do worldwide.

Describe the transition of Kuwait since the Gulf war till present?

The Kuwaiti culture has changed significantly since those days onwards.

Do you think the younger generations appreciate the triumph of the country over the invasion? Kindly explain your opinion.

I believe it is getting worse with time since younger generations are not being taught about the Gulf War in any context (schools, texts etc.). They were listed before but have

Distinguished Kuwaiti Tareq Al Sane went to primary and secondary schooling in Lebanon (Manor House), and graduated with a Management degree from a University in Brighton, UK. He is a proud father of five children.



been removed from recent teachings - it is part of our history and it reflects great stories about our country and the brave people who have defended it.

On the National and Liberation day, what is the one historical memory should Kuwaitis never forget?

The day the news announced that the Iraqi troops withdrew from Kuwait - a moment that is unforgettable.



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His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Leading Kuwait on a path of peace and prosperity

Continued from Page 1

In his role as foreign minister during the period of Iraqi occupation, His Highness was instrumental in successfully piloting every subsequent UNSC resolutions against the invasion, including UNSC

decision 678 on 29 November, 1990 that authorized member states to use all necessary means to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait and restore international peace and security in the region. Despite the repeated challenges he has faced on the foreign and domestic scenes,

His Highness has proved time and time again his immense ability to overcome obstacles hindering the path of peace, stability and progress for Kuwait, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and for nations around the world. His Highness's strategy is

centered on supporting people and countries to cooperate with each other so as to progress economically, socially and culturally in a peaceful manner.

At the Arab Summit for Economic and Social Development, which was held in Kuwait in early 2009, is Highness announced an initiative for supporting and encouraging small and medium enterprises based on exploiting available local resources of goods and services with an estimated capital of \$2 billion and pledged \$500 million as Kuwait's contribution to this initiative.

On the Palestinian scene, Kuwait has always stressed backing the just cause of the Palestinian people. The state, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir, has over the years delivered hundreds of millions in aid to the Palestinian Authority to support its functioning, reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.

A firm advocate of the power and importance of Arab unity and the importance of discussion and dialogue in overcoming conflict and disagreement, His Highness has taken on numerous conciliatory and mediatory roles. The distinguished role and tireless efforts exerted by His Highness the Amir in tackling challenges and issues faced by regional and Arab nations has realized historical reconciliations, bridged differences and created a positive environment for interaction between the brotherly states.

His Highness the Amir has always

“

Acts of benevolence and philanthropy are inherent values in the hearts of the Kuwaiti people, as inherited generation after generation from their forefathers, renowned for rushing to help the downtrodden and extending a helping hand to all those in need; even when the Kuwaiti people faced hardships in the past.”

”

been keen to put Kuwait at the heart of humanitarian work. Since his ascension to power in 2006, he has raised the volume of aid provided to countries affected by catastrophes and crisis and Kuwait's humanitarian assistance has soared to reach the farthest corners of the world. On a personal level His Highness most recently donated one million dinars to the 'Tour of Hope' project, where a boat set off from Kuwait to the UN Headquarters in New York and back, stopping at various

“

A consensus is the only way we will be able to encourage the development of our country. We must put aside tribal and sectarian loyalties and work for the good of our country as a whole, for the national will, so that Kuwait will be the winner not an individual.”

