



National Day of Turkey

The Daily Star

Special Supplement

October 29, 2007

MESSAGE

THIS year, we are celebrating, both in Turkey, abroad and in the brotherly Bangladesh, the 84th anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic. On this day of 29 October, in the year 1923, the new modern Turkish State was born, albeit at the cost of millions of our people we lost during our War of Liberation.

October 29 is also a day of remembrance of the "Founder and the First President of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk" who was given the surname "Ataturk-Father of Turks" by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1934. Ataturk was an exceptional person still revered as a brave and bright commander, a statesman and a great leader, who had also been well understood and appreciated by the great national poet of Bangladesh, Kazi Nazrul Islam, for his bravery and his struggle for liberation, which Kobi Nazrul had meaningfully reflected in his poem "Kamal Pasha".

On this occasion, I would like to once again express our gratitude to our Bengali brethren, who generously provided moral and material support for our armies under the command of Mustafa Kemal during our War of Liberation. Sacrificing his short span of life of only 57 years for his people and his country, Ataturk passed away to eternity on 10 November 1938. It is a consolation for us that the people of Daganbhuiyan/Feni named their school "Ataturk Model High School" in his remembrance. Bangladesh also named two streets, one in the capital Dhaka and the other in Chittagong, "Kemal Ataturk Avenue". As a reciprocal gratitude, two streets in the center of our capital Ankara, were named after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

Following the proclamation of the Republic, Turkey has consistently pursued a policy based on Ataturk's dictum: "Peace at home, peace in the world." In line with his ideal, Turkey has established friendly relations with her neighbours and member countries of the United Nations, of which she was a co-founder, and has been promoting her relations with them in conformity with the principles of respect for sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and political unity as enshrined in the UN charter.

As is well known, Turkey is the member of numerous international organisations. Apart from her significant role within Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Turkey is also an active member of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). Turkish Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu is serving as the Secretary General. Turkey aims to be a full member of the European Union. Turkey has twice assumed the Command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, Afghanistan. These

memberships are all along the noble ideal of serving for the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the world.

After gaining her independence in 1971, Bangladesh was officially recognized by Turkey on 22 February 1974. On November 1976, Embassies were opened in Dhaka and Ankara. Since then, Turkey and Bangladesh have maintained deep rooted relations of friendship and cooperation in all fields. Our Governments closely cooperate bilaterally and within the United Nations as well as other international organisations such as the Organisation of Islamic Conference-OIC. Several high level visits have been exchanged between our two countries which further strengthened the bonds of friendship and affinity.

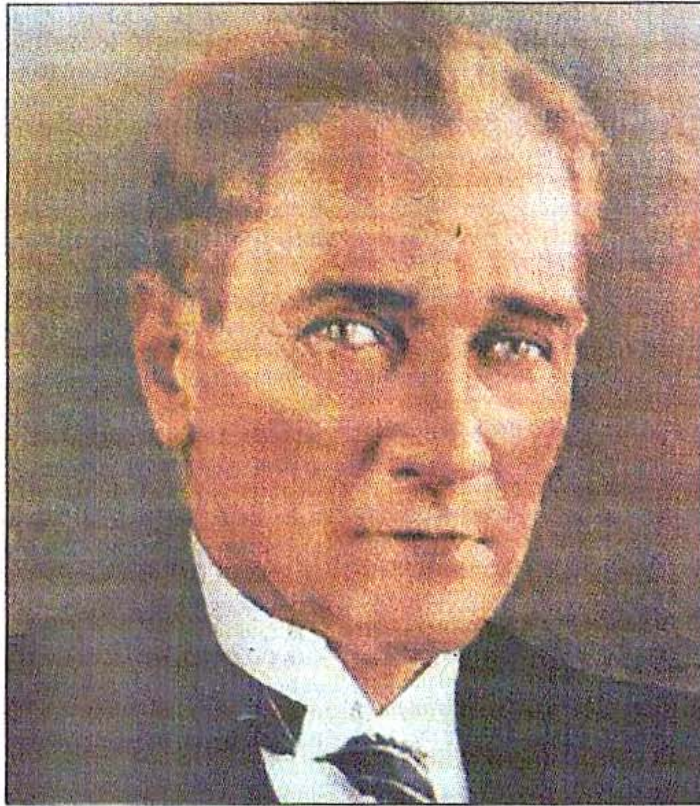
I would like to reiterate that we are committed to maintaining and further improving our relations with Bangladesh and broaden our close cooperation to as many areas as possible. This year in June "Turkey-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry" was established in Dhaka which I hope will give impetus to our economic and commercial relations. In August, Bangladesh participated at the international Izmir Trade Fair in Turkey. Bangladesh stand was very popular and attracted thousands.

