

Independence Day of Pakistan

PUBLICITY

Pakistan eyes new partnerships with Japan in many areas

By Raza Bashir Tarar
Ambassador of Pakistan

On Aug. 14, 1947, Pakistan became an independent and sovereign nation-state. Today, 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 Independence Movement, who paved the way for the creation of Pakistan.



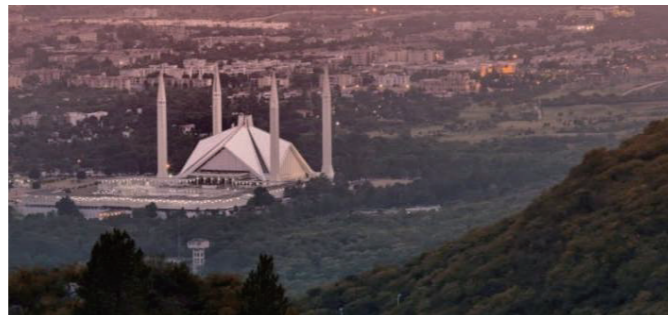
Raza Bashir Tarar

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, the government and the friendly people of Japan.

Since its independence, Pakistan has always approached the countries of the world as fraternal nations with a desire for lasting peace, friendship and mutual respect for sovereignty. This approach is strongly linked to the ideology that crystallized during our independence movement.

Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Japan were established on April 28, 1952. It is a relationship based on mutual respect and understanding which is characterized by a shared sense of history and common perceptions on important issues. In the current scenario, Pakistan and Japan share a fundamental desire to propagate peace and support for all members of the international community.

Linkages between the peoples of our two countries date back to prehistoric times. The Gandhara and Indus Valley civilizations and cotton trade were some of the oldest means of contact between the two countries. This rich history has a shared legacy between our two countries — much of which remains to be discovered and understood.



Courtesy of Embassy of Pakistan

Islamabad's Faisal Mosque is the largest mosque outside the Middle East.

Pakistan has always looked at Japan with a sense of respect as a very important country in Asia, whose economic success is a model that we wish to emulate. We appreciate the fact that 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 across more than seven decades. We are also seeing increasing cooperation at various levels of engagement. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's successful visit to Japan in July 2023 added another layer to our already strong ties.

However, 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. Economic cooperation and engagement between Pakistan and Japan 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.

Japanese investment in Pakistan has recently entered a new phase. Toyota Motor Corp. announced an investment worth \$100 million in the field of hybrid automotive manufacturing in Pakistan in 2023. A large investment was

also made by Morinaga Milk Industry Co. denoting a renewed interest in the Pakistani market while also ascertaining its potential.

Japanese assistance has been of monumental importance to Pakistan. Japan was the first country to deliver COVID-19 diagnostic kits to Pakistan, and it also provided \$7.4 million to Pakistan for COVID-19 control through international organizations. In January 2021, Japan provided a grant of \$4.57 million for the procurement of oral polio vaccines via an agreement signed between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UNICEF.

In recent years, JICA has been assisting in the installation of weather surveillance radars to mitigate damage caused by natural disasters. Such radar installations have already been established in Islamabad and Karachi, and one will soon be established in Multan. In January 2021, JICA announced a grant of around \$19 million for the installation of weather surveillance radar in Sukkur. These radar installations cover more than 90% of Pakistan.

In the wake of Pakistan's economic downturn due to the pandemic, the government of Japan under the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) in 2020 suspended debt payments (approx. \$327 million) due from Pakistan.

Defence relations between the two countries remain strong and robust. The bilateral defence relations have grown from strength to strength based on firm foundations. Their present scope is characterized by a strong sense of mutual trust and reliability. Our cultural linkages are further cemented by regular people-to-people exchanges encouraged by both sides.

I would also like to highlight the major contributions of Pakistani diaspora in Japan. Our community in Japan is among the pioneers in carpet trade, Halal food and the exporting of used automobiles. It continues to be an important contributor to the Japanese economy. We are working with our Japanese friends to promote exporting skilled manpower from Pakistan to Japan.

We should endeavor to carry forward the excellent momentum in our relations in the years ahead and forge new

partnerships in multiple fields. We are also confident that, through our joint efforts, our fraternal ties and co-operative relations will acquire further depth in the future, to the mutual benefit of our two peoples as well as regional peace and prosperity.

Long live Pakistan-Japan friendship!

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Happy 77th Anniversary Independence Day of Pakistan

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