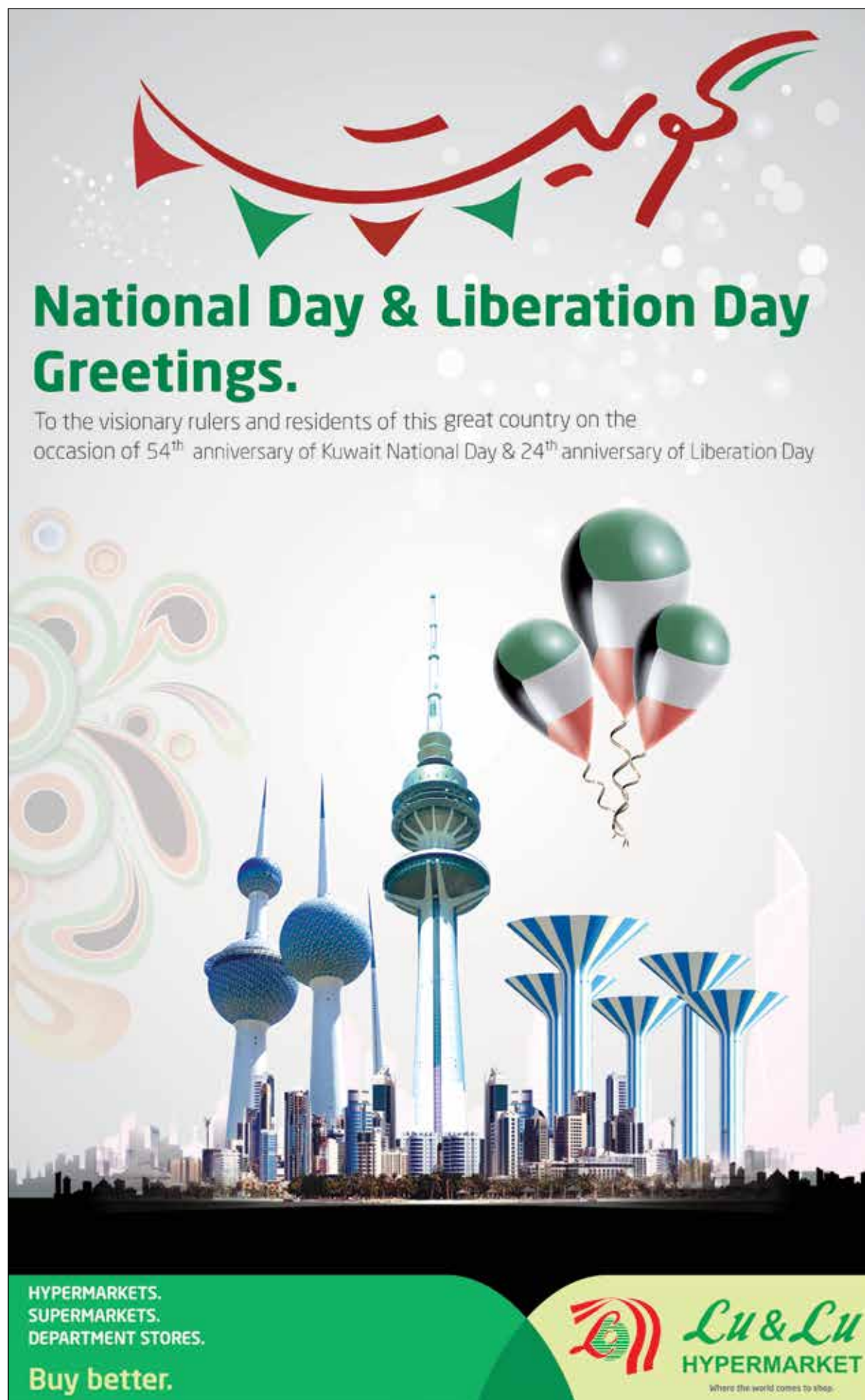
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ports on the way, to highlight the plight of the intellectually disabled and the humanitarian and civilized role the state of Kuwait plays in field of special-need care and in looking after marginalized sections of society.

Following the enormous efforts exerted by Kuwait to host the two Syrian Donor Conferences in 2013 and 2014, and His Highness's generous contribution of a total of US\$800 million, to relieve the humanitarian situation of displaced Syrian people, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that Kuwait is “an international humanitarian center” and its Amir is the “humanitarian leader”. Delivering his statement on the occasion of being felicitated by the United Nations, in September 2014, as ‘Humanitarian Leader’, His Highness the Amir expressed, “appreciation for the gracious and unprecedented gesture towards the people and government of my country Kuwait, and towards me personally.”

He went on to say that the honor bestowed upon him was a tribute to all the people of Kuwait, in appreciation of their longstanding and ongoing benevolence. He pointed out that since gaining its independence and consequent membership in the UN, the State of Kuwait has followed a steady approach in its foreign policy, based essentially on providing humanitarian assistance to all needy countries, regardless of their geographic location, religious beliefs or ethnic origins.

Moreover, Kuwaiti charitable associations and peoples' fundraising committees have set an example in their continued support of many humanitarian projects in Asia and Africa, by individual initiatives that have become a shining example of benevolence characterizing the Kuwaiti people. In conclusion, His Highness said, “I also would like to renew the commitment of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations and its noble message of the preservation of international peace and security, the dissemination of the principals of justice and equality, and ensuring a life of dignity and welfare to the peoples of the world.”



