

# India Minister hails strong India-Kuwait bilateral ties

## Embassy marks 62nd anniversary; India, Gulf deepen ties

**NEW DELHI:** Indian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Culture Meenakshi Lekhi affirmed the strong relations between India and Kuwait and expressed her keenness to seek ways to strengthen and develop these ties into broader areas to achieve common interests of both countries. Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Jassem Ibrahim Al-Najim said that this year marks the 62nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, expressing his hope that these close relations between the two countries will witness growth and development in the coming years.

He praised the 'Project Mausam' which aims to restore communication between the countries of the Indian Ocean, including the countries in the Arabian Gulf, which will also contribute to strengthening cultural relations between India and Kuwait. This came during a ceremony held by the Kuwait Embassy in New Delhi on the occasion marking the 62nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The event was attended by a number of officials in the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a number of heads of missions accredited in New Delhi. It is worth noting that Meenakshi Lekhi supervises the 'Project Mausam' which was launched in June 2014 in Qatar with an aim of creating a comprehensive database and electronic platform for UNESCO on sea routes, linking UNESCO cultural agreements with the World Heritage Convention. It also promotes research in sustainable tourism, heritage development, and highlights other cultural legacies across the Indian Ocean region.

### India, GCC ties

In another development, India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have agreed to deepen cooperation in several areas of mutual interest. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that Secretary from the External Affairs Ministry Ausaf Sayeed headed the Indian delegation in the first round of India-GCC Senior Officers Meeting held in Saudi city of Riyadh. The GCC delegation was led by Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Negotiations, GCC Abdulaziz Bin Hamad Al-Owaishaq.

Both sides agreed for early finalization of India-GCC Free Trade Agreement while conveying happiness over the progress in trade and investment. The Indian official appealed for more collaboration between the two countries in renewable energy, food security, health, IT sector and counter terrorism.

"Both sides proposed formation of Joint Working Groups to cater to particular areas of cooperation between India and GCC countries. These joint working groups would be headed by experts and would ensure regular and continuous progress across priority sectors," the statement said. Indian and GCC officials also hailed the progress in relations between India-GCC countries built on historical relationship, growing trade and investment, and presence of an 8.5 million Indians in the region.

"GCC as a trade bloc is the largest trade partner to India with a total trade of 154 billion dollars in 2021-22," it said adding people-to-people ties need to be further enhanced. The discussion



Indian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Culture Meenakshi Lekhi meets Kuwaiti Ambassador Jassem Ibrahim Al-Najim. —KUNA

also touched upon regional issues and both sides looked forward for early convention of India-GCC TROIKA meeting at Foreign Minister Level. The meeting, which saw participation from all GCC

countries, was pursuant to a MoU inked on India-GCC Mechanism of Consultation during Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visit to Riyadh in September 2022.—KUNA

## Doctors perform a rare surgery at Jaber Hospital

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Jaber Hospital held a five-day workshop during which five delicate pediatric neurosurgeries were carried out, including one that was done for the first time in Kuwait. The procedure, called a rhizotomy, is a minimally invasive surgical procedure to remove sensation from a painful nerve by killing nerve fibers responsible for sending pain signals to the brain. It was done on the back nerves of a child in order to alleviate the muscle cramps he is experiencing and help him move.

Jaber Hospital Neurologist Dr Aliaa Askar said such cases are rare but affect the general health of the patient, including their general functions and the nerves condition. She said the success rate in some cases may reach 80 percent. She added that the workshop was held under the supervision of the health ministry and aimed at learning from physicians with international experience in field of pediatric surgery.

Head of Jaber Hospital's surgery department Dr Suleiman Al-Mazidi lauded the ministry's role in bringing in the most competent doctors in addition to the best equipment to serve patients. He said the hospital seeks to attract Kuwaiti doctors along with inviting international experts to carry out delicate operations which contributes to reducing medical treatment abroad by presenting the best health services and most modern techniques to patients.