We admire the progress Bangladesh is achieving in many fields and particularly appreciate her participation in the United Nations' Peace Keeping Operations in many parts of the world, to some of which Turkey is also contributing. On the other hand our sympathy is with those victims of the sad land slide incident in Chittagong and the devastating floods all over the country. I would like to humbly mention here that my Government contributed 100 thousand US Dollars for the relief efforts of the Caretaker Government aimed at rehabilitating the affected people.

On this occasion, I would like to reiterate my best wishes for the welfare and prosperity of Bangladesh as well as for the health and happiness of my Bangladeshi brothers and sisters.



Ferit Ergin
Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Bangladesh



Mustafa Kemal Ataturk
Founder and the first President of the Republic of Turkey



Abdullah Gul
President of the Republic of Turkey



Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

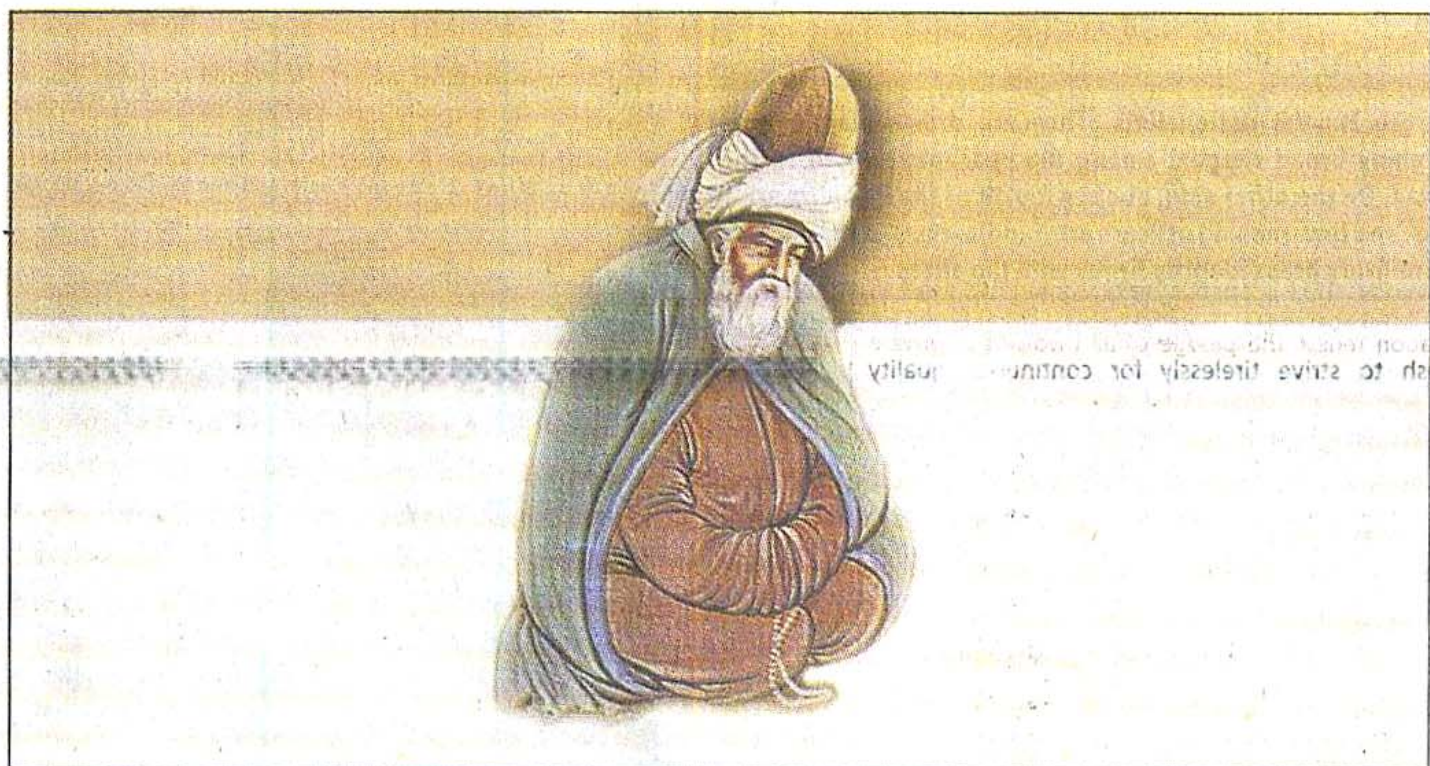
800th birth anniversary of Mawlana Jalal ud-din Muhammed Rumi

THIS year we Turks and the world are celebrating the 800th birth anniversary of the great humanist, mystic poet and theologian, Mawlana Jalal ud-din Muhammed Rumi. Mawlana means "our lord," Jalal means "Majesty," "din" means "religion."

It is common knowledge among historians that Rumi was born at a date falling around 30th September of 1207 in the city of Belkha of the Horasan country in Iran which falls within the boundaries of current Afghanistan. At the age of 21, Rumi had to move with his family to Nishapur, from there to Baghdad and to Kaaba through Qufe. On his way back from pilgrimage his family stopped at Damascus and from there they reached Ispahan, now Karaman and finally settled in the Turkish Seljuk Empire capital of Konya, where Mawlana got married with Gevher Hatun and lived most of his life until he passed away to eternity on 17 December 1273.

Mawlana produced five major works of verse and prose. His six-volume poem "Masnavi-Manawi-Spiritual Couplets" is considered to be his major work. "Divan-i-Kebir-Great Divan" was another of his works of verse. "Fihi Ma Fihi-What's in It" contains his conversations with the people and his disciples. "Majlis-i Sab'-Seven Sessions" cover his sermons. "Maktubat-Letters" compiles his 147 letters to Seljuk Sultana and prominent personalities of the time.

The main theme and message of Rumi's thoughts and teachings is the love of God and his creatures. The focus of his philosophy is humanity and his objective is to



achieve and to help others reach the state of perfect human being-insanikamil.

Jalal ud-din Muhammad Rumi founded the Mawlawi Mystic Order, commonly known as the "Whirling Dervishes" and created the "Sema Rite," a ritualistic sacred dance to symbolically seek the divine truth and maturity. Today, Rumi's message and teachings continue to inspire people from all regions and cultures and show us how to live together in peace and harmony.

It is significant that Mawlawi

Sema Ceremony was proclaimed by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) in 2005 as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" which lists the Sema ceremony, and symbolic and unique expression of Rumi's teachings.

In recognition of the conformity of Rumi's message with the objectives and mission of UNESCO, upon the proposal by Turkey together with Afghanistan and Egypt, the 33rd UNESCO General Conference decided to associate

UNESCO with celebrations of the 800th birth anniversary of Mawlana Jalal ud-din Muhammed Rumi in 2007.

This year, the celebrations of Mawlana's 800th birth anniversary began in Istanbul and Konya in May. Turkish Government hosted an International Symposium on Rumi to which hundreds of prominent personalities, academics, researchers who have the expertise on Rumi's philosophy, including those personalities from Bangladesh, were invited who gathered together there and shared their knowledge.

Celebrations were held at the UN Headquarters in New York and UNESCO in Paris as well as in many cities of various countries with a series of events comprising panel discussions, Sema ceremony and an exhibition of the vision and works of Rumi.

Mawlana's 800th birth anniversary celebrations ended with a spectacular finale held in Konya on 30 September 2007 with 300 dervishes performing the largest sema ritual ever.

**OUR WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
GOVERNMENT AND THE BROTHERLY
PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ON THE OCCASION OF 84TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR
NATIONAL DAY**



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Galata Tower

NECDET SAKAOGLU

IN the mid-14th century, in defiance of the Byzantines, the Genoese built a defensive wall around their colony of Galata on the north side of the Golden Horn facing Istanbul to the south. The Galata Tower was the main tower in these walls, and known to the Genoese as Christea Turris (the Tower of Christ) and to the Byzantines as Megolas Purdos (the Great Tower). A century later the tower was raised to a greater height, but this addition was demolished by Zadenos Papa on the orders of Sultan Mehmed II after conquering Istanbul in 1453. The tower is today 70 metres high, with an outer diameter of 16.5 metres and inner diameter of 9 metres. After being damaged by an earthquake in 1509, it was repaired by the architect Hayreddin, and in subsequent centuries underwent repairs on numerous occasions after fires and storms.

For a long time during the Ottoman period the upper floors of the tower served as barracks for the galley slaves who worked at the naval arsenal, and the lower floors as naval stores. It was from the top of the Galata Tower that in the 17th century Hezarfen Ahmed Celebi flew on wings strapped to his arms, gliding across the Bosphorus and landing safely on Dodancilar Hill in Üsküdar. In 1831 it became a watchtower for the fire service. The postcard shows the tower in 1875 without its conical roof, which had been removed for repairs.