كويت

National Day & Liberation Day Greetings.

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WOMEN

THE DRIVING SOCIAL FORCE IN KUWAIT

Women played an important role in the social fabric of Kuwait long before the discovery of oil in the country. For hundreds of years, they were the driving force behind family cohesiveness, they were active in parenting, livestock rearing and weaving. Nonetheless, they had very few legal rights and were not viewed as persons with individual rights of their own.

It was only with the opening of the first private school for girls in 1926, that women began to learn reading and writing. Public schooling began in 1937 and though enrollment of girls was initially low, by 1940s many young Kuwaiti women were enrolled in primary schools.

With the modernization that began following the discovery of oil in the 1930, women in Kuwait experienced many changes to their social status. In the 1950s their access to education and employment increased dramatically and it was often women themselves who pushed for these educational advances and opportunities. In 1956 a group of them rallied for their right to go abroad to study.

With education came a greater awareness of their role in society and in the late 60s early 70s there were calls and campaigns for women's suffrage. Women frequently took their petition to parliament, which was however always rejected by the male lawmakers.

But the 1990-91 Iraqi occupation of Kuwait forever changed not only the view of women by their male counterparts but also women's own outlook about their gender and capabilities. During the occupation, Kuwaiti women played a large role in resisting the Iraqi invasion and this period served as a catalyst for the eventual liberalization of women's political and social rights.

Following the liberation there were louder calls for more women's representation in the political life of the country. In 1993, Nabila Al-Mulla became the first female ambassador in the Gulf region. True political equality, however, remained elusive as the election Law continued to ban political rights for women for another decade.

In 1999, the then Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, during an interregnum of parliament, promulgated a decree granting women suffrage. However, the next duly elected parliament overturned this decision. In 2003, another government-sponsored bill that would give women the right to vote and run in municipal councils was rejected by the parliament. Between 2000 and 2005 a number of cases were filed in courts against the Minister of Interior for his refusal to include women in the election tables. In 2004 they took their protests to the halls of parliament and a year later held one of the largest demonstrations in Kuwait's history.

Through the combined efforts of activists, lawyers, politicians, and everyday citizens, women were finally able to get Parliament to grant them their voting rights on 18 May, 2005. Parliament granted women their voting right by a simple amendment that removed the word 'men' from Article 1 of the election-law. The amendment was passed by a vote of 35 in favor and 23 against.

For the first time in Kuwait's history, women were able to file their names as candidates in the snap elections that were called for in 2006. Though 32 women ran for parliament in this election, and again, in the 2008 elections there were 27 women in a pool of 275 candidates, none managed to secure a seat.

But through persistence and by running effective and professional campaigns women were finally able to shatter the glass ceiling and four of them made their way into parliament in the 2009 elections. The four, Massouma Al Mubarak, Aseel Al Awadhi, Rola Dashti, and Salwa Al Jassar, assured a place for themselves in the history of women's fight for equality in Kuwait. Dr. Mubarak also became the first Kuwaiti woman to serve as a cabinet minister.

In February 2012, all four women lost their seats in parliament but the subsequent elections in December 2012 saw Masooma Al Mubarak return to parliament along with newcomers Safaa Al Hashem and Thekra Al-Rashidi. Throughout their time in parliament, women legislators were the driving force behind drafting many new labor laws, including those that stipulated regulations surrounding working conditions and workers' rights, especially those for women.

Today, women in Kuwait are among the most emancipated in the Middle-East. Women form over 46 percent of those employed in the country and are seen in every sector of the economy and play an important role in the political and administrative life of the country. Employment rate of women in Kuwait is the highest in the MENA region and Kuwait is also ranked top among all Arab countries in the Human Development Report's Gender Inequality Index.

Though women in Kuwait have seen their long history of official political and social activism finally beginning to bear fruit, they need to remain vigilant against changing political scenarios that might attempt to rescind their hard won freedom and equality.

