

Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George at the Launch of Indian Business Directory 2021, Kuwait, May 18, 2021

Esteemed Guests, my friends from Media, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very Good Afternoon to all of you.

I begin by thanking His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait for hosting the large Indian community in Kuwait and for the care extended to the Indian community here in Kuwait during the Covid 19 pandemic.

I also thank the leadership and the citizens of the State of Kuwait for the support extended to India these days when we are faced with unprecedented challenges associated with COVID 19 pandemic. Today, India is going through the most challenging time due to the ferocious second wave of COVID 19, which has badly hit many parts of our country and has put an enormous strain on our healthcare resources. The whole of society and whole of government approach adopted by our leadership in India helped us win the fight against Covid 19 in the first phase. In this second wave also the leadership is doing everything humanly possible to save lives and win this fight against Covid 19. I am confident that we will defeat this pandemic comprehensively in coming weeks and months and save lives. The sudden and acute crisis has been a formidable challenge and it is most heartening to see our friends across the globe strongly coming out in support of India. The leadership and government of State of Kuwait have been very supportive at this critical time.

Dear Friends,

India and Kuwait have always stood by each other, in good or difficult times. Today, we see that history of mutual trust and friendship reinforced again, with the substantive medical assistance of Liquid Medical Oxygen as well as other essential medical equipment, going from Kuwait to India, on a sea and air bridge, involving our naval ships and aircraft. Kuwait has already send over four hundred metric tons of liquid oxygen to India. Our plan is to send over 2000 metric tons in coming weeks. This is in addition to several thousands of oxygen cylinders which have gone to India by ship and aircraft. The many friends of India in Kuwait and Indian community have also been in the forefront of arranging oxygen cylinders.

It is also a remarkable example of our bilateral cooperation. India does not hesitate to reach out when help is needed anywhere abroad and indeed, assistance is reaching India spontaneously now when India needs it. As we say often these days, This Too Shall Pass. Till such time we will continue to support the Indian community here in Kuwait and also continue to extend all possible assistance to our brothers and sisters back home in India. Together, we will prevail over this pandemic. And together, we will move ahead into better times.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today we have gathered here for the launch of Indian Business Directory-2021. Compiled by Prisma media, this directory is a comprehensive resource for anyone interested in Indian businesses in Kuwait. A large number of our fellow countrymen have been actively contributing to the business and commerce in Kuwait, some for many decades and with their hard work, innovation and entrepreneurship they have been attaining great successes in their chosen business sectors. They contribute to the economy of Kuwait in every way and their success is success of India-Kuwait bilateral relationship. Hence, a publication like this one brought out by Ms. Indu Malhotra of Prisma Media serves as a database for the benefit of all.

I congratulate Ms. Malhotra and her entire team for this effort. The content of the directory is not that of the Embassy, it is entirely the effort of Ms. Malhotra and her team. I am told that it is work in progress and in coming years the team will work towards further improving the quality of content and also expand its reach and broaden the canvas. I appreciate her effort in putting together this directory, which is an example that through innovation and entrepreneurial skills everyone can contribute towards promoting India – Kuwait business partnership. A large number of our senior businessmen and entrepreneurs are present here today mostly in virtual platform. I acknowledge the presence of Shri Ashok Kalra, Advisor to IBN and Shri Choji Lamba, President of the IBPC here. I also acknowledge the many members of IBPC as well as IBN who joined us virtually.

Dear Friends,

Here in the Embassy, our endeavor is to make a sustained effort to streamline our engagement with the business community and promote India-Kuwait bilateral economic and commercial relationship. Earlier this month we had a zoom interaction between the CII and Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In recent months, despite the COVID 19 pandemic, we held several rounds of sector wise meetings with major business firms in Kuwait.

The last year has been a difficult year for most businesses anywhere in the world and Kuwait is no exception. Despite that, our business leaders have kept their morale high and continue with an eye on the long-term scenario. Through our platform of IBN, we will continue to engage with you all on macro as well as micro subjects and themes and we hope that this platform will galvanise unity and collective learning for all of us. I look forward to your ideas and suggestions to have more sectoral engagement with Kuwaiti business. I also wish that we all will be able to meet physically soon.

It is our endeavour to not let our momentum be affected by the pandemic situation. We understand very well that our economy, our businesses need to run as smoothly as possible for us to bounce back faster. Hence, we will continue our facilitation and business promotion activities. Like it has always been in the past, a recovery and an upward trajectory is waiting to arrive for most sectors after this long pandemic slump. We need to be ready for that. Our India Business Bulletin which includes all relevant updates from the world of business and industry is being well received. I am happy to release the next edition of the India Business Bulletin later in the program today. I encourage you all to read, share and send in your comments and feedback on the bulletin.

Before I conclude, let me remind you about a few events that we are scheduled to organize this month. We have the launch of Ayush Information Cell planned on May 21, the launch of Indian Women's Network planned on May 22 and my Open House on May 26. We will continue to do these events, while we continue to focus on priority engagement to support our motherland in this hour of crisis and also ensure the welfare of those Indians in Kuwait affected by the pandemic.

Dear Friends,

I wish that the India Business Directory contributes to further strengthening our bilateral economic and commercial relationship. With these words I formally launch the Indian Business Directory 2021 in Kuwait.

Thank you.