



My Opinion

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Happy National Day The fireworks generation... the 1980s

Every year we celebrate national day we evaluate what we have politically and economically achieved and what we forget to look into is how we as a nation have stood together in good and bad times and succeeded in protecting our country against our enemies.

When we were children and those who are a few years younger or older than I am will relate to what I will now write about. To make this easier I will gladly say I am 44 and by my generation I mean those who remember how we used to celebrate national day.

A teapot, snacks and we get into dad's car and drive to the locations where fireworks were held. We would get stuck in traffic and never grumble because what was awaiting us was the fun of the year, the national songs and our fireworks.

Life was simple and we weren't the Starbucks generation. We were the tea and the car drive, all the way to the fireworks generation.

Life was simple and our dreams were simple. National day was associated to fireworks and songs about Sheikh Isa may his soul rest in peace. I still remember this song that had our beloved kings name in it "Ya BuHamad Sheikh el balad..teslam lena ebladena" and its translation is the "The Father of Hamad is the ruler of our country, God bless our country."

We learnt to love Sheikh Isa and Hamad's name was also associated to him, and we after him had already loved our future king.

He was the son of the modest down to earth leader we had known as children and our hearts were all open to his son, our new leader.

And this just reminded me of how modesty in its own form is greatness.

If you are from my generation, you would also remember Adhari Park, Andalus Garden and the Water Park. These were the places we used to go to during our national day breaks. There was no such thing as three days break in Paris. We loved and enjoyed our own country and our love for it made us wait for this day to come.

You might also remember when the first fast food chains were opened. Wimpy opened before Dairy Queen and many of our birthday parties were held in DQ.

You would also remember the first time Baskin Robbins was opened with its 31, 32, or 33 flavours. And this was all in the early 1980s. To us, Wimpy followed by Baskin were the best treats ever. That's how we celebrated national day.

We had nothing else. We only had those, yet life was beautiful.

Today we and our children have much more and I will not say life was more beautiful then.

No, life is of course more beautiful now if we have kept our country and our families together and we did.

We succeeded.

So today when we celebrate our national day we should celebrate the fact that we kept it all together. We were always one family and we will always remain to be that. THAT is our accomplishment.

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of this newspaper.)



Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) yesterday received at the SCW's premises the Wife of Malaysian Prime Minister, Datin Paduka Seri Hajjah Rosmah Mansor, in the presence of HH Shaikha Mariam bint Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Wife of Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. Princess Sabeeka reviewed with Rosmah Mansor Bahraini women's achievements and emphasised the importance of exchanging expertise among Islamic countries to avail of each others' experiences in the fields of women advancement. The Malaysian Premier's wife said that she is looking forward to opening up new horizons of bilateral cooperation, especially in the women empowerment field.

A tribute to the fallen heroes

Manama

Rich tributes were paid yesterday to the fallen heroes of the Kingdom with HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa affirming that the "nation will not forget those who lost their lives while defending the homeland."

In a statement on the eve of the Commemoration Day, HH Shaikh Nasser said, "Bahraini people have every right to be proud of the nation's martyrs and the sacrifices they had made to protect the nation and defend its capabilities and achievements."

The Commemoration Day, which falls on December 17, is an opportunity to pay homage to the late servicemen and commemorate their bravery and sacrifices for the sake of defending the nation's sovereignty and protecting its citizens and residents.

This day, Shaikh Nasser said, is an opportunity to recall with pride their dedication in the service of the homeland, and their courage and bravery while



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa (file)

defending the nation.

"I am proud of living with the martyrs of Bahrain and having close ties with them," said Shaikh Nasser.

"I witnessed them racing to the battlefields of dignity and glory, carrying their lives in their hands for the sake of the homeland."

"They will be granted

heavenly rewards," added HH Shaikh Nasser, the Representative of HM the King for Charity Work and Youth Affairs, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports Chairman and the Bahrain Olympic Committee President.

HM the King's decision, HH Shaikh Nasser said, to associate the Commemoration Day with

the Anniversary of HM the King's Accession to the Throne reflects the royal pride in the sacrifices of the late soldiers.

In a statement released separately, Information Affairs Minister Ali bin Mohammed Al-Rumaihi said, "The sacrifices of our heroic soldiers have always been valued by the wise leadership and all the people of Bahrain."

"The Commemoration Day has a big historical significance," the minister said adding that it shows that the leadership, government and people of Bahrain never forget the sacrifices of its heroes who fell in the line of duty."

The Minister paid tribute to the staff of the BDF, Interior Ministry and National Guard who gave their lives, in defence of their religion, homeland, the Arab identity and humanity.

Al-Rumaihi hailed the martyrs' valour and heroic stances in confronting extremist and terrorist organisations and staving off their threats to the security of the Arabian Gulf.