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From hummus to machboos... baba ghanoush to fattoush

Forget your processed snacks and fast foods; the much loved Middle-Eastern treat of khubz-humus combination, with a dressing of virgin olive oil and fresh herbs, wins hands down for its simplicity, naturalness, health and filling factors. While regional staples such as olives and olive oil, pitas, honey, sesame seeds, dates, sumac, chickpeas, mint, parsley, barley, pistachios, figs, pomegranates and dates dominate the distinctive taste of the region, Middle-Eastern dips are in themselves, multifunctional wonders that are worthy of being consumed on their own. Under the Ottoman Empire, sweet pastries of paper thin phyllo dough and dense coffee were also brought to the area. Good food is plentiful in the region and its skillful cooks are masters of the intricacies of Arabic cuisine. Appreciation of Arabic cuisine is skyrocketing globally; here are a few foods that highlight the Arabic menu's versatility and its emphasis on local produce.

Which came first, hummus or pita:

The chickpea (garbanzo beans), tahini, garlic, and lemon spread can be slathered on anything from a burger or baked potato to the traditional hot pita bread.

Veteran preference: the more the garlic, the better it is.

Machboos: Kuwait's national dish is a combination of fragrant rice cooked in a well spiced broth of chicken or mutton and topped with chicken, lamb, or fish and sometimes also a tomato sauce.

Gouzi (or ghoozi): Kuwaiti dish of grilled lamb stuffed with meat, rice, eggs, onions, and spices.

Tabbouleh: You do not have to be a

vegetarian to enjoy this magical salad – combination of bulgur, parsley, mint, onion and tomatoes. But watch out, you just might be tempted to switch teams after a steady diet of this popular salad.

Moutabal/baba ghanoush: Just when you are ready to declare hummus the best dip on the planet, you find moutabal. Similar to baba ghanoush, the dip offers a similar consistency with an eggplant kick but is spiced with chili to deliver a characteristic zing.

Fattoush: This tangy salad is one of the Middle-East's greatest contributions to world culture. Crispy lettuce, crunchy fried squares of pita, diced

tomatoes, cucumbers and onion, garlic, lemon, olive oil and mint make for a refreshing addiction.

Shawarma: The tender bits of skewered chicken, garlic puree and salad wrapped in pita have made it a beloved post-session snack the world over.

Baklava: Buttery filo pastry, chopped nuts, sweet syrup and honey dressing — made from a recipe that dates to the Ottoman empire— it is no wonder baklava is one of the most enduring and beloved dishes

in the region.

Shish tawook: Served with pure garlic paste, this simple skewered chicken dish is hugely popular in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iraq and the Gulf region. Dishes are served with fries and pita bread.

Falafel: You may consider fried chickpeas with herbs as simply a great snack, or a tasty, pita filler. For Middle-Easterners, however, the origins of falafel are a matter of patriotic interest. The dish's provenance sparks fierce debates,

but we are happy to sit on the sidelines and remain addicted to the taste.

Gers ogaily: A traditional Kuwaiti cake made with eggs, flour, sugar, cardamom, and saffron, traditionally served with tea.

Khubz: Kuwait's traditional flatbread, called Khubz, is a large flatbread baked in a special oven. Numerous Khubz bakeries dot the country. It is often served with mahyawa tangy fish sauce.

Bahrah Trading Company wishes all of Kuwait hearty congratulations on the Happy National and Liberation Days



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The Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Centre, which is being developed by Kuwait's Amiri Diwan, will be located in Flag Square next to Kuwait's Al Salam Palace. The project is in full swing and halfway into completion of what will be a cultural district that will include state-of-the-art theatres, concert halls, cinemas, conference and exhibition halls and a library archive. The four buildings will be accessed from spacious entrance courtyards and will sit like jewels within a larger public park.

Likely to attract the world's leading performers, the centre will have at least nine



Kuwait's new National Cultural District under construction



theaters of which eight are indoor and one outdoor. Of the nine theaters, the larger ones will be able to hold 2,000 people while the smallest up to 200.

The Al Salam Palace, bordering the new Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Centre, will

also be a part of the Amiri Diwan restoration project. The transformation of the 1960-built palace, which accommodated visiting heads of state, will turn it into an integral part of Kuwait's vibrant new cultural landscape.

Restoration efforts of the abandoned palace remained unfulfilled for over 20 years since the 1990 Iraqi-invasion, but the Amiri Diwan restoration project will now bring the palace as well as its magnificent chandeliers and extensive grounds to their former beauty and splendor.

