



National Day of Spain

The Daily Star

Special Supplement

October 12, 2009



Their Majesties King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia

MESSAGE

It is an honour and a pleasure to be back here, in the generous pages of The Daily Star, to celebrate our national day, the day of "Hispanidad" in Bangladesh.

In this year we have experienced many changes as far as the Embassy of Spain is concerned. We have appointed local personnel who are adding indispensable value to our day to day activities. The Residence of the Embassy is now fully furnished and begins to look like a home. I hope you will be able to see it soon.

With all these, we continue with our busy work of enhancing and improving our existing sound friendship with Bangladesh. The National Day is a very good opportunity to recapitulate the ongoing cordial bilateral relations and I am certain that we have gone a good way forward. Nevertheless, I believe that in the coming days we need to accomplish more.

You may find that the figures of our trade are not very impressive but there is a tendency that points out to an increase in the future. Also the quality of the products we

exchange is getting better.

On the political side, we are also expecting an escalation in our relations. The year is ending too soon for any valuable visits but next year I can anticipate a few, especially on the occasion of the official opening of the Embassy of Spain located at two very pleasant buildings in the Gulshan Area.

Our relations have great potential, since we share common values and we can cooperate further in many fields of mutual interest. Bangladesh belongs to a very important community in South Asia that we assess very promising. All the actions this government is taking in order to enhance its foreign policy are positive. The sense of belonging to SAARC by Bangladesh as its founding member is a good reason of pride. We also have the same feelings towards the European Union and we are also very proud of it. Today, we celebrate, however, our belonging to the Latin American Community, a complex ethnic-cultural people embracing the Iberians and Latin Americans. These include Afro-Indo-American com-

ponents as well as the ethnic cultural contributions of immigrants as diverse as Italian, French, German, English, Russian, Polish, United States, Arabs, Jewish, Oriental, etc. All these currents have integrated today, maintaining their own identities in this complex wrap of the Hispanic or the Latin. I find some similarity with Bangladesh, as this nation too has been part of important political entities, including Buddhist kingdoms, Indian empires, the Moghul Empire, the British Empire and the Pakistani nation.

Spain is a leader in Spanish speaking America for the complexity of our mutual interest. Many Spanish companies are now obtaining great benefits. This could also be a good example for Bangladesh, very importantly as an exporting country. I am sure Spain can assist Bangladesh in its export drive towards the Latin American area of the continent.

Unfortunately, the recent global economic crisis is affecting all of us and preventing us from moving ahead. But we are hopeful that the

situation will change in near future as we can see light at the end of the tunnel.

We had been very busy at the Embassy organizing the National Day Reception last year. I think we all enjoyed that day thoroughly. This year we are planning to do better. Taking the opportunity, I wish all the Leaders, the authorities and people and friends of Bangladesh a "Happy National Day of Hispanidad".



Arturo Pérez Martínez
Ambassador of Spain to Bangladesh

Spain's natural heritage

SPAIN'S geographical position along with the two archipelagos of the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands bestow Spain with a unique biodiversity. From north to south there is a variety of different climates that coexist with a large diversity of ecosystems, from the Atlantic woods of the Cantabrian coast in the north to the pasturelands of the south, not forgetting the high mountains of the Pyrenees and the wetlands of Castilla. We must also mention the spectacular singularity of both archipelagos.

A good example of Spain's rich natural heritage, along with its current keen environmental policy, is the fact that it has a network of twelve National Parks, seven of which can be found on the Spanish mainland with the other five located in the Canary and Balearic Islands. These natural areas are environmentally protected and have been declared reserves because of the representative species that can be found within the different ecosystems of Spain.

Even though the denomination of National Park is the most important we must not forget about the long list of

nature reserves that also exist throughout Spain. Nature reserves have fewer regulations imposed on them as opposed to the National Parks. Nature reserves allow their natural assets to be used and enjoyed within reason but always ensuring that the reserve's intrinsic value remains the same. Nature reserves, protected areas and nature-orientated monuments are also blessed with varying degrees of environmental protection.

Visits to these areas are in each case governed by a series of basic regulations based on protecting the environment as well as the wildlife and plant life. Spain possesses 19 areas, distributed between the mainland and the islands that have been registered by UNESCO as part of the International network of Biosphere Reserves. This is a clear indication of the effort that has contributed towards making human development and conservationism compatible.

The National Parks are a showcase for Spain's diverse biodiversity. One of the main tourist and natural attractions in the whole of the Cantabrian mountain range is the Picos de Europa National Park. The

reserve extends through Asturias, Cantabria and Castilla and Leon, with an ecosystem that is closely linked to the Atlantic woodland system and is characterised by its limestone features



Asturias, northern Spain.

that take the form of chasms, rock formations and glaciers. This natural environment is the habitat of numerous species of Iberian wildlife. The most symbolic of the reserve is the chamois. It also has some outstandingly beautiful scenery, such as the Ruta del Cares, the Naranco de Bulnes and the Covadonga lakes.

