

Independence Day of Pakistan

PUBLICITY

Pakistan-Japan ties deepening in key areas

By Raza Bashir Tarar
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

On the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of Pakistan, let me express on behalf of the government of Pakistan, myself and my compatriots in Japan, our respectful and sincere greetings to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress, members of the Imperial family, H.E. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, and the government and the friendly people of Japan.

On Aug. 14, 1947, Pakistan became an independent and sovereign nation-state. We pay homage to the Father of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Poet of the East Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal and all the other great leaders of the Pakistan Movement who paved the way for the creation of Pakistan. Since its independence, Pakistan has always approached the rest of the world with a desire for lasting peace, friendship and mutual re-



Raza Bashir Tarar

spect for sovereignty.

Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Japan were established on April 28, 1952, and our friendly relations have stood the test of time. The relationship is based on mutual respect and understanding, and is characterized by a shared sense of history and common perceptions on important issues. Pakistan and Japan are both pragmatic in their approach to international and regional issues and their solutions.

Both countries enjoy traditionally fraternal ties based on mutual trust, cooperation and people-to-people contacts, as well as cultural and civilizational connections. Historical links between the peoples of our two countries date back to pre-historic times. The Gandhara and Indus Valley civilizations and cotton trade were some of the oldest means of contact between us.

Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship with Japan. We have always looked to Japan with a sense of respect and veneration as a very important country in Asia, whose economic success and model we wish to emulate. The Japanese people are kind, progressive and family-centric. They have many similarities with the people of Pakistan.

Our relations have gone from strength to strength during the last 71 years in multiple fields. We are also seeing increasing and expanding cooperation at various levels of engagement. The recent successful visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari bolstered our already strong ties.

The bedrock of our relationship has been economic, with Japan being a key development partner, a major investor and a significant export destination for Pakistan. Pakistan and Japan's economic cooperation and engagement has been picking up in the last few years. The recent "Pakistan Investment Seminar," co-organized in Tokyo by the governments of Pakistan and Japan, was heavily attended, signifying renewed Japanese interest in investing in Pakistan.

Japan is also one of Pakistan's key partners in education, manpower, and scientific and technological cooperation. We need to further deepen our comprehensive engagement with Japan in these important areas to make them a key pillar of bilateral relations.

Defense relations between the two countries remain robust and strong. Based on solid foundations, bilateral defense relations have gone from strength to strength. Their

present scope is characterized by strong mutual trust and reliability.

I would like to highlight the major contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in Japan. Members of our community in Japan are pioneers in the export of used automobiles, the carpet trade and Halal food. They remain important contributors to the Japanese economy. We are working with our Japanese friends to promote the export of skilled manpower from Pakistan to Japan.

I believe that both countries need to further deepen their engagement regarding the economy, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Moreover, we need to explore new avenues of cooperation to further broaden our relations. We will keep working with all stakeholders in Japan and Pakistan to achieve these objectives.

We should endeavor to carry forward the excellent momentum in our relations to the years ahead and forge new partnerships in multiple fields. We are also confident that through our joint efforts our fraternal ties and cooperative relations will acquire further depth in the future, benefiting both our peoples and contributing to regional peace and prosperity.

Long live Pakistan-Japan friendship!

MP league eyes more active relations

By Seishiro Eto
Chairman of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians' Friendship League and Member of the House of Representatives

On the occasion of the 76th anniversary of the Independence Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and on behalf of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians' Friendship League, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Pakistan.



Seishiro Eto

Pakistan was last year hit by devastating floods that caused the loss of many lives, with one-third of the country submerged and millions of people displaced. Once again, I would like to express my deepest sympathy. Japan is similar to Pakistan in the sense that it is a country where natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods occur frequently. I hope that Japan will be able to contribute to Pakistan's recovery and future disaster prevention through knowledge and technology we have gained

through our experiences.

At the same time, Japan will never forget the support that Pakistan extended to us when the Great East Japan Earthquake struck in 2011, and its aid in the safe evacuation of a Japanese national as well as Afghan staff of the Japanese Embassy and the office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency when the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated in 2021. We hope that we can continue to maintain and strengthen this enduring, cooperative relationship of helping each other in times of need.