In 2016 the palace will re-open as a museum dedicated to the history of Kuwait told through its 15 rulers. The design will retain the palace's original character while incorporating contemporary additions and meeting the highest international construction standards. Visitors will follow in the footsteps of heads of states and VIPs, arriving in the Rotunda, the heart of the original palace, before beginning a journey through nine re-created palatial rooms and galleries.

Kuwait... a look through history

Continued from Page 1

During the eighteenth century, regional geopolitical turmoil brought economic prosperity to Kuwait as it usurped Basra and Baghdad to become the principal commercial center for the transit of goods to and from the region. Kuwait became the entre port for goods from India to the Arabian hinterland all the way to Aleppo, the Mediterranean and beyond. Also the shifting of East India Company to Kuwait in 1792 helped secure the sea routes between Kuwait, India and the east coasts of Africa.

By late eighteenth century, Kuwait had established itself as a flourishing boat building and pearl diving center, as well as principal exporter of fine Arabian horses. At the height of its horse trade in the nineteenth century, Kuwait was reported to have sent over 800 Arabian steeds annually to India and the country's sea-going vessels and seamen were reputed to be among the best in the Arabian Gulf region. Discovery of Oil: But Kuwait's economy took a downturn in the early twentieth century following changing geopolitics, a global economic depression and lengthy blockades imposed on its borders. It was only after the discovery of large oil reserves in the late 1930s by the joint US-British Kuwait Oil Company and the first export of oil in 1946 that Kuwait's economic fortunes began to revive and shine again.

In the late 1950s, on the back of increasing oil revenues, a major public-work program began to enable Kuwaitis to enjoy a better standard of living. By the time of the country's independence in 1961, Kuwait was the largest exporter of oil in the Arabian Gulf and this prosperity drew many foreign migrant workers especially from Indian subcontinent. Independence of Kuwait: On 19 June, 1961 Kuwait gained independence after the then Amir, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the eleventh ruler of Kuwait, signed the Declaration of Independence which abrogated its protectorate status with Great Britain. Although 19 June was the day of Kuwait's Independence, starting from 1963 the celebration of Kuwait's Independence was moved to the 25 February, and called the National Day, in commemoration of the day on which Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah came to power.

Invasion and Liberation: The gruesome and unprovoked cruel aggression of Kuwait by invading Iraqi forces of Saddam Hussein on 2 August, 1990 marks an unforgettable event in the history of Kuwait. The UN condemned the invasion and authorized the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The USA, led by President George Bush, created an Arabic-Western coalition of 35 countries which freed Kuwait on 26 February 1991.

The seven month occupation by Iraq left hundreds of Kuwaitis and third country nationals martyred, tortured and brutalized, in addition to properties being looted or damaged. Before liberation, markets, warehouses, factories, hospitals, colleges, offices, residences and many government buildings were stripped of content and burnt, museums and cultural centers were emptied of their valuable objects by the retreating Iraqi forces. The environment was destroyed by the setting ablaze of over 700 oil-wells and resulted in loss of over US\$75 billion. In addition, the ports were blocked and mined, and power and water distillation plants were rendered inoperative. But within 10 days one port was cleared, power was restored two months later, and the last oil fire was extinguished in November 1991.

Kuwait today: Today, Kuwait is a modern, constitutional monarchy with an elected parliamentary system. The country ranks highly in regional comparisons of national performance, including protection of civil liberties, press freedom and judicial independence. Kuwait is frequently ranked as having the freest press in the Arab world.

Efforts exerted for building the State since independence reflect the wisdom of the political leadership, and stand as indicators of a better and brighter future horizon for the country.

The government has announced its revamped new five-year development plan (2015-2020), which focuses on economic reform and the implementation of several long-stalled mega strategic projects.

The two-pronged objective of the plan is to address a range of challenges and imbalances facing the socio-economic development process and to realize the country's strategic vision through the implementation of mega projects. Both decision-makers and the man in the street are looking forward to this process making tangible achievements that could live up to their aspirations and the huge resources of the country.

The 2015-2020 plan will recommend many of the projects that have long been held up due to disagreements between the legislative and executive branches of the government. These mega projects include the construction of an approximately KD1 billion metro project and KD8 billion trans-Gulf rail project to link the five partners of the Gulf Cooperation Council; privatization of some public schools and cooperatives and university; further development of the Mubarak Al Kabeer Port on Bubiyan Island. Other major projects like a new business hub (Silk City) in Subiya; the new Jaber Bridge linking Subiya region to the capital, a new airport, several hospitals and additional oil sector investments are also on the anvil.



