

47th National Day, Ties with UAE to strengthen: PM

ISLAMABAD: As the United Arab Emirates (UAE) celebrated its national day on Sunday, Prime Minister Imran Khan lauded the relations between the two countries, saying the ties based on “mutual support and cooperation, and will further strengthen in future”.

In a felicitation letter to the leadership of the UAE on the country’s 47th National Day, Khan said that the “development, prosperity and good governance of UAE is exemplary in a short period of 47 years”.

He said that it is a “matter of confidence that the relations between the two countries have changed into a long-term strategic economic partnership”.

The PTI-led government, which completed its 100 days in power on November 26, counted “resetting relations with key partners including Saudi Arabia and the UAE” among its accomplishments in its performance report.

Since assuming office in August, the premier has visited the UAE twice. The first visit took place in September when Imran Khan visited Saudi Arabia and then the UAE. He was received by Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan and the two countries had agreed to strengthen economic, trade and investment relations.

The next month, a UAE delegation—comprising CEOs/senior officials of major companies including Mubadala Petroleum, ADIA (Sovereign Wealth Funds), Etisalat, DP World, Dubai Investment Authority, Emaar Properties, Aldahra Agriculture and Abu Dhabi Fund for Development – arrived in Pakistan.

According to Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the one-day visit of the delegation headed by Dr Sultan Aljaber, minister of state and the CEO of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company was a follow-up to the prime minister’s maiden visit to Abu Dhabi.

In November, the prime minister embarked upon his second trip to the UAE. He was received by Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi and was accorded a reception at the presidential palace, which was followed by delegation-level talks.

He was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising Foreign Minister Qureshi, Finance Minister Asad Umar, Petroleum Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Power Minister Omar Ayub Khan, PM’s Adviser on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, PM’s Adviser on Accountability Shahzad Akbar and Chief of the Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, among others.

The inclusion of Akbar, who is also head of the government’s Assets Recovery Unit, in the delegation was said to be “meaningful” following his claims to have traced properties of Pakistanis in Dubai worth billions of dollars and engaged the UAE authorities in talks about recovery of wealth stashed in the Gulf emirate.

During his day-long trip, the prime minister had also met Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the vice president and prime minister of the UAE and ruler of Dubai.

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