

**REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR SIBI GEORGE ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS OF INDIA IN KUWAIT,  
JANUARY 26, 2022**

My fellow citizens, Friends of India,

On the occasion of the Republic day of India, I extend greetings to all Indians in Kuwait. Let's join our 1.3 billion brothers and sisters in India and millions of Indian Diaspora abroad and billions of our friends across the world to celebrate this occasion. I particularly congratulate one million Indian brothers and sisters in Kuwait.

Let me begin by thanking His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of Kuwait and His Highness Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of Kuwait for hosting our large community in Kuwait.

Dear Friends,

This year's Republic Day is of special significance as it comes during the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of India's independence which we celebrate as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. In Kuwait's context, it comes when we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries.

For each one of us, Indians, as our Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji said, it is an occasion to remember and pay home to our freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives to win us freedom and our soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice to defend our freedom and secure our borders. Our Constitution is not just a basic law of the land, it also serves as a scripture for social and economic transformation of India. And today India continues to be a thriving democratic country and also the fastest growing major economy in the world.

For us in the Embassy here, this is an occasion to recall and review what we were able to achieve during the last one year. 2021 has been a very difficult year, for the community and for the embassy. We all faced many challenges. Almost all of my staff in the Embassy got

infected with Covid at some point of time, during the last two years. We used to do PCR test for all the staff every fortnight and each time the results gave us surprises. I am so happy and proud of my staff that they were able to face these challenges and continued to extend smooth consular service and community welfare activities. Covid or no covid they delivered and covid or no covid they continue to deliver, meeting all our targets and deadlines.

Let's recall the Vande Bharat Mission arranging travel of hundreds of thousands to India and later return of those stranded in India back to Kuwait, setting up of an air-bubble which continues even today, vaccination drive, food shortages and medicine distribution drive, supply of air tickets, our challenges were too many. With the full support and active participation of our many associations and groups and many of our well-wishers both Indians and Kuwaitis we were able to meet most of these challenges. We should always remember the many sacrifices made by our doctors, nurses and other medical professionals in saving lives of Indians and Kuwaitis. Also, we should not forget the contributions made by other professionals, our lawyers who organize free legal consultations every Saturday at the Embassy, our businessmen who contribute generously and our many volunteers who serve honestly. We were also able to address the many concern that our children and their parents had, including by organizing JEE, NATA and NEET examinations for the first time in Kuwait.

Dear Friends,

Despite the challenges of Covid, we had a very good year in our bilateral relations. We celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations in a befitting manner. I recall the Indian tricolor flying on Kuwait Towers for the first time in the history of those towers, not once but twice. I recall the MoU with NCCAL to celebrate a yearlong cultural festival. We were able to take our bilateral relationship with Kuwait to a new level of partnership with two high-level visits, that of Kuwaiti Foreign Minister to India in March and that of our External Affairs Minister to Kuwait in June last year. We

organized the Regional Ambassadors' Conference in Kuwait for the first time, which was attended all our Ambassadors in GCC.

Our bilateral cooperation in the fight against pandemic further strengthened our partnership. You would recall the dispatch of emergency medical team from India to Kuwait and then supply of Made in India Vaccines to Kuwait. We recall the supply of medical oxygen from Kuwait to India, which made Kuwait the largest supplier of medical oxygen to India. Our trade relations and business engagement also witnessed an upward swing despite the Covid 19 related supply chain disruptions.

We also celebrated India in Kuwait in a big way. Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav was celebrated in Kuwait by almost all the Indian Associations in Kuwait. The list no doubt in long. In all these activities we also had the support of media friends who helped us to reach out to Indian community in Kuwait and also to our Kuwaiti friends. I thank each one of them for their dedication and commitment.

Dear Friends,

We will continue all our efforts this year as well. We will face the challenge of Covid 19 together with determination and commitment. We will continue to strive towards further strengthening our bilateral engagement with Kuwait. We will soon hold our Joint Commission Meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers. We will have more high-level visits and meetings. We will make Kuwait a partner in our Aatmanirbhar Bharat and in our 3 Ts project – Trade, Technology and Tourism.

Today, we all have heard Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji mentioning about his visit to his village and on the importance of our home villages in our lives. One project I visualize for our large Indian community in Kuwait is to connect with our home villages and home towns back in India and explore how we can contribute in the development of our villages. This year, we in the Embassy will work with our ICSG, IBPC, IDF, IIM/IIT Alumni and our other associations and groups in Kuwait to connect with our home villages and home towns. We have seen how

we were able to send medical oxygen in large quantity last year which helped thousands in our towns and villages. I know many of our associations and individuals are already connected with the development of their villages and towns. Let's do it in a bigger scale. Lets' contribute to promote and support the handicrafts, art and culture in our own villages and towns, let's support the export of products from our villages, towns and districts. Let our new motto be, 'Connecting with our Villages'. This is the target that we could set for ourselves and for all groups and associations while we celebrate India in Kuwait and in addition to our contributions to ensure the welfare of our community here. I look forward to your suggestions and ideas.

Dear Friends,

We will continue to celebrate India in Kuwait as part of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav and our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. We have a lot of work to do. We will continue to promote India in Kuwait, including our Ayurveda and our yoga. We will continue to smoothen further our consular services and do everything humanly possible to ensure the welfare of our community in Kuwait.

Let me conclude by repeating what I always said. Those Indians who need our help are not liabilities, they are not strangers; they are not problems, they are priorities. We will always receive them with a smile at the Embassy. They always have a meal ready at our Embassy, every day.

Once again, I wish you a very happy Republic Day.

Thank you. Jai Hind.

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