Happy National Day & Liberation Day








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Kuwaiti Passionistas

From the determined Kuwaiti artifacts collector, to the biker with a huge collection of 350 bikes; from the calligraphy artist who weaves art through calligraphic words to the enthusiasm of a recycling enthusiast, the passions of Kuwaitis know no bounds. Kuwaiti Passionistas collects the patterns and passions of some such Kuwaitis and their take on patriotism this National and Liberation Days.

Wheels of Time Khaled Abueljebain (Avid Biker)



A 45-year old avid biker who also creates miniature bikes with anything he finds handy; be it a piece of wire or the dials of old watches, all things turn into bikes.

"I started biking in middle-school. It was around 1982-83 that I started with a Honda50 and my interest grew until I owned a Piaggio – an electric bike that can turn into a bicycle. Until 2001, there was nothing; that is when I actually bought my first bike. I work at the Public Institution for Social Security as a system engineer. I am responsible for managing the application at the administrative department."

"I am one of the heads of Kuwait Riders team – the second bikers' group in Kuwait. We are about 400 members now. My passion for bikes has grown over the past years; I own now five motorbikes of all categories – touring, on-road/off-road,

cruisers, vespas and classics. In addition to that, I own a collection of 350 small-scale motorbikes that are established by Frank Clement Company, which has an amazing scale of the Harley Davidson bikes or the Hondas; they make the exact same size."

"The National and Liberation Days means a lot to me. National Day is our love to Kuwait and our love to this amazing country and I hope it remains the same. Liberation Day means to me also the



world because I remember I was in Kuwait during the invasion. When we heard the news of liberation, we were all over the place out of joy and happiness. We do not ride out bikes during these celebrations because it is extremely dangerous because most of the drivers are reckless and incautious at that time. It is preferred that we ride during these celebrations early-morning in the holidays."

"I advice each and every biker in Kuwait who does not wear a helmet that they would look really good if they are in a full setup gear for riding like helmets, gloves, jackets and stuff like that."

Ministry of Interior gears up for national days celebrations

Ministry of Interior has taken all security measures ahead of celebrations of the country's National Day and Independence Day, a Mol senior official has stressed.

"These measures include intensifying security and traffic awareness campaigns, organized and supervised by the Security Media Department (SMD)," Director of the General Department of Public Relations and Morale Guidance Brig. Adel Al-Hashash told KUNA in a statement here on Saturday.

The Mol works in collaboration with all media outlets to guarantee trouble-free celebrations, Al-Hashash, also SMD acting director, said.

The SMD prepared an integrated media plan for the celebrations of the national days in line with a comprehensive media plan conducted by the supreme security committee in collaboration with all security

apparatuses, he noted. He added the media plan in carried out under the directions of Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Mol Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad.

The SMD coordinated with all media outlets and instructed radio and TV programs on security to urge citizens to cooperate with traffic men and policemen to avoid any violations and maintain discipline, Al-Hashash pointed out.

He appealed to citizens not to use spraying tools and fireworks, calling on youngsters to abide by the legal speed limits when driving their vehicles and not to violate traffic signs.

He congratulated citizens on the national days and hoped the country further progress, prosperity and stability

