

# Independence Day of Pakistan

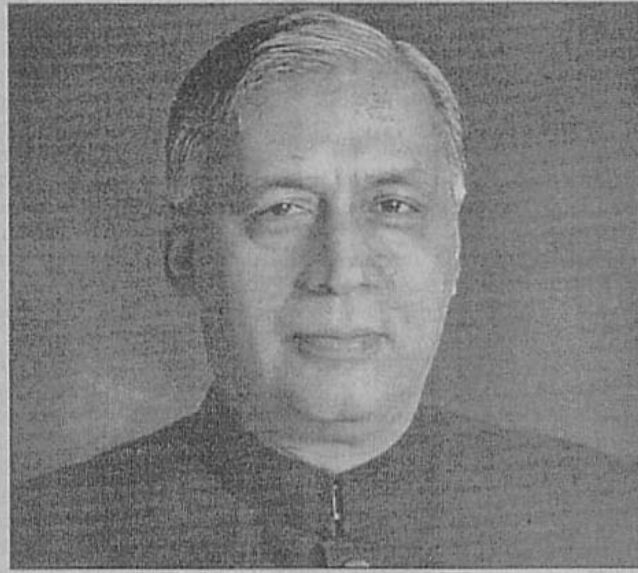
The Daily Star

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

AUGUST 14, 2006



General Pervez Musharraf  
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



Shaukat Aziz  
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

## MESSAGE

I am privileged to greet my Pakistani brothers and sisters both at home and overseas on the auspicious occasion of our 6th Independence Day.

The emergence of our beloved country Pakistan, as a sovereign state on the map of the world was the result of a long and arduous struggle by the Muslims of South Asia under the matchless leadership of our founding father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Dynamism of the Quaid was wonderfully complemented by his personal and leadership qualities. He inspired the people by principles of unity, faith and discipline, enabling them to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds in achieving independence.

It is imperative that we, the people of Pakistan realise the importance of a strong, prosperous and progressive country for us as a nation. If we analyse economically, politically and militarily weak find it a struggle to exist as sovereign states on the world stage. It is, therefore, our national duty to make Pakistan strong.

While today is without doubt a day for both prayer and rejoicing, it is also a moment to pause and reflect. We have to examine our strengths and weaknesses. While keeping in view the lofty objectives for which our country was created, it is our duty to take our beloved country forward in attaining its rightful place in the comity of nations.

Alhamdulillah, far-sighted policies and reforms over the last seven years have given the country correct strategic direction and Pakistan is beginning to realise its tremendous human, geo-strategic and economic potential.

Consistency and transparency of policies have resulted in economic stability; our focus is now on transferring these benefits to the people. The defence of the country has been made impregnable and a comprehensive strategy is in place to ensure that it goes from strength to strength. We have also achieved much needed political stability for progress of the country. There is an elected government and representatives of the people are present at all tiers of the legislature, from the national and provincial, down to the grassroots level.

On this occasion, I would like to reiterate that we stand for democracy and have taken far-reaching measures to ensure its sustainability; there is total freedom of speech and expression in the country. Steps have been taken for the politico-socio-economic empowerment and rights of women. The antiquated and colonial administrative structure has been replaced by developing power down to the peoples' representatives at the grassroots level and local government is in its second tenure. A host of development projects have been initiated and are at various stages of completion. In this regard, special care has been taken for generation of jobs for the poor segments of society and bringing progress to far flung areas in order to bring them at par with the rest of the country.

Our achievements do not mean that we as a nation have overcome the challenges before us, for on the fringes of society there are obscurantist elements who do not wish to see Pakistan on the path of progress and prosperity. It is our collective duty as citizens of the state not to let such elements succeed in their evil designs.

Let us therefore pledge on this occasion that we will join hands to make Pakistan a dynamic, progressive, tolerant and democratic Islamic welfare state. We have the example of our founding father before us to emulate. We cannot afford to let down the vast majority of moderate and peace-loving citizens of our country.

May Allah Almighty grant us the wisdom, courage and resolve to take our beloved country on the path of prosperity and glory. Ameen.

## MESSAGE

Today, we are celebrating our Independence Day. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartiest felicitations to my fellow citizens living in Pakistan and abroad.

We must remember that the Muslims of South Asia made great sacrifices for achieving independence and our ancestors, under the inspiring leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah pledged to strive for the greater glory of our nation. It is, therefore, our foremost duty to demonstrate firm determination for upholding unity of the nation and strengthening integrity and solidarity of our country. I am confident that our nation imbued with a sense of honour, national pride and dedication will spare no effort to protect its national interests. In the prevailing environment, internal unity is far more important than ever before.

I appeal to my fellow Pakistanis that we should work hard to ensure peace and prosperity in our country. We should endeavour to create a tolerant and progressive society, as cherished by our founding fathers. I urge you to maintain unity in your ranks and live in harmony as brothers and sisters without any ethnic, sectarian or regional considerations.

The reforms introduced by the present government have laid the foundations of a stable political system and sound economy.

We should stand together as a nation, united to face the challenges with courage and fortitude. We should make our nation stronger and more prosperous so that we are able to foil any internal or external threat to our sovereignty and ensure that our future generations enjoy the fruits of peace and prosperity.

On this Day, let us pledge to the Quaid's guiding principles of Unity, Faith and Discipline and make Pakistan a truly modern, progressive, enlightened, democratic Islamic welfare state. This will be a befitting tribute to our founding father. I pray to Almighty Allah that He keeps us on the right path and reward our sincere efforts in improving the well-being of the people of Pakistan, Ameen!



Alamgir Babar  
High Commissioner of Pakistan

## MESSAGE

Towards a future for mutual benefit

Bangladesh-Pakistan relations have entered a new dynamic

phase. This growing relationship is deep rooted and broad-based. The common aspirations of our people provide the underpinning for this close friendship. Both share the same desire of peace and stability in the region and economic prosperity and well-being at home.

Interaction at all levels continues to expand and intensify. The visits of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan to Bangladesh and that of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to Pakistan have placed our bilateral relationship on a new trajectory for the mutual benefit of our two countries. Cultural exchanges, people to people contacts and bilateral commerce and trade have gained new momentum and direction.

During Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's visit to Pakistan in February 2006, our two Prime Ministers agreed to increase bilateral two-way trade to US\$ one billion by the year 2007. Several MOUs were signed including in the areas of agriculture, tourism and export promotion. It was also agreed to work towards a bilateral Free Trade Agreement. Once finalised, it will give fresh impetus to bilateral trade and commerce.

Last year, the Joint Economic Council met to identify measures to further strengthen mutually beneficial economic cooperation. A Joint Working Group has been formed to reinforce this process. Pakistan has extended the facility of duty free import of jute and has offered to enhance duty free import of tea to 15000 tons per annum. Exchanges between our business communities are on the rise. There is now greater private sector participation in our respective trade fairs. The first meeting of the Joint Business Council will be taking place later this month. As a result of these measures, bilateral trade has grown by 20% over last year to approximately US\$ 340 million in 2005-06.

More than 70% of Pakistani exports to Bangladesh are raw materials for Bangladesh's growing textile industry. Value addition takes place in Bangladesh from which the country continues to greatly benefit. Hence, the major share of Pakistani exports to Bangladesh are in the form of inputs for the country's largest foreign exchange earning sector.

Pakistani businessmen are showing increasing interest in investing in Bangladesh. FDI from Pakistan to Bangladesh has grown to US\$ 90 million. Over 50 Pakistani business concerns are currently operating in Bangladesh, some are located in the EPZs. Applications of several other Pakistani companies

## Pakistan's economic outlook

MAQBOOL AHMAD BHATTY

As it enters the 60th years of its history on 14 August, 2006 Pakistan is again launched on era of dynamic growth. Since 1999, when President Musharraf assumed power, he announced a seven-point agenda, designed to introduce reforms, improve governance and bring about an all-round development of the economy, in order to improve the life of the people. From 2000, there has been an improvement in the rate of growth, which exceeded 8 per cent in 2005 being the second highest in the world. The per capita income has reached \$800.

Prior to 2000, the economy was characterized by high fiscal deficits, the debt burden was consuming over 60 per cent of the budget, and the foreign exchange reserves had fallen to an all time low. Exports were stagnating around \$8 billion, and very little investment was being attracted. Since then, the government has narrowed the fiscal gap and achieved a considerable increase in exports. The macro indicators have shown a remarkable transformation, with foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$13 billion, the fiscal deficit falling below 4 per cent, and the national debt reduced so that the annual burden of debt servicing fell below 25 per cent. The Direct Foreign Investment reached the record figure of over \$3 billion.

As the annual review of the economy, that preceded the presentation of the budget showed, the economy has continued to do well despite the disastrous earthquake of October 2005, that hit the northern part of the country and Azad Kashmir. An estimated 73,000 persons died while nearly 4 million were made homeless. Thanks to generous aid both from inside and outside the country, the task of rehabilitation and reconstruction is being carried out in an organized manner.

Like other parts of the world,

for investment are in the pipeline. The Government of Pakistan has increased the number of scholarships available for Bangladeshi students to one hundred. These include the areas of engineering, medicine, advanced sciences, banking and information technology. These scholarships are over and above the self-finance scheme under which students are studying in Pakistan on payment of local rates.

Prestigious private universities such as LUMS, IBA Beaconhouse and others have Bangladeshi students on their enrollment. Similarly, there are a number of Pakistanis studying in Bangladeshi educational institutions.

People to people contacts continue to expand and grow. There are regular exchanges of media representatives, academics and artists. Institutional links are being forged between our respective think tanks and centers of excellence. Civil society in both countries are increasing their cooperation for the common benefit of the people. Music, art and other cultural activities are further strengthening the existing bonds between the two countries.

The mutual goodwill that exists between our people is most evident whenever our countries have faced challenges or suffered natural calamities. The spontaneous and generous support and assistance extended by the Government and the People of Bangladesh for the victims of the major earthquake that struck parts of Pakistan last year has been greatly appreciated by Pakistanis.

At the regional and international levels, Bangladesh and Pakistan share a common vision. Out two countries seek regional and international cooperation in order to attain greater economic progress and prosperity. Globalisation offers challenges and opportunities. By working together, we can maximize on the advantages of these new global trends.

Today, the people of Pakistan celebrate the nation's 60th Independence Day. As stated by President General Pervez Musharraf in his message, it is a day for prayer and rejoicing in the country. At the same time, it is also a moment for reflection. We are looking to the present with a view to a better tomorrow. It is in this spirit that I would like to take this opportunity to invite the people of Bangladesh to join us in mutually beneficial enterprises for the future common good of our two countries.

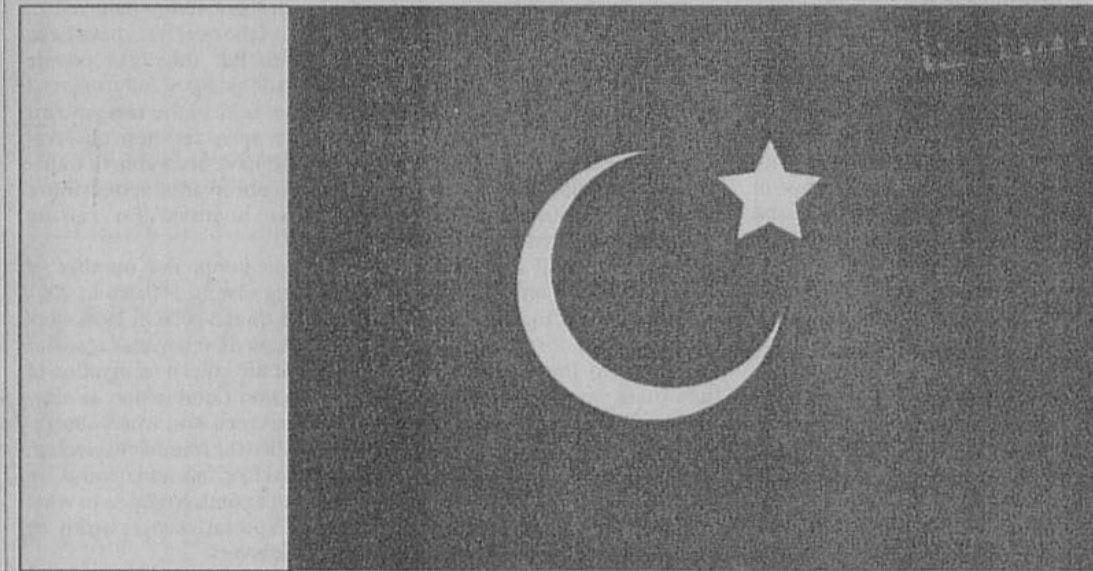
Pakistan is facing the challenge of meeting rising demands of energy as well as water. The country has the largest integrated system of irrigation in the world, but as its population has quadrupled since independence, the requirements have increased as well. The Indus river system also provides a cheap source of electricity, and with rapid industrialization, the requirements for energy has also been rising fast. A programme of building five major

dams has been taken in hand, to be completed by 2016, and the opening ceremony of the first one, the Bhabha-Diamir Dam in the northern areas has already taken place.

Since 2000, the government's economic strategy has been based on three pillars. These are liberalization, de-regulation and privatization. This strategy has paid off, in the shape of higher growth, greater competitiveness and increased employment. The prob-

lem of poverty existed, and is being addressed. The figure of those living below the poverty line has come down in recent years from 29 per cent to 23 per cent but greater investment into the social sector, including education, health and housing is necessary to eliminate poverty. Efforts in the regard need to be pursued at the global level, keeping in view the agenda adopted at the UN Millennium Summit.

(Abridged)



Our Heartiest Congratulations  
to the Brotherly People and the  
Government of the Islamic Republic of  
Pakistan on the Occasion of  
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August 14, 2006

## INDEPENDENCE DAY OF PAKISTAN



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