



National Day of Turkey

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Suleyman Demirel
President of the Republic of Turkey



Tansu Ciller
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

Kemal Ataturk's Republic of Culture

THE New Turkey was born in 1923 and with it the new life of Turkish culture. Under Mustafa Kemal Pasha's leadership, the young Republic became a milieu of cultural change and creativity for the benefit of the Turkish nation and mankind.

Among all the national leaders to emerge in the first half of the twentieth century, it was Ataturk who stated his view of the supreme importance of culture in national transformation most systematically and implemented it most vigorously. His basic reforms, taken singly, would have a convulsive impact in any social structure; collectively, they could be cataclysmic. Consider the changes which took place in Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s:

A dynasty which had ruled for more than six centuries came to an end. All power was assumed by a republic, with its parliament and president, representing the will of the people. Theocracy was abolished and replaced by modern governmental and legal institutions. The traditional fez was outlawed overnight as a symbol



and the fine arts. The young Republic mobilized its scanty resources for the purpose of mass education much the same way the national struggle against foreign invaders had been undertaken without funds or material. Ataturk called illiteracy shameful. During his Presidency schools were opened in scores of cities, hundreds of villages, increasing literacy from 9% in 1923 to 33% in 1938.

The strides in the field of education were matched by an efflorescence in the arts. As early as in 1923, Ataturk had dwelt on the need for "modern libraries, conservatories, museums, art galleries" and for "equipping the whole country with printing presses". Again, he was recognizing and voicing his nation's appreciation of aesthetics: "An historical attribute of the Turkish nation, which is a high human society, is to love the fine arts and to attain to greater heights through them". On another occasion he warned: "A nation left without the arts suffers from the rupture of one of its vital chords."

Today Turkey is one of the world's liveliest countries in the field of culture. She is the proud possessor of layer upon layer of civilization — Paleolithic, Bronze age, Hittite, Phrygian, Lydian, Urartian, Greek, Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, Ottoman. Her magnificent sites and edifices range from Ephesus to Bogazkoy, from Troy to Nemrud Dag, from Sardis to Suleymaniye. St. Sophia, the Mevlana Mausoleum and Topkapi Palace were converted into museums by Ataturk. Far ahead of any country of her size, Turkey has more than 120 museums, including some of the world's most spectacular, three full-fledged opera and ballet companies, 11 state-operated art galleries, four symphony orchestras, 17 state theaters in 6 cities, and three dozen independent theaters.

"We have a lot to learn from Mustafa Kemal". There are not many Presidents who will tell a group of leading politicians: "Gentlemen, you may become members of parliament or cabinet members or even President, but you can never become creative artists". One rare President who did was Ataturk. He was a rare creator of a Republic of Culture.

Kemal Ataturk

MESSAGE

The Turkish nation celebrates today the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic. 70 years are, of course, insignificant when compared with infinity which marks the lifetime of people. The importance of this anniversary is that it symbolises the emergence of modern Turkey under the leadership of Kemal Ataturk, after a war of independence supported among others by the Muslim people of Bengal, who proclaimed its own Republic in 1971.

The friendship which exists between the peoples of the Republic of Turkey and the People's Republic of Bangladesh transcends the mere political and state systems and defies time. The mutual feelings of brotherhood were carried over the centuries, inspired by common traditions and aspirations.

The socio-cultural heritage which we share is enriched through democratic process which prevails in both countries. Turkey and Bangladesh are engaged to further their cultural relationship by instituting the teaching of Turkish and Bangla languages in their respective universities. It is high time for the scholars of Turkey and Bangladesh to study the intrinsic richnesses of these languages through the poetries of Kazi Nazrul Islam and

Yunus Emre. On the other hand, it is hoped that more and more students from Bangladesh enroll to Turkish Universities.

The field of economic and trade cooperation is far from being exploited satisfactorily. The lack of closer contacts between the businessmen of the two countries which would publicise effectively the economic and commercial potentialities of Turkey and Bangladesh and institutionalise such contacts. I am happy to observe that the business circles of this country are determined to work for the promotion of our economic relations.