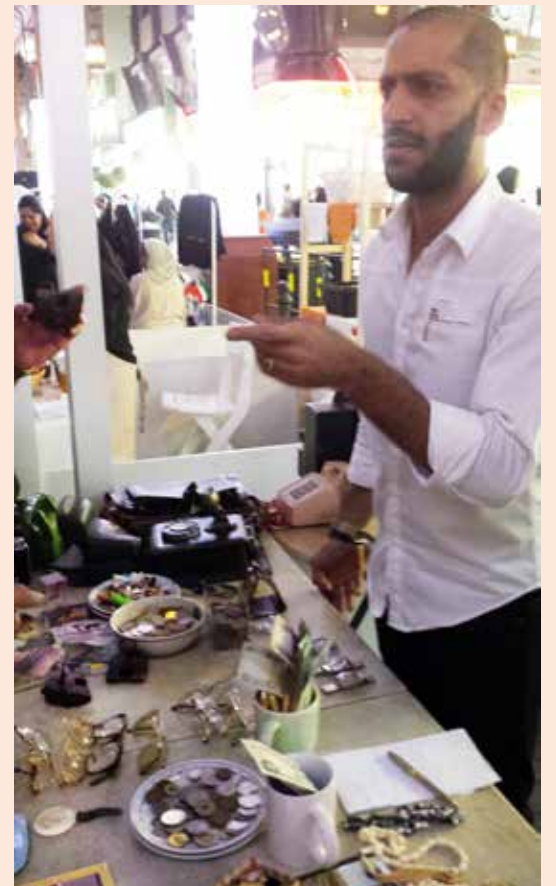
Holding onto the past

Haitham Alsarraf
(Artifacts collector)

"I have lot of artifacts and collectibles like vintage classic cameras, old coins, old currency, watches, clocks, ink pens, old telephones, stamps and badges, glasses, a few photographs – all of it mostly from the time of pre-Iraqi-invasion. Over the years, these have filled my home."

"I think that whatever I have collected tremendously represents Kuwaitis' past. In a way, it also represents a niche of today's Kuwaitis holding onto the past; many having a liking for vintage collectibles, I am sure that the people who value them would buy these things from me and keep them as priced possessions."

"I feel people now are more selfish. I wish they could be like they were before."





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HISTORICAL, VINTAGE & CLASSIC CAR MUSEUM

The first museum in Kuwait specializing in historical and vintage cars, this museum displays vintage, rare beauties, old-Kuwait picture gallery, a library with books about cars, encyclopedias and holds educational and cultural workshops. Its exhibition hall presents the finest collection of classic cars on public display anywhere within the region, with a superb 'James Bond' Aston Martin DB5 at the entrance. More than a full century of motoring history is laid out – and many cars hold unique and special connections to Kuwait. Adorning the walls of the exhibition hall are images from motoring's illustrious past, many of the photographs specifically highlight Kuwait's motoring history too. Also there is a permanent display of models illustrating many of the most iconic cars of the last hundred years. Located within the museum complex the 'Museum City' provides a unique and self-contained driving experience for 6 to 16 year-olds.



Kuwait, sitting in the cradle of one of the most ancient corners of world civilization, was once a barren desert with a few settlements and a largely nomadic population. While it is true that with a bit of patience and an eye for detail, there is plenty to see even in a barren desert, Kuwait has come long way from its impoverished desolate past.

Today, Kuwait is a country with all the trappings of rich, modern city-state with excellent museums, a corniche lined with combed beaches and lively restaurants; overflowing malls and souqs that mark the Kuwait City experience. The country's huge oil reserves and powerful currency, its peace and pace, and most importantly the country's tremendous capacity of generous acceptability of a large expat community, has since long been an influence on the country's culture and cuisine.

Here is a list of enjoyable options that you could consider for the upcoming National and Liberation Day holidays; unless, of course, your idea of fun is being part of the road-rally-celebrations and joining the escapades of feverishly enthusiastic patriotic youngsters, tooting horns and spraying colored water at passersby with their water cannons.



Housed in an iconic building with sail-shaped awnings on Kuwait's corniche, the Scientific Center is split into three beautifully-designed parts – the Discovery section, the IMAX theatre and the Aquarium, incidentally the largest in the Gulf. The waterfront provides an excellent walking promenade extending in wave like patterns for one whole kilometer, as well as two fishing piers extending 70m into the Gulf, for fishing enthusiasts, complete with seating, shades and light beacons. The recent Award-winning and interactive production – 1001 Inventions Exhibition at its outer tent, themed 'Discovering our Past... Inspiring Our Future', highlights over one thousand years of scientific and cultural achievements made during the creative Golden Age of Muslim Civilization, which stretched from Spain to China from the 7th century onwards. Indulge in a diverse range of exhibits, hi-tech games, interactive displays and science theatre at its eight interactive zones after watching the award-winning short film – 1001 Inventions The Library of Secrets.

Ras Al-Ardh Area, Arabian Gulf Road, Salmiya. The 1001 Invention is running until 7 March | Sunday – Thursday, 9am – 1pm, 4.30 – 9.30 pm / Friday, 2 – 10pm / Saturday from 9.00am till 9.30pm.