The spread of the novel coronavirus has eased, and it seems that person-to-person exchanges are returning to previous levels. Last month, H.E. Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited Japan for the first time in four years as Pakistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs. I hope that bilateral exchanges in various fields and at various levels will become more frequent, and that the overall Japan-Pakistan relationship will be strengthened.

The Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians' Friendship League is committed to further promoting the friendship between Japan and Pakistan that has been sustained for more than 70 years.

May prosperity continue to reign in Pakistan.

JPBCC seeks even closer economic ties

By Akira Terakawa
Chairman of the Japan-Pakistan Business Co-operation Committee

On the auspicious occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day, and on behalf of the Japan-Pakistan Business Co-operation Committee (JPBCC), please allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.



Akira Terakawa

Since the JPBCC's establishment in 1984, we have been promoting bilateral business ties, trade, investment and economic activities. Last year was the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Pakistan. The JPBCC held the ninth Japan-Pakistan Private Sector Business Dialogue in Islamabad together with the Pakistan Japan Business Forum in September 2022. We also attended the Government Business Dialogue organized by the governments of Japan and Pakistan as representatives of the Japanese business community. We paid a courtesy call on His Excellency Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif

to report the results of the discussion. We hope to further strengthen economic ties between Japan and Pakistan by bringing together the strengths of the public and private sectors.

Pakistan has a population of over 240 million people. Those under the age of 25 account for approximately 60% of the total population, and there are many who speak English, so we believe Pakistan holds immense potential.

Pakistan will surely be able to achieve further economic development thanks to its demographic dividend and promising automotive, textile and information technology sectors, among others.

I expect more and more Japanese companies to enter the Pakistani market in future.

Please let me conclude my message by once again offering my congratulations on the occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day, as well as my sincere wishes for Pakistan's increasing development and prosperity going forward.

Gandharan art: Early depictions of Buddha in Pakistan

Originally, the depiction of the sublime Buddha in human form was considered taboo. However, during the first century, perception shifted in the Gandhara region. Gandhara, an ancient kingdom located in present-day northwestern Pakistan, played a pivotal role as a crucial hub along the Silk Road, connecting the East and the West and attracting diverse ethnic groups. Buddhism was practiced in Gandhara, but initially, people refrained from creating images of Buddha. Gradually, the influence of Western culture, which involved sculpting gods, led to the emergence of the first Buddha statues in Gandhara. As a result, the statues and carvings of Buddha found in Pakistan are among the earliest representations of him.

Today, Pakistan is home to three museums that house remarkable collections of Gandharan art:

1. **Peshawar Museum:** This is one of the most extensive collections of Gandharan art from the Buddhist era, and one of the largest collections of Buddhist artifacts globally. Visitors can marvel at Buddhist stone sculptures, terracotta figurines, and other significant objects. The main hall showcases various aspects of Buddha's life, including stories about him, miracles, symbols of worship, relic caskets, and individual standing Buddha sculptures. Additionally, the

museum features ethnological objects from the period.

2. **Taxila Museum:** This museum holds one of Pakistan's most significant and comprehensive collections of stone Buddhist sculptures dating from the 1st to the 7th centuries, part of Gandharan art. The core of the collection originates from excavation sites in the Taxila Valley, particularly those led by Sir John Marshall. Other pieces come from excavations elsewhere in Gandhara, donations like the Ram Das Collection, or items seized by police and customs authorities. The museum houses more than 1,400 objects in total.

3. **Lahore Museum:** The Lahore Museum houses an impressive array of Greco-Buddhist sculptures, as well as Mughal and Pahari paintings. With 14,000 artifacts on display, and over 58,000 artifacts in its collection, it holds significant relics from the Indus Valley civilization, Gandhara, and the Graeco-Bactrian periods. One of its prized possessions is the "Fasting Buddha," which dates back to the Gandharan period.

These museums offer a fascinating glimpse into the rich artistic heritage of Gandhara and its portrayal of Buddha, providing valuable insights into ancient history and culture.

By Muhammad Farrukh Rafiq
Press Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo



The largest Gandharan Buddha statue at the Peshawar Museum

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