

**PAKISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY 75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Good evening and welcome to Government House to this reception to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pakistan Independence Day.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

I know that this gathering has been arranged at short notice and so well done to Zainab Huzaifa for ensuring this excellent gathering of “Hum Hai Pakistani” Facebook members.

At the outset it is important that as the Governor of Tasmania, on behalf of all Tasmanians, I express my sorrow at the flood disaster that is devastating much of Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has described the crisis as the “toughest moment in the history of Pakistan.”<sup>1</sup>

Statistics are able to express only a measure of the suffering. Monsoon rains and floods have killed over 1130 people, with more than a million homes destroyed and damaged, thousands of kilometres of roads washed away, untold livestock deaths, and already damages estimated at \$10 Billion [£8.5bn].<sup>2</sup>

There is very significant evidence that this destruction is exacerbated by human-caused global heating. South Asia is a hotspot for the climate crisis, in the words of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres,<sup>3</sup> and yet Pakistan as a single nation emits less than one per cent of global greenhouse gases.

Our thoughts here this evening are very much with all Pakistanis enduring this crisis.

Now, in respect of why we are gathered for this event – to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pakistan’s Independence Day – I would like to briefly look back

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/aug/30/pakistan-monsoon-on-steroids-flooding-warning-antonio-guterres>, accessed 31 August 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

to that time, from a Tasmanian perspective, because the contemporary assessments are fascinating and bring that recent history vividly into focus for us this evening.

The *Voice* newspaper, published in Hobart from the 1920s to the early 1950s, ran a long article reflecting on the new nation, and I will quote from some of it:

“The foundation of Pakistan as an independent sovereign State within the Commonwealth of Nations on August 14th, 1947, was a momentous development in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. It was the re- birth of 1,200 years of Muslim history ...

“Most of India gradually came under Muslim sway until the middle of the 18th century. Then followed the disintegration of the Moghul Empire and the splitting up of the country into many small kingdoms and principalities ...

“By this time the British, had established themselves at three points in the South, East and West, and slowly succeeded in conquering the once-mighty Moghul. Empire ... At about this time the Hindus formed the Indian National Congress ...

“In 1906, the All-India Muslim League, which became an effective champion of the Muslim cause, was organised to check the threat from the Indian National Congress. From then onwards Muslim politics aimed at the rescue of the Muslim majority provinces ... In 1930, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Pakistan's greatest poet-philosopher, gave the world a vision of a separate Muslim State.

“In 1939, at the outbreak of World War Two, the Indian Congress demanded an immediate grant of full independence to India. This was followed in March 1940 by the demand of the All-India Muslim League for the creation of an independent State in those areas where the Muslims were in a majority ...

“Finally, in accordance with the Mountbatten Plan of June 1947, the division of the sub-continent became an accomplished fact. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1947, amidst great rejoicing, the Dominion of Pakistan came into being and a new epoch in Muslim history opened ...

The idea in the establishment of Pakistan was that Pakistanis should have a State in which they could develop according to their own genius and culture and where principles of Islamic social justice would find free play. The culmination of this great event took place on 30th September 1947, when Pakistan was admitted to the Assembly of the United Nations and took her rightful place among the comity of free, independent nations.”<sup>4</sup>

End of quote.

---

<sup>4</sup> *Voice* (Hobart), Saturday 18 October 1952, pages 1, 4.

And a few years later, in 1953, the Hobart *Mercury* had some worthy reflections on the early years of independence, and again I quote, from an article with the heading “Pakistan is a Nation on the Move”:

“Six years ago a new political force swung into action in one of the most strategically important areas in the world. On August 14, 1947, some 76,000,000 people of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent became the new nation of Pakistan and started their career as an independent sovereign Power within the British Commonwealth ...

“Since then the process of welding those millions of people into a progressive nation has been one of the most fascinating studies in contemporