

# NEWSLETTER

EMBASSY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF  
PAKISTAN TOKYO, JAPAN

Pakistanembassytokyo.com Jan-Mar 2021

## NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATED AT THE EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN, TOKYO

The National Day of Pakistan was celebrated at the Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo with zeal, fervor and enthusiasm. The ceremony commenced with recitation from the Holy Quran followed by the National Anthem of Pakistan.

Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad hoisted the national flag whilst the audience recited the National Anthem.

The Ambassador read the messages of President and Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Ambassador in his remarks paid homage to the father of the nation Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and all the other great leaders of the freedom movement who



paved the way for the creation of Pakistan. He reiterated that Pakistan had been achieved after rendering innumerable sacrifices, hence, it was imperative upon all Pakistanis to strive for promoting peace, progress and unity in Pakistan.

In the end prayers were offered for the prosperity of the country and for those affected by pandemic.



## AMBASSADOR IMTIAZ AHMAD HELD INTERACTIVE SESSION WITH JAPANESE MEDIA ON PAKISTAN DAY

Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad hosted prominent Japanese media persons on the occasion of Pakistan Day.

Speaking to the journalists, Ambassador Ahmad reaffirmed the importance of relationship with Japan and said that Pakistan and Japan are long-standing friends and share a special bond based on deep-rooted linkages that go far in history and time. He said that people of Pakistan carry a deep sentiment of warmth and affection for Japan and the Japanese people. We have always stood with each other in times of need, calamity and natural disasters, he added.



The event was attended by Ms. Natsuko Kikuchi of The Yomiuri Shimbun, Ms. Tamami Kawakami of The Mainichi, Mr. Tsukasa Arita of Kyodo News and Ms. Mai Asami of JIJI press.

## WEBINAR TO CELEBRATE PAKISTAN DAY

A webinar to celebrate Pakistan Day was held in the Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo which was attended by Pakistani community living in Japan.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Japan Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad opened the session by reading out messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan. He also shared his thoughts on the occasion with the participants and highlighted the importance of Pakistan Resolution.



Prominent historian Dr. Wiqar Ali Shah from NUML University Islamabad also joined the session and gave a brief overview of the events that took place from 1857 to 1940. He said that the 400 words contained in Pakistan Resolution changed the course of history for South Asian Muslims and led to the creation of Pakistan on 14th August 1947.

Members of the Pakistani community in Japan and Pakistani students who are completing various degrees from Japanese universities shared their views on the event.

### AMBASSADOR IMTIAZ AHMAD INAUGURATED PICTORIAL EXHIBITION TO COMMEMORATE PAKISTAN DAY

A photo exhibition was held at the Embassy of Pakistan in Tokyo to commemorate Pakistan Day. The theme of the exhibition was Pakistan's nature and diversity.

Speaking at the inauguration Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad said that Pakistan is one of those few countries which is blessed with rich diversity. We have relics of some of the oldest civilizations in the world, exquisite scenic beauty, highest peaks, sacred religious and historical places, seasonal variations, unique arts and crafts, rich traditions and delicious cuisine.

Preserving precious memories, bonds, and moments in photographs is an important part of human culture, the Ambassador said.

The exhibition displayed photos of Pakistan's wildlife, landscapes, costumes, crafts and sporting events. Visitors admired the work of Mahnoor Saghir, Fakhr e Alam, Qammer Wazir and Nauman that was on display.



## EVENT AT THE EMBASSY TO OBSERVE KASHMIR SOLIDARITY DAY

In order to express solidarity and to reaffirm steadfast support for Kashmiri brothers and sisters in distress, we observed Kashmir Solidarity Day at the Chancery today.

A broad cross section of Japanese society comprising of academics, journalists, think tanks, business persons, and members of the Pakistan Community were in attendance.

Messages of the President and Prime Minister in support of the Kashmir cause were read out. The National Anthem of Azad Jammu & Kashmir along with our National Anthem was played on the occasion. Members of the Pakistan Community also made speeches in support of our Kashmiri brethren. Earlier in the day, Pakistan Community members with banners and placards in hand marched towards the UN Representative Office in Tokyo and submitted a resolution on behalf of the “Kashmir Solidarity Forum Japan” reminding the United Nations of its pledge made to the people of Kashmir accepting their right of self determination.



Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad in his key-note address shed light on India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019 and emphasized that despite turning Kashmir into a large prison, India has not been able to dampen the determined spirit of the freedom loving Kashmiri people. He enumerated the steps taken by the government of Pakistan at various international forums to highlight India's unacceptable actions and gross human rights violations. He acknowledged the concerns raised by International community, human rights organizations, media and civil society on the continuing gross human rights violations and their condemnation of Indian unconcealed brutalities in IIOJK.