The visiting medical team carried out consultations for pediatric neurosurgery cases. The team also reviewed symptoms and diagnoses for cases to be operated on during the workshop. Askar hoped the ministry will continue to invite international experts in the future. Pediatric Neurologist and Head of the Neurosurgery Department at Arnold Palmer hospital in Florida Dr Samer Al-Baba said the visit was a consultative one where he carried out some surgeries. Dr Al-Baba said he prescribed the best medication for the cases he reviewed with assistance from the local team at Jaber Hospital.

He added that Jaber Hospital is a modern and advanced facility supplied with the best available equipment. Head of the neurosurgery unit Dr Ayoub Dixon lauded the efforts of brain and spine surgeons and their efforts in improving patient service. He added that the field of surgical technology will see more advancements in coming days in order to carry out complex, delicate surgeries.

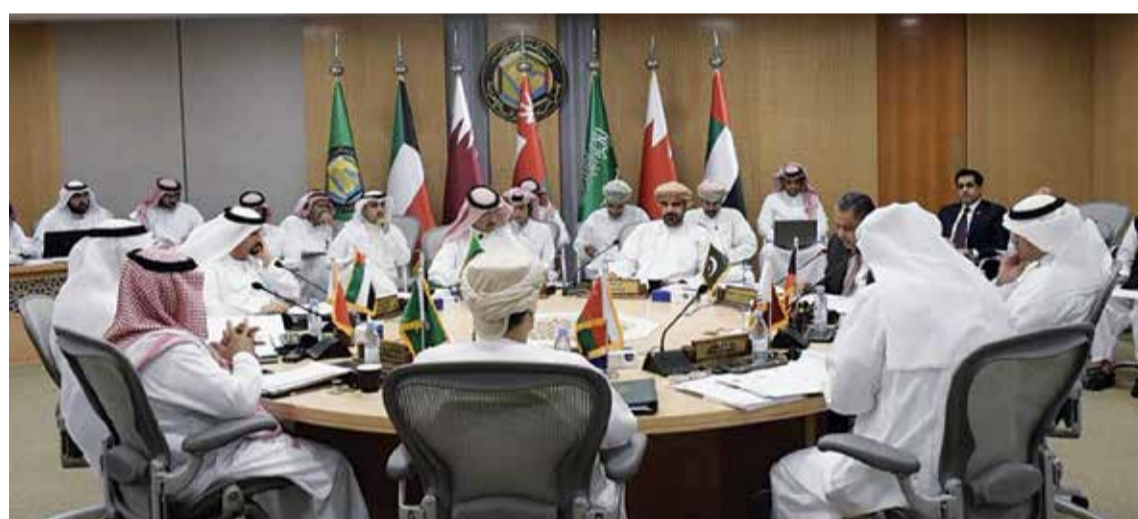


Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) receives Iraq's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

## GCC foreign ministries, Pakistan officials meet

**RIYADH:** Senior officials of the foreign ministries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Pakistani officials from the foreign ministry held, Tuesday, a political dialogue meeting, hosted by the GCC General Secretariat. The meeting highlighted a number of political and regional security issues, the Assistant Secretary for Political Affairs and Negotiations at the General Secretariat of the Cooperation Council, Dr Abdulaziz Al-Owaishaq, said in a statement issued by the secretariat.

Al-Owaishaq added that the meeting also discussed mechanisms to enhance strategic dialogue



GCC Senior officials of the foreign ministries and Pakistan officials meet. —KUNA photos

between the two sides and develop aspects of cooperation between them in light of the memorandum of understanding and the joint action plan that was approved for the period (2022-2026). The officials also talked about some economic and trade issues of common interest.

### Firm partnership with Iraq

Meanwhile, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi has underlined the significance of the firm strategic partnership between the GCC member states and Iraq that were established by their leaderships. This came during a meeting between Al-Budaiwi and Iraq's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Abdul Sattar Al-Janabi in Riyadh, the GCC Secretariat said in a statement Tuesday. This partnership was translated in a memo signed in 2019 and the action plan for 2014-2019 during which the two sides agreed on enhancing cooperation, dialogue and partnership in all fields,

Al-Budaiwi said. He stressed GCC's stances and resolutions on backing brothers in Iraq in the face of terrorism and illegal arms, and achieving stability and security in the country, as well as maintaining its sovereignty and territorial integrity. These resolutions and stances also aim to maintain Arab and Muslim identity of Iraq, and its national and social unity, and reject all foreign interferences into its domestic affairs, Al-Budaiwi noted.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed enhancing partnership and implementing the action plan in all domains through political and security dialogue, and investment and commercial cooperation, and cultural and sports activities, according to the statement. They further reviewed the GCC-Iraqi ties and means of developing and enhancing them to serve their common interests, in addition to discussing the most outstanding challenges and crises on regional and international arenas, the statement concluded. —KUNA



LONDON: UK, Kuwait hold strategic dialogue on boosting ties, cooperation. —KUNA photos

## UK, Kuwait hold strategic dialogue on boosting ties

**LONDON:** The first round of strategic dialogue between Kuwait and the United Kingdom has been held in the UK, with both sides examining prospects of cementing further the historic and broad relations and cooperation at diverse levels. The Kuwaiti side in the dialogue session was headed by Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, while the British side was chaired by Sir James Cleverly, the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain and North Ireland.

Sheikh Salem, at start of the meeting, conveyed sincere greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; addressed to King Charles III, the Monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland. He also relayed identical salutes from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah toward the UK leadership, government and people, lauding the solid, historic and



LONDON: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met with MP of the UK House of Commons Nigel Evans, head of the Foreign Affairs Committee Alicia Kearns and head of the parliamentary group at the House of Lords Rehman Chishti, as part of his UK visit on Monday.

friendly relations between the two countries.

His Highness the Prime Minister affirmed necessity of boosting cooperation and coordination for serving mutual interests between the two friendly countries, while emphasizing significance of elevating the bilateral ties to broader levels for serving the joint interests. He recalled historic events that had been witnessed in the process of partnership, friendship dating back to more than 124 years ago, exactly in the year 1899; such a process that has been based on security, defense cooperation, boosting mutual investments, cultures' exchange, in addition to coordination in the sectors of medicine and teaching, noting Britain's unwavering commitment to safeguarding security and sanctity of Kuwait.

Also during Monday's session, Sheikh Salem praised solidity of the cooperation at various international quarters, expressing hope for boosting this cooperation and lauding the high level of the solid, historic, strategic and friendly relations bonding the State of Kuwait with the UK. Sir Cleverly expressed pride of the friendly and close relations and the strategic partnership between his nation and the State of Kuwait. Although the world has been witnessing major and various developments, the Kuwaiti-UK relations have grown stronger, he said, also applauding Kuwait's balanced foreign policy that is based on bol-

stering regional security and peace.

Sheikh Salem and Sir Cleverly discussed during the first round of the dialogue latest regional and international developments, means of boosting the mutual cooperation on the international arena, coordination vis a vis some issues such as the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. The two parties expressed desire to hold the second round of the strategic dialogue in Kuwait, next year.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met in the British capital, London, with UK National Security Adviser Sir Tim Barrow, as part of his official visit to the UK, leading the delegation for the first round of strategic dialogue between the State of Kuwait and the UK. The meeting, which took place yesterday, Monday, dealt with the close deep-rooted ties between Kuwait and the UK that go back as long as over a century.

They also reviewed the process of joint cooperation between both sides, in addition to conversing the most prominent developments regionally and internationally. During the meeting, ways to enhance joint cooperation between the two sides were discussed to support efforts to establish peace, stability and security in the Middle East, in a way that benefits both sides. —KUNA



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