The people of Turkey is following with great interest the achievements of the people of Bangladesh and rejoice over the successes registered by the latter in its development efforts. Nothing could make our people happier than the welfare of our sisters and brothers of this land.

Long live the friendship between democratic Bangladesh and Turkey.

Kutlu Ozguven
Ambassador of Turkey in Bangladesh

The Turkish Economy

THE Turkish economy gained momentum in 1992 and grew by 5.9%. External balance improved, while debt burden and cost pressures inherited from 1991 hampered the sufficient improvement in public finance and inflation. Therefore interest and exchange rates balance occurred relatively at high levels. The private consumption demand which was stimulated in election conjuncture in the second half of 1991 — enlivened due to the increases in wages and agricultural subsidy prices. This gave an impetus to the increase in growth rate despite the high interest rates. Current account deficit remained at an acceptable level. As a result of the rise in capital inflows international reserves increased significantly.

Real agricultural product increased: Agricultural product expanded by 63.5% at current prices, higher than the 34.8% growth recorded in 1991. Real agricultural production in 1992 grew by 2.9% in contrast to the 0.6% decline in 1991 and the share of agricultural sector in real GDP decreased from 17% to 16.5%.

The growth of the industrial sector accelerated: In 1992 industrial product, expanded by 70.4% in current prices, compared to 59.9% of 1991 while real industrial product grew by 6.7% over the previous year's rate, 3.3%. On the other hand, the share of the industrial sector in GDP in real terms increased from 25.6% to 25.9%. The most important sub-sector of the industrial sector, manufacturing, increased by 6.7% in 1992 compared to the 3.1% in 1991. Real product increase in energy accelerated and that of mining sector increased at a slower rate.

Real product of the construction sector increased: Construction sector expanded 63.6% in 1992 at current prices, lower than the 68.6% growth recorded in 1991. At constant prices, construction sector expanded by 6.5% in 1992 while it expanded by 2.8% in 1991. Thus, the share of the construction sector in GDP increased from 6.5% to 6.6%.

Real growth in the service sector accelerated: In 1992, the growth of the service sector (excluding construction) was 76.4% at current prices compared to the 63.3% in 1991. In real terms, the growth rate of the service sector was 6% in 1992, considerably faster than the 0.6% increase in 1991. Thus, its share in GDP in-

creased from 50.9% to 51.1%.

Fixed capital investment increased: Fixed capital investment by current prices, which had expanded by 59.4% in 1991, showed a 63.7% increase in 1992. An analysis by constant prices indicates that fixed capital investment increased by 1.3% in 1992 in contrast to the 0.4% decrease in 1991.

International reserves increased: Turkey's international reserves (gross) rose by 31% over the end of 1991 figure and reached \$16,050 million. Of which, 9.3% was gold holdings of the Central Bank, 39.8% was foreign exchange holdings of the Central Bank, and 50.9% was with commercial banks. At the end 1991, the share of gold holdings of Central Bank in total international reserves was 12.2%, that of Central Bank's foreign exchange holdings was 40.1% and the share of commercial banks' foreign exchange holdings was 47.7%.

Capital market was dull in equities but lively in fixed-income instruments: In 1992, the capital market was dull in shares as the upward trend in interest rates and speculative transactions caused investors to prefer fixed income instruments. On the other hand, issues in capital market increased significantly owing to high public sector borrowing and issuance of asset backed securities by private sector for the first time.

Trading volume in gold market increased: Demand in the domestic gold market increased compared to 1991 due to the dissipating, of negative effects of Gulf crisis and liveliness in touristic demand. In the internal gold market headed by the Central Bank against foreign exchange, the volume of transactions increased by 14% from 114 tons in 1991 to 130 tons in 1992. In spite of the fall in international gold prices, domestic gold prices rose with the effect of the rise in \$/TL parity.

Expectations
A real growth rate of 5%, a significant increase in investments through new incentives, maintaining the existing performance of external balance, reducing the public sector borrowing requirement and pulling down the inflation below 50% are the aims of economic policy in 1993. Within this framework, growth rate is expected to realize at about target level while foreign trade volume continues to expand.

