



# REPUBLIC DAY OF TURKEY

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## A time-tested partnership

Turkey has been a longstanding and time-tested partner for Bangladesh. The ties between the people of Bangladesh and Turkey are rooted in history that dates back to even before the two countries emerged as modern nation-states. The rebel poet of Bengal Kazi Nazrul Islam, for example, wrote in praise of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's bravery in the Turkish War of Independence: "To chase out the invading aggressor/ We need, indeed, a fearless Kemal/ Kemal, what a wonder you've worked!/ Ho Ho Kemal, what a wonder you've worked!" (Kemal Pasha, 1921).

After Bangladesh secured independence, relations between the two countries flourished following Turkey's recognition of the country as a new independent state in 1974. Over the years, their partnership has strengthened and now Bangladesh and Turkey cooperate in many areas including trade, defence, foreign investment and education.

The current two-way annual trade between Turkey and Bangladesh stands at \$1 billion. The two countries aim to double this value within the next five years through increased cooperation among economic actors, simplification of trade rules, and diversification of trade products.

Turkish companies are keen on investing in and collaborating with their Bangladeshi counterparts in numerous sectors such as jute, light engineering, pharmaceuticals, ICT, shipbuilding, energy, and household appliances.

There are also wide-ranging opportunities for Bangladesh nationals to invest in Turkey.

The two countries are also stepping up their defence ties and in June this year, Bangladesh signed a defence purchase agreement with Turkey for importing various equipment from Roketsan, a Turkish military hardware company and contractor. According to local experts,

these products will equip the Bangladesh Armed Forces with NATO standard air, land and naval warfare capabilities.

The mark of a true ally can be seen during crisis moments and this has been reflected in Turkey's unconditional support to Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue at various multilateral fora such as the UN, ICJ, G20, and OIC. Turkey has also been providing humanitarian aid, particularly in the field of health, education and rehabilitation, to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

While both Bangladesh and Turkey are Muslim majority countries, their ties run deeper. People of both nations follow Sufism and there is a wide appreciation of the works of famous Turkish poet and Sufi mystic Mawlana Jelaleddin Rumi among Bangladeshis.

Turkish television programmes are also very popular in Bangladesh. Popular Turkish historical dramas such as "Dirilis Ertugrul" (Resurrection Ertugrul) and "Muhtesem Yuzyl" (Magnificent Century) have even been dubbed in the local language for Bangladeshi audiences.

Turkey is a popular tourist destination for the people of Bangladesh with around 18,000 Bangladeshi nationals having visited Turkey in 2018 alone.

Currently, around 600 Bangladeshis are studying in different Turkish universities. The government of Turkey regularly provides scholarships to Bangladeshi students to study in their most prestigious universities.

There is the potential to take bilateral relations between Turkey and Bangladesh to even greater levels. So, new avenues of cooperation should be explored to deepen the ties between the government and private sector of both countries. The people-to-people contact between the two nations also needs to be promoted to consolidate the gains from the improved relationship.

## Bengal's contribution to Turkish independence

The Republic of Turkey is the achievement of Turkish nation's unprecedented struggle of life and death, under the leadership of Great Leader Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who is well-known to all Bangladeshi brothers and sisters. After World War I, Turkish nation, with its members of all ages united and

became of one heart during the War of Independence which led to the foundation of our Republic.

During this struggle, Turkish nation remembers with gratitude the support received from the Muslims of South Asia including the Bengalis. People all over from Bangladesh sent their support for the

Turkish War of Independence.

The respect and appreciation for Turkey, Turkish Nation and for Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is reflected in the epic poem "Kemal Pasha," written by Kazi Nazrul Islam, national poet of Bangladesh, in 1921. Kazi Nazrul Islam was the one and only foreign poet who praised Atatürk and Turkish War of Independence with an epic poem at the time. He received the news of the Turkish victory in Sakarya against Greek forces when he was twenty-two years old in India and brought a victory song into life, which resonates in Bengali culture to this day.

Apart from Kazi Nazrul Islam, rebellious poets and writers Kazi Abdul Wadud, Ismail Hossain Siraji, Kazi Motahar Husain and Abul Fazal also supported Atatürk's reformist revolution. Bangladeshi national artist Sheikh Afzal painted a beautiful Atatürk portrait, which is on display in the National Museum. Principal of Dhaka

College, Ibrahim Khan wrote a theatrical play named "Kemal Pasha" in 1925 that gained huge success and contributed to the love and respect of the Bengali people toward the Turkish nation and its independence movement led by Atatürk.

Another sign of appreciation for Atatürk and the Republic of Turkey was that 54 days after Atatürk's demise on November 10, 1938, on January 6, 1939, "Atatürk Model High School" was inaugurated in Feni.

Ambassador Mustafa Osman Turan met the current Principal and some teachers of the school in early March this year. They still keep alive the memory and the achievements of Atatürk with much pride.



"Brother Kemal, the desperate son of a frenzied mother  
Has gone furious; so the devils' dens are full of hue and cry  
Looking for self-protection everywhere;  
Kemal, what a wonder you've worked!  
Ho Ho Kemal, what a wonder you've worked!"

"Ey kahırlı ananın yiğit oğlu  
Kemal Kardeş!  
Kararlıydı, kararlı ve kızgın,  
Düşman siperlerinde bir telaş bir bozgun  
Canını kurtarmak beyhude oyun  
Harikalar yarattın sen Kemal, harikalar  
Harikalar yarattın sen Kemal Kardeş, harikalar  
Hey! Hey!....(Ho! Ho!)

Htÿ#c#QcvMjxgv#qi`vgvj  
†Q#j Kvgvj fvB  
Amyi-cy#i#kvd#v#Q†Rv†m  
mvgvj-mvgvj ZvB!  
Kvgvj!Zz†bKvgvjwKqvfvB!  
†nv †nv Kvgvj!  
Zz †b Kvgvj wKqv fvB!

HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY OF TURKEY!



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We Wish Turkey  
Peace & Prosperity  
on the 98<sup>th</sup> Republic Day



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