The Pyrenees form a natu-

ral border between Spain and France and are a good example of high mountain ecosystems. One of these is the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park, located in the



Aragon Pyrenees, headed by the large mountain peak of Monte Perdido (Lost Mountain) with sheer gorges and canyons such as Ordesa cutting through it. Another example is the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, that sits in the Catalan part of the Pyrenees. The beauty of its more than 200 lakes, the impressive cliffs of "Els Encantats" (more than 200 metres tall) and the high mountain meanders make this reserve a must-see.

Heavily influenced by the continental climate, the extensive mass of land formed by the Spanish plateau occupies a large part of the Spanish mainland, and is home to a great many natural treasures that include the wetlands. Water is the main factor that contributes to the development of these fragile and yet extremely precious ecosystems. It has become a refuge for a variety of aquatic and migratory birds, as well as housing a rich ensemble of mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Two of the most characteristic wetlands are the Tablas de Daimiel and Cabañeros, both of which have been declared National Parks.

Towards the south of the mainland in Andalusia, the contrasts become even more marked. Doñana National Park is one of Spain's most emblematic reserves and has been declared a World Heritage Site. Its ecosystem is comprised of wetlands, moving dunes and small reserves converting this coastal reserve into one huge refuge for mammals and birds. In stark contrast in the far eastern part of Andalusia, sits the Sierra Nevada National Park, representative of high and middle-mountain Mediterranean life. The large rocky mass is surrounded by glacial lagoons and snowy peaks and is the largest of all the National Parks, as well as boasting the highest peak on the Spanish mainland: Mulhacén (3,481 metres).

The unique semi-desert landscape makes Cabo de Gata-Níjar Nature Reserve a must-see, being the only dual maritime and land based reserve in all of Andalusia. Its ravines, cliffs and virgin beaches give a whole new meaning to the word beauty. As well as the rich mainland

heritage a word must be said about the unique island ecosystems. There are no fewer than four National Parks on the Canary Island archipelago, without counting other magnificently preserved and protected areas in the region. The volcanic history of the islands along with its geographical position, have enabled many species of animals and plant life to appear, as well as forming wonderful and exotic landscapes. The highest mountain peak in all of Spain and the greatest example of high mountain volcanic ecosystems in the Canary Islands is mount Teide in Tenerife. The islands also offer up a great many other



City of Jaen, Andalusia.

enjoyable surprises, including the Caldera de Taburiente National Park a spectacular crater full of wonderful plant

life and found on the island of La Palma. The volcanic rocks of Garajonay Reserve in Gomera, and the impressive image of

the Timanfaya National Park's volcanic landscape in Lanzarote are also spectacular.

Finally, one of the jewels in the crown of the Balearic Islands is the Cabrera Archipelago National Park. This group of small islands, located to the south east of Majorca form an important marine ecosystem where abundant colonies of sea birds all live together.

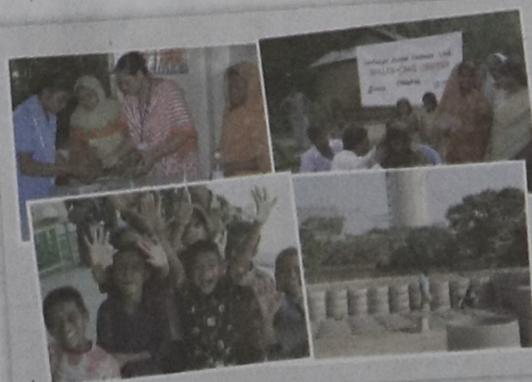
Spain gives the visitor a privileged opportunity to admire the unique and diverse treasures that it has to offer, some of which are the most protected natural treasures in the entire European continent.

Felicitations on the occasion of National Day of Spain



Leading Spanish cement maker Cementos Molins joined hands with Lafarge of France in setting up and operating the biggest and most modern dry process integrated cement plant in Bangladesh. Situated in Chhatak in north-east of Bangladesh, this cross-border plant produces the high quality Supercrete cement and adds value to sustainable development in Bangladesh.

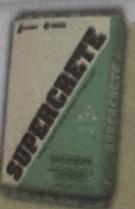
The 17 kilometer long belt conveyor is unique. It brings limestone from the company's own quarry in East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya to the cement plant at Chhatak, Bangladesh. It ensures uninterrupted supply of basic raw materials



Lafarge Surma Cement is also contributing to socio-economic uplift in the local communities around its operation. Its CSR programmes in health-care, primary education and vocational training for women are already showing visible signs of improvement in the lives of the local villagers.

Lafarge Surma Cement Ltd.

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