Interview with the Ambassador

by S Y Bakht

BANGLADESH and Turkey enjoy excellent political relationships but bilateral trade and cultural ties between the two countries need to be further strengthened, said the Ambassador of Turkey in Dhaka, Kutlu Ozguven.

The political relationship between the two countries are excellent, we are brothers and we say so openly," the newly appointed Turkish envoy explained, while referring to the existing cultural and historical affinities between the two countries. "But unfortunately we did not exploit the potentials for cultural and economic cooperation between the two countries."

However, Ambassador Ozguven optimistically pointed out that steps are currently being initiated to boost trade and cultural ties between the two member states of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC).

In an interview with The Daily Star the Turkish envoy outlined a number of priority areas for expanding cultural ties between the two nations, including exchange of language instructors, scientific and technical cooperation and fostering links among academic institutions of the two countries.

Indicating the tremendous possibilities to expand trade and economic ties between the two countries in areas of commodity trade, joint ventures and other avenues, he noted that steps are being taken to link the business communities of the two nations and to establish a joint chamber body.

At present the volume of annual bilateral trade between the two countries stands at around 25 million US dollars with about 20 million dollars worth of exports, primarily jute and jute goods, from Bangladesh.

"This is not enough, we want to double or triple the volume" of bilateral trade between the two nations, the Turkish envoy asserted. "And we don't have a complex to balance our trade with Bangladesh."

A move to form a joint chamber body to promote bilateral economic ties is being initiated and a delegation of the



H. E. Kutlu Ozguven, Ambassador of Turkey (right) and Mrs. Ozguven at their residence in Dhaka.

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) is expected to visit Turkey next month, he informed.

There is good prospect for setting up joint venture industries, he observed, in the areas of jute goods, leather, pharmaceuticals, cement production and other manufacturing sectors.

Bangladeshi businessmen, he said, can also take advantage of the contacts of their Turkish counterparts to enter the newly-opened Central Asian markets. "Turkey is ready to share the information" and help Bangladeshi businessmen to tap the huge market in that region.

Ambassador Ozguven also spoke about the various avenues in which Dhaka-Ankara cultural ties can be strengthened. He said a Turkish language instructor has already been deputed to the Dhaka University and he would soon initiate a course at the Modern Language Institute. Similarly, a Bangla language instructor is also expected to leave for Turkey soon to start a course at the Istanbul University.

The exchange of language instructors would help both countries develop experts, he said. "This is a must in our cultural relationship and it is an investment for the long run."

A number of annual scholarships are currently provided to Bangladeshi students to attend Turkish universities and limited official exchange of visits also takes place between the two countries.

However, the Turkish envoy

emphasised the need for more exchange of visits by officials and experts, and enhanced scientific and technical cooperation between the two friendly nations.

He urged for an effective cooperation between the universities of the two countries including exchange of professors and publications.

A career diplomat Ambassador Ozguven served his country's embassies in Canada, Iraq, the United Kingdom, India and France before being posted to Bangladesh.

He came to Dhaka some five months ago along with his wife Nurtan. They have two daughters, one of whom is an English teacher at the Middle East Technical University in Istanbul while the other is studying in a US university.

"I really feel comfortable and at home here as everyone has reacted very warmly towards me and the country I represent," the envoy said about his initial experience in Bangladesh.

The couple said that they are enjoying the local food as they like spicy and hot dishes and that they are also relishing the seasonal fruits, particularly mango and pineapple. "I like the smoked hilsa, but I like grilled hilsa more," Ambassador Ozguven added.

Asked about the future direction of the overall bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and Turkey, he said that the ties are "very positive" and would be further consolidated in future by fostering cultural and economic cooperation between the two countries.

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A car assembly plant.

Warmest felicitations to the Government and friendly people of the Republic of Turkey on their National Day



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UNITED ENTERPRISES & CO LTD

73, Siddheswari Road
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Phone: 404660, 404664, 404994

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