The Ambassador concluded his speech by reaffirming Pakistan's continued political, diplomatic and moral support to the oppressed Kashmiris in their legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination, promised to them by the international community through numerous UNSC Resolutions.

The Ambassador also presented a letter of appreciation to Mr. Shahid Majeed, Chairman, Kashmir Solidarity Forum, Japan for his contribution towards highlighting the Kashmir cause in Japan.



Webinar held at the Embassy on the occasion of “Kashmir Solidarity Day” . The event was attended by representatives of Japanese media, Kashmiri activists in Japan, and the spokesperson of Jammu and Kashmir Journalists Association from Srinagar.

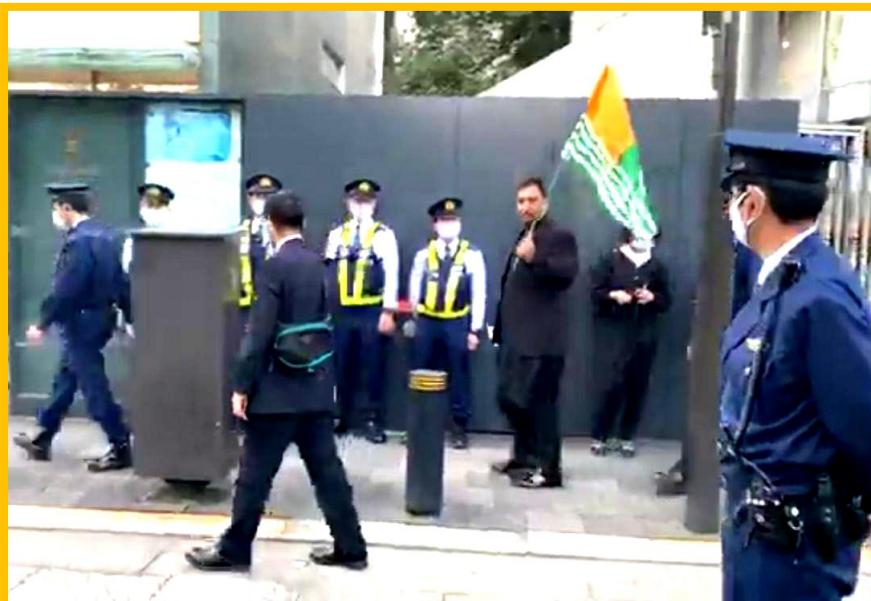


## KASHMIR SOLIDITY DAY

A photographic exhibition was organized by the Embassy to highlight the continuing torture and brutal repression carried out by the Indian Occupied forces in IIOJK



Members of the Pakistani community and Kashmiri Diaspora held a strong protest in front of the Indian Embassy to observe the Kashmir Solidarity Day and strongly agitated against the unprecedented gross human rights violations in IIOJK by Indian security forces.



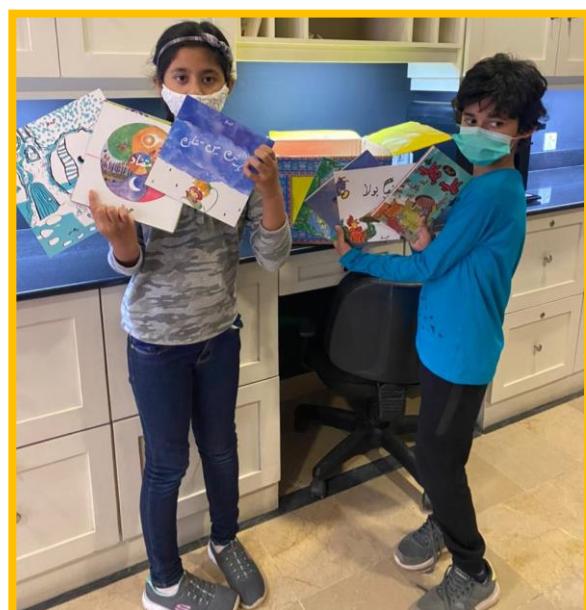
## PAKISTANI CHILDREN DONATE BOOKS FOR JAPANESE KIDS

School children from Headstart School Islamabad, Pakistan ran a book donation drive to help complete Tono Children's Book Forest Project in Tono city, Japan.

Tono is known as The City of Folklore for its rural nature, its traditional culture and folktales. It is located in Iwate prefecture, 500 kilometers north of Tokyo. The city is developing a cultural facility for children designed by famous architect Tadao Ando. The facility called "book forest" will offer children thousands of books to read onsite. Last year the Mayor of Tono decided that all books for the facility will be collected through donations.