The Scientific Center, Kuwait

Sadu House

The roots of Kuwait are associated with both the desert and the sea. The Bedouins lived a life governed by the rhythm of seasons. Sadu weaving, characterized by geometric designs woven by hand with dyed, spun and colored wool, is a traditional craft of major importance. The Al-Sadu Society, which was formed with the intention of safeguarding traditional Bedouin crafts and saving them total extinction, led to the establishment of Sadu House. The house comprises various chambers decorated with construction materials and pottery, depicting the old houses, mosques, water and bread storage places etc., in Kuwait. Al Baraha, another section, is a roofed playground that in days gone by was meant for children to play.



The Shooting Range

Become a sharp-shooter as you participate in biathlon that combines rifle marksmanship with cross-country running. An expert guide at the shooting range walks you through the entire process; so take your choice of handguns and rifles, and go all out. **6th Ring Road, Behind Hunting and Equestrian Club.**



Kuwait Zoo

The Kuwait Zoo is an educational destination for everyone with over 1600 animals and rare birds, including five different sections, each containing 12 breeds of birds. Learn more about wildlife with dangerous carnivores like cheetah, leopards, tigers and lions; exotic birds like swans, flamingos, vultures, and white pelicans; 'creepy crawlies' like boa constrictors, desert cobras and rattle snakes. Airport Road off the Fifth Ring Road, Al-Omariya



SIRBB Circuit

Start your engines! SIRBB Circuit is one of the newest tracks in the Middle-East – a dream destination for speed racers and adrenaline junkies alike. The track includes seven curves designed to international safety standards with the highest technology. Aside from the spectator's section, a private room is available with a direct view of the track and screens equipped to transmit a live feed of the track events. Here is a perfect place to try something new, or fine tune your existing skills. Shuwaikh Industrial Area



Souq Mubarakia

Right in the heart of the city, Souq Mubarakia is an amazing labyrinth of little shops, main boulevards and halls of produce. Name what you need – from choice traditional foods to fabric stalls, vintage guns and ammo, perfumes to gold, souvenirs to a small history museum off the entrance courtyard – and you will find it in within the confines of this old traditional market. The market also hosts two mini museums: Sheikh Mubarak Kiosk and the first Islamic pharmacy in Kuwait, where admission is free. Do not miss out on the courtyard near Al-Bahar or Sea Mosque, where you can find traditional cafes brewing their teas over coals. The biggest and at least 200 year-old souq in Kuwait has in store authentic experiences for anyone and everyone.



Kuwait Towers

One of the country's most famous architectural landmarks, the Kuwait Towers are unique for the surroundings and offer a great view of downtown and of the Gulf Road from the rotating viewing platform located in one of the spheres of the tower. It consist of three towers – the highest 187m tall, the second one, a water reservoir is 147m tall and the shortest one which is an electricity control center is 113m tall. An urban monument that symbolizes Kuwait's progressive and economic renaissance as well as a world's cultural and tourist landmark, the towers are being transformed to feature complete lighting with the highest quality in LED technology. Turning it into the most recognized media façade, the fully-interactive towers are up for a spectacular lighting show on 25 and 26 February to celebrate Kuwait's National and Liberation Days.



National Museum

The Museum comprises four buildings and a planetarium. It was stripped and burnt by the Iraqi invaders, and now it houses the Al Sabah collection of Islamic art, the most comprehensive collections in the world. The other buildings display pearl-diving relics, archaeological material from excavations on Failaka Islands and ethnographic artifacts. The Museum also houses the Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah (DAI), a wide collection of Islamic art, ranging from early Islam to the eighteenth century. A variety of artistic and scholarly activities revolve around this collection. A reference library, with various publications of Hadeeth ad-Dar maintains a close link with the DAI, to give viewers a better knowledge of the artifacts.



House of Mirrors

See Kuwait's own House of Mirrors owned by Lidia Al-Qattan, the widow of the late Khalifa Al-Qattan, a renowned Kuwaiti artist, who filled the house with glass mosaics to create different art in different ways. In fact what started with just one wall has now turned into an entire house and grew to incorporate epic scenes such as in the Room of the Universe (bedroom) and the Basin of the Sharks (hallway). The house also features artwork by the late Khalifa Al-Qattan. Reputedly, 77 tons of mirror and 102 tons of white cement have been used in the creation of the mirror mosaics that spangle the entire house – both inside and out. House 17, Block 9, Qadisiya. Call in advance at 22518522.



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