School children from Pakistan were excited to become part of the book donation drive with the cooperation of Pakistan Embassy, Tokyo and collected several books about historical and cultural richness of Pakistan. The collection also consisted of several children's story books.

Pakistani kids also sent handwritten letters to their friends in Tono City wherein they expressed their joy of helping set up a library for them.



## E-KHULI KACHEHRI “OPEN HOUSE” FOR PAKISTANI COMMUNITY ORGANIZED BY THE EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN

According to Prime Minister’s initiative of reaching out to the Pakistani community, Pakistan Embassy, Tokyo, held an “Open House” (e-Khuli Kachehri) on March 26, 2021.

Ambassador Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad chaired the event and opened the session with detailed briefing to the community on purpose and objectives of the E-Khuli Kachehri, followed by a quick round up of the corona situation in Japan. He urged the community to follow all the SOPs and take every precaution against the virus. He also informed the community about border enforcement measures by Japanese Government in wake of the UK variant prevalent in different countries including Pakistan. He also apprised the audience about the follow up steps taken after the last meeting which included distribution of Roshan among the needy and embedding Pakistan Student Association of Japan’s (PSAJ) website with the Embassy’s webpage. He also congratulated the Pakistani students who recently graduated in different programs in various universities of Japan.



The Second Secretary, Mirza Sameer Baig apprised the community about different measures taken by the Government of Pakistan for their facilitation. He said that services related to visa and passport can now be availed online, adding that physical presence is required only for a few services like biometrics and power of attorney.

Trade and Investment Counsellor Mr. Tahir Habib Cheema briefed the community about trade related matters. He said that over the years trade between Pakistan and Japan has remained limited to a few products but now we are going towards diversification. He said that Pakistani leather products were on display on the “Tokyo Fashion site” held recently. He also said that many Japanese IT companies have shown interest in hiring Pakistani IT engineers for their projects, adding that we will see many Pakistani IT engineers coming to Japan in near future. Cheema apprised the community members about measures taken to simplify the procedure of sending cars to Pakistan through gift scheme.

The community members praised Prime Minister Imran Khan’s initiative of e-Kachehris and shared their opinions and suggestions for improving the quality of work related to various services provided by the Embassy.

## 7th PAKISTAN-JAPAN HIGH LEVEL ECONOMIC POLICY DIALOGUE

The 7th Pakistan-Japan High Level Economic Policy Dialogue was held today in virtual format. The Pakistan delegation was led by Mr. Noor Ahmed, Secretary, Economic Affairs Division, whereas the Japan delegation was led by Mr. Hiroshi Suzuki, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. Ambassador of Pakistan to Japan Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad and Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Mr. Kuninori Matsuda also attended the Dialogue.

Both sides gave an overview of the current status of bilateral economic relations and reaffirmed their commitment to enhance mutually beneficial economic cooperation in diverse fields. Japan acknowledged Pakistan's geo-economic location with its connectivity potential as an export destination for Japanese goods and services not only catering to the Pakistan market but also to the wider region.



In order to bridge the balance of trade between the two countries, various measures to enhance Pakistan's export competitiveness such as transfer of technology, technical know-how, capacity building, and even joint ventures for Pakistan's export-oriented industries were discussed. The two sides also agreed to deliberate further on the possibility of concluding a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)/Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Agriculture products, fisheries, textiles, food processing, and ICT cooperation were some of the main areas identified as having the greatest potential for bilateral trade cooperation.

In the field of investment cooperation, Pakistan proposed Japan to take advantage of opportunities in its investor friendly Special Economic Zones and even offered a country specific economic zone for Japanese investment. Japan expressed certain investment and tax related concerns faced by its companies operating in Pakistan, which Pakistan side agreed to address.

With regard to human resource cooperation, both sides recognized the existence of immense potential in export of skilled and semi-skilled manpower to Japan and discussed ways and means to achieve maximum dividends from the MoCs signed between the two countries on Technical Intern Training and Specified Skilled Workers Programmes. Japan was keen to utilize Pakistan's highly qualified ICT experts in win-win cooperation for both countries.

The two sides resolved to work together in giving concrete shape to the various proposals discussed during the Dialogue.

# EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN COMMEMORATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

To mark the 10th year of the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011 and to acknowledge the services of the Pakistani community in the massive relief operations, a live zoom session was held by the Embassy of Pakistan in Tokyo on Thursday. The session was attended by a large number of Pakistanis who participated in relief efforts during the disaster.

On 11th March 2011 Japan suffered unimaginable tragedy following the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident. It was the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in Japan, and the fourth most powerful earthquake in the world since modern record-keeping began in 1900.



Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad briefed the participants about the incident. He said that the 9.1 magnitude earthquake that struck Tohoku region of Japan in March 2011 caused at least 16000 deaths and almost \$200 billion damage to the infrastructure.

Soon after the earthquake, the Embassy established an emergency cell with round the clock duties to help with relief activities. The Embassy sent seven teams to the affected areas who distributed warm clothes and food among the affected people.



Mr. Muhammad Zubair of Islamic Circle of Japan, Ghalib Hussain and Haroon Qureshi of Japan Islamic Trust, Mr. Shahid Majeed, Mr. Inam ul Haq and Hafiz Maher Shams shared memories of the relief operations. Soon after the earthquake, many teams of Pakistani nationals from various regions of Japan rushed to affected areas to deliver relief goods. They also cooked fresh meals for them.



The selfless service offered by Pakistani community during the disaster left a lasting impression on Japanese consciousness and was commended by all sections of the society. Their tireless work has not only been recognized by the Japanese leadership but has also been widely covered by the Japanese print and electronic media.

Earlier a photo exhibition was also held at the Embassy that displayed photographs of the relief activities.

To mark the 10th year of the Great East Japan Earthquake 2011 and to acknowledge the services of Pakistanis in the massive relief operations, International Press Division of Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged an interview of Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad with a panel of three Pakistani journalists. The panel included Mr. Shams Abbasi of APP, Mr. Amin Ahmad of Dawn, and Ms Jamila Achakzai of The News. Two Japanese persons of Pakistani origin Mr. Anees Raees and Mr. Ramzan Siddique, who took active part in relief operations, also joined the interview online.

At the outset, Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad briefed the panel about the incident. He said that the 9.1 magnitude earthquake that struck Tohoku region of Japan in March 2011 was the largest earthquake ever to hit Japan, causing 16000 deaths and almost \$200 billion damage to the infrastructure. Soon after the earthquake, we established an emergency cell in the Pakistani Embassy, Tokyo with round the clock duties. We also flashed our cell numbers on Pakistani TV channels for earthquake affectees and their families in Pakistan. We started receiving calls from Pakistani nationals living in Japan as well as their relatives in Pakistan. In many earthquake affected areas, telephone lines were not working and people were finding it difficult to contact.

We made list of missing Pakistanis and started contacting them on phone as well as taking help of Pakistani nationals living in those areas.

After a few days, we were able to contact all of them except two persons. One of them had unfortunately died in the Tsunami and the other one was later traced by the Embassy and reported to his family back in Pakistan. There were many Pakistanis living in affected areas who had contacted us for help. We met Pakistani nationals in Sendai and delivered relief goods to them. Two female students wanted to go back to Pakistan, we brought them to Tokyo and arranged their repatriation to Pakistan. We repatriated six persons to Pakistan. All subsequent visits to Tohoku region were aimed at delivering relief goods to Japanese nationals affected by the earthquake. The Embassy sent seven teams to the affected areas for relief activities. The Government of Pakistan sent two planes load of relief goods for the affected people which were delivered by the Embassy to Sendai and Morioka cities. We visited Sendai, Morioka, Ishinomaki, Kesennuma and Fukushima.

Our community living in Japan actively participated in relief activities. Soon after the earthquake, many teams of Pakistani nationals from various regions of Japan rushed to affected areas to deliver relief goods. Mr. Anees Raees, set up a kitchen in Ishinomaki and cooked food everyday for the 1000 people till May 20, 2011. Mr. Ramzan Siddique also prepared lunch boxes for 800 people and accompanied us to deliver it to affected people in Ishinomaki.

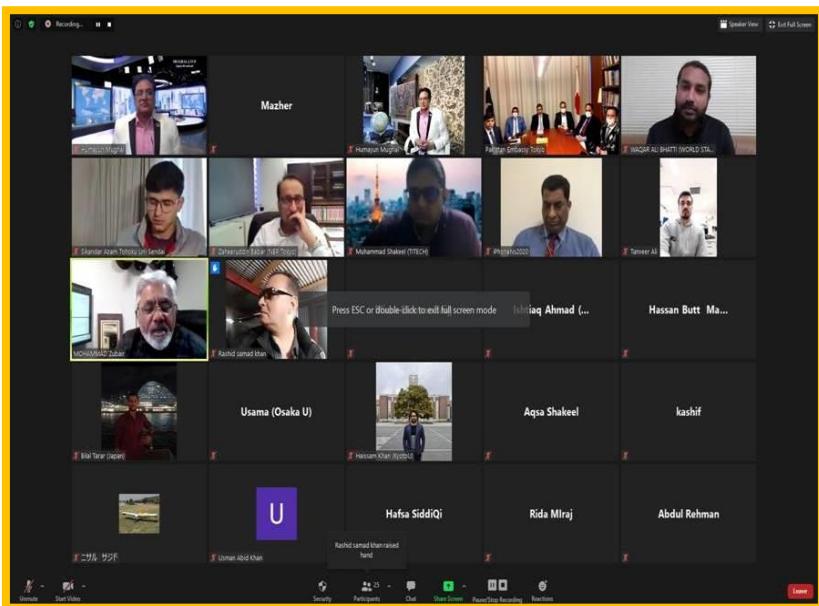
On a question regarding key lessons learned from the Japanese relief operations that can be replicated in Pakistan, Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad said that disaster preparedness is the key. Since earthquakes are a common occurrence in Japan therefore Japanese people are very well-informed on the issue. Secondly relevant technologies and building codes are very crucial. They not only minimize the damage caused by disasters but also help with the relief efforts.



# E-KHULI KACHEHRI “OPEN HOUSE” FOR PAKISTANI COMMUNITY ORGANIZED BY THE EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN, TOKYO, JAPAN

According to Prime Minister’s initiative of reaching out to the Pakistani community, Pakistan Embassy, Tokyo, held an “Open House” (e-Khuli Kachehri) on February 02, 2021.

Ambassador H.E. Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad chaired the event and opened the session with detailed briefing to the community on purpose and objectives of the E-Khuli Kachehri, followed by a quick round up of the corona situation in Japan. He urged the community to follow all the SOPs and take every precaution against the virus.



While apprising the community about different measures taken by the government of Pakistan for their facilitation, he said that our services related to visa and passport can now be availed online, adding that physical presence is required only for a few services like biometrics and power of attorney. The Ambassador also briefed the community members about Roshan Digital Account, Pakistan’s rising trade, investments, manpower export and growing bilateral relationship between Japan and Pakistan.

Trade and Commercial Counsellor Mr. Tahir Habib Cheema briefed the community about trade related matters. He said that over the years trade between Pakistan and Japan has remained limited to a few products but now we are going towards diversification. He said that among other things there is great potential for exporting Pakistani seafood, surgical items and agricultural products to Japan. He also said that many Japanese IT companies have shown interest in hiring Pakistani IT engineers for their projects, adding that we will see many Pakistani IT engineers coming to Japan in near future.

Mr. Cheema apprised the community members about measures taken to simplify the procedure of sending cars to Pakistan through gift scheme. He allayed concerns of the community members regarding an ongoing investigation against few people who used fake stamp and signature of the Pakistani Embassy to clear a vehicle, and said that genuine businessmen will not be affected by this.

The community members praised Prime Minister Imran Khan’s initiative of e-Kachehris and shared their opinions and suggestions for improving the quality of work related to various services provided by the embassy.

# JAPANESE VIRTUAL BUSINESS DELEGATION FOR PAKISTAN

Embassy of Pakistan co-hosted a delegation of Japanese companies interested in investing in Pakistan with the support of Board of Investment (BoI), Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Investment & Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) UNIDO holding webinars, virtual tours to Special Economic Zones (SEZs), online meetings/presentations by public sector stakeholders and B2B meetings during a two days event in Tokyo on January 13-14, 2021.



Ambassador of Pakistan to Japan, Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad inaugurated the event and welcomed the Japanese delegate companies. In his opening remarks, the Ambassador, while acknowledging contributions of more than eighty Japanese companies already operating in Pakistan, pointed towards a keen interest shown by many more Japanese companies to integrate in Pakistan's economy for which the Mission expects expansion and diversification of Japanese investment in Pakistan in the coming years.

The Ambassador further emphasized the supportive and enabling investment climate offered by Pakistan on the basis of better regulations for safeguarding foreign investment and significant improvement in Ease of Doing Business ranking by the World Bank with consistent and continued efforts to improve business environment in the country by all stakeholders.



The audience was also introduced to the attractive incentives being offered for investing in Special Economic Zones in Pakistan in addition to the commercial advantages associated with Pakistan such as its geographical location, huge domestic market, no distinction between domestic and foreign investors, trained and English speaking educated manpower, quality infrastructure, abundant natural resources and extensive digital penetration already well recognized by multinational companies.



In different sessions during the event, Japanese investors were exposed to various investment opportunities in the sectors including but not limited to Textiles, Leather, Sports Goods, Surgical Instruments, Fisheries, Fruits & Vegetables, Agricultural Machinery, Marble & Granite, Autoparts, Construction & Housing and Information Technology.

Pakistan's Trade and Investment Counselor in Japan Mr. Tahir Habib Cheema represented the Embassy, Ministry of Commerce and Board of Investment throughout the event responding to questions and concerns raised by Japanese participants. During the last session hosted for all major business chambers in Pakistan to interact with the delegation, Mr. Cheema offered both Japanese investors and Pakistani companies to obtain assistance from the Mission as and when required.



The Embassy of Pakistan in Tokyo assured its full cooperation to BoI and TDAP for promoting investment and trade between Pakistan and Japan while thanking JICA, JETRO and ITPO UNIDO for their continued support in enhancing bilateral economic cooperation between Pakistan and Japan.

Chairman Zeal Corporation Mr. Iyama & President Lima Trucks Mr. Yamaguchi conveyed their group's keen interest in investing in logistics & construction sectors in Pakistan in a meeting with Ambassador Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad and Trade & Investment Counselor Mr. Cheema.



Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad welcomed interest of Japanese human resource companies in skilled and highly skilled professionals from Pakistan, offering support in matchmaking the stakeholders during a meeting with CEO of +W Ms. Wakako Sakurai.



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## National Day of Pakistan

Publicity

# Taking bilateral relations to further heights

By Imtiaz Ahmad  
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

On this auspicious occasion of the National Day of Pakistan, allow me to 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 Yoshihide Suga and the government and the friendly peo-



Imtiaz Ahmad

ple of Japan.  
Every year, we celebrate the national Day of Pakistan to commemorate the historic day of March 23, 1940, when our founding fathers clearly laid out the vision for a separate and independent state for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. That vision became a reality on Aug.

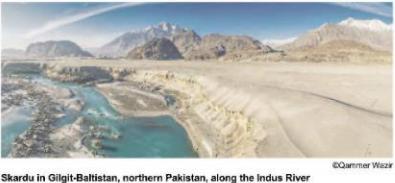
14, 1947, owing to the relentless efforts by our elders led by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Pakistan and Japan are long-standing friends and partners in a bond that is based on deep-rooted bonds steeped in history and time. The people of Pakistan carry a deep sentiment of warmth and affection for Japan and its people. We have always stood with each other in times of need, calamity and natural disasters.

The year 2021 marks the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan

Earthquake that struck the Tohoku region. It was great tragedy resulting in the loss of many precious lives. Many in the Pakistani community living in Japan came forward to help the affected people in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami. Indeed, all this makes us very proud.

On this cherished day, we pledge to take the Pakistan-Japan bilateral relationship to further heights in the new Japanese era of Reiwa. Thank you! Long Live Pakistan! Long Live the Pakistan-Japan Friendship.



©Qammer Wazir

## Sincere wishes for prosperity

By Teruo Asada  
Chairman of the Japan-Pakistan Business Cooperation Committee

On behalf of the Japan-Pakistan Business Co-operation Committee (JPBCC), I would like to offer my warmest congratulations to the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day.



Teruo Asada

Under the leadership of the Khan Cabinet, our sincere expectations for economic reform in Pakistan have risen substantially. With increasing business momentum in Pakistan and a population surpassing 200 million, the pace of market penetration by Japanese companies is expected to accelerate. I am convinced that more Japanese companies will enter the Pakistani market once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

The JPBC was established in 1984. Since then, we have been promoting bilateral business ties, trade, investment and economic activities.

In October 2019, the JPBC held a roundtable talk with His Excellency Dr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, where the attendees had thorough, valuable discussions. The JPBC hopes to contribute to the further development of business between both our countries through these types of mutual activities.

We offer our sincere wishes for Pakistan's increased development and prosperity in the future.

(Asada is a former Chairman, Executive Advisor, Marubeni Corporation.)

## Japan-Pakistan ties actively promoted

By Seishiro Eto  
President of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians Friendship League

On behalf of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians Friendship League, I

would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day.

Japan and Pakistan have been the beneficiaries of exchange in various areas such as politics, economy, culture and academy since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1952. Although in the past year mutual visits between the two countries were largely restricted amid the worldwide battle against the spread of COVID-19, there has been active communication between Japan and Pakistan.

The efforts include telephone talks between Japanese Foreign Minister Mr. Toshimura Motegi and his Pakistan counterpart Mr. Mahmood Shah Mahmood Qureshi as well as exchanges between then Japanese Defense Minister Mr. Taro Kono and Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. These talks confirmed the existence of friendly and strong bilateral relations even during this

coronavirus catastrophe. Japan's Self-Defense Forces in February participated in the Pakistan Navy's Multinational rifle Exercise Aman-21, along with more than 40 other countries, that also led to an advancement in military exchanges between Japan and Pakistan.

Both countries are still working continuously to tackle issues involving the spread of COVID-19. I hope we will share our knowledge and experiences with each other to solve this problem. Japan has been providing assistance, including medical equipment, to reinforce Pakistan's medical systems. In addition, the government of Pakistan and Pakistan International Airlines provided flights to bring 110 Japanese nationals, who had been residing in Pakistan and wished to return to Japan in the midst of fears COVID-19 would spread, to safely travel back to their home country in April 2020.

Japan and Pakistan will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations next year. As the President of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians Friendship League, I pray for early victory of both countries in the fight against COVID-19 and would like to further strengthen bilateral relations, looking ahead to the post-corona era.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the continued prosperity of Pakistan and further development of friendly relations between Japan and Pakistan.

(Eto is a member of the House of Representatives.)

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## Pakistan a nature-rich country

There is a popular legend among Japanese backpackers that the landscapes in "Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind," a 1984 anime by Hayao Miyazaki, were modelled after the Hunza valley of Pakistan. Although it's difficult to ascertain the source of the story, its references to the Hunza valley are found in travel guides and social media posts.

I've been following Japanese social media and have seen many posts regarding Pakistani food, gemstones, the northern areas and the daily flag lowering ceremony at the Wagah border. Every day I see content and vlogs about Pakistan popping up all over the internet that highlight growing interest of Japanese travellers in Pakistan. This is a promising trend, especially when visiting the country has become very easy. Japanese travellers can now apply online for an electronic visa, which is valid for 30 days and is issued within a week.

Pakistan has seen a 70% increase in international tourist arrivals over the last three years. In 2019, Forbes, British



Khaplu Palace in Gilgit-Baltistan ©Muhammad Sajid

Mulla Ki Basti in Mansehra

mitances have increased 151% at a compound annual growth rate of 20%, the highest in the region. Therefore, many Japanese IT companies have recently shown interest in hiring IT professionals from Pakistan.

To leverage its geo-economic location in the region, Pakistan is actively pursuing regional connectivity projects which also present a great opportunity for Japanese companies for investment and partnerships.

This article was written by Muhammad Faruk Rafa, Press Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo.

Congratulations on the Occasion of the 81st National Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

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# Pakistan National Day Special

## A special relationship forged by history

MUHAMMAD AHMAD  
AMBASSADOR OF PAKISTAN

On this auspicious occasion of the National 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 Yoshihide Suga and the government and the friendly people of Japan.

Every year, we celebrate the national



Indian subcontinent.

day of Pakistan to commemorate the creation of the independent state of Pakistan on Aug. 14, 1947, when our founding fathers deadly laid out the vision for separate and independent state for the Muslims of the

Pakistan and Japan are long-standing friends and share a special bond based on deep-rooted respect and mutual trust. The projected Pakistan carry a deep sentiment of warmth and affection for Japan and the Japanese people. We have always stood with each other in times of need, calamity and natural disasters.

2021 marks the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake that struck the Tohoku region. It was a great tragedy resulting in the loss of precious lives. The Pakistani community living in Japan con-

dered their services to help the affected people in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami. Indeed, all this makes us very proud.

On this cherished day, we pledge to take the Pakistan-Japan bilateral relationship to further heights in the new Japanese era of Reiwa. Thank you! Long Live Pakistan! Long Live the Pakistan-Japan Friendship!

This article was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Maia Ki Benthi, a popular place to camp in the northern Hunza District TAKHARAYAM



Khaplu Palace, a fort in eastern Gilgit-Baltistan MAENOK SAGIR



The Indus River near Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan QAMMERAZAK

## A celebration of strong reciprocal ties

SOSHIRO KITO  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-PAKISTAN  
PARLIAMENTARIANS FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians Friendship League, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the auspicious

occasions of Pakistan Day.

Japan and Pakistan have been enjoy-

ing exchanges in various fields, including

politics, economy, culture and academic

and diplomatic relations since 1952. Although in the past year mutual visits between the countries had largely

reduced due to the worldwide fight

against the spread of COVID-19, there were many exchanges between Japan and Pakistan, such as telephone discussions between Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and his Pakistani counterpart Mahmood Shaukat Mahmood Qureshi, as well as between Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono and Pakistani Chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa. These talks confirmed the existence of friendly and strong bilateral relationships and mutual trust.

As both countries are still working continuously to bring the spread of COVID-19 to a rapid halt, I hope we will share our knowledge and experience with each other to solve this issue. Japan has been providing medical assistance to Pakistan, such

as medical equipment, to strengthen the medical system in Pakistan. On the other hand, the government of Pakistan and Pakistan International Airlines provided kind cooperation for 110 Japanese nationals who had been residing in Pakistan and wished to return to Japan amid the rapidly spreading contagion so they could safely return to Japan last April.

Japan and Pakistan will continue the tradition of mutual friendliness in the field of diplomatic relations next year. As the president of the Japan-Pakistan Parliamentarians Friendship League, I pray that both of our countries will celebrate an early victory in the fight against COVID-19 and world peace to further strengthen bilateral relations, looking ahead to the post-COVID era.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the continued prosperity of Pakistan and the further development of friendly relations between Japan and Pakistan.



in Pakistan and a population surpassing 200 million, the pace of market penetration by Japanese companies is expected to accelerate. I am convinced that more will enter Pakistan's market once the COVID-19 pandemic is contained.

The JPBCC was established in 1984. Since then, we have been promoting bilateral

business trade, investment and economic activities.

In October 2019, the JPBCC held a round-table talk with His Excellency Dr. Asif Ali, president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, where the attendees had thorough, valuable discussions. The JPBCC hopes to contribute to the further development of business relations between our countries through such activities.

I conclude by once again offering my congratulations on Pakistan Day, as well as my sincere wishes for Pakistan's increasing development and prosperity in the future.



A Pakistani woman from the Gilgit-Baltistan region wears traditional dress. ASMAN KHURSAINI

Congratulations  
to the People of  
the Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
on the Occasion of  
the Anniversary of  
their National Day

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## Tourism on the rise as foreign businesses profit

There is a popular saying among tourists that the landscape in "Nature of the Valley of the West," a 1980s movie by Hayao Miyazaki, were modelled on the Hunza Valley of Pakistan. Although it's difficult to ascertain the source of the story, its references can be found in travel guides and social media posts.

On Japanese social media I've found many posts on Pakistan's food, green scenery and the beauty of the Hunza. Following currently at the World Cup, Every day I see content and slope on Pakistan popping up over the web, highlighting Japan's growing interest. This is a promising trend, especially when access has become easy. Japan can now apply online services and often get them in a week.

In winter, I see a 10% increase in international tourist arrivals over the past three years. In 2019, Forbes, the British Backpacker Society and Condé Nast named it as top tourist destination. Whereas interest in tourism is growing, trade has always been a major area of focus between Pakistan and Japan. Both

countries started trading partners, particularly in cotton and wool. In the 1990s, Japan was dependent on cotton imports from Pakistan, and Japanese spinners played a crucial role in developing Pakistan's textile industry.

Today, Pakistan offers an open and deregulated market with 100% equity ownership and 100% repatriation of capital and profits. Over the past five years, IT export committee has a growth 151%, for a compound annual rate of 20%, the highest in the region. Therefore many Japanese IT firms have shown interest in India. IT exports from Pakistan.

From 2007 to 2017, leading multinationals corporations like Unilever, GS, Nestle, Colgate-Palmolive and Unilever have already made substantially high profits in Pakistan as compared with their global averages. Therefore, Japanese companies also consider Pakistan one of the most profitable international destinations as we are growing interest in the energy, minerals, infrastructure, pharmaceutical, seafood and dairy sectors.

The outward campaign, Option Pakistan launched by the Prime Minister in Tokyo has attracted a lot of attention from major business chambers and associations in Japan, and we are moving ahead to the matchmaking stage in collaboration with partners in both countries.

To leverage its geoeconomic location, Pakistan is actively pursuing regional connectivity projects that also provide Japanese companies opportunities for investment and partnerships.

On defense and security, Pakistan and Japan have active coordination and cooperation in maritime security in the North Arabian Sea. The series of bi-lateral frequently hold joint training involving humanitarian aid, disaster relief and anti-piracy operations. Likewise, Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force participated in one of the largest multi-national maritime cooperative exercises in the Arabian Sea—the Exercise Ananta (Fleet), which was hosted by the Pakistani Navy.

Mohammad Farrukh Raja, Past Consul-General, Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo



The founder of Pakistan Qazi-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah



23RD MARCH



Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan

THIS DAY  
WE CELEBRATE  
THE ANNIVERSARY  
OF OUR NATIONAL DAY

with renewed vigour and hope to build up a happy, prosperous and progressive future for our country and leave behind a rich legacy of achievements for our future generations to feel proud of. NBP will continue to play its role in promoting the national effort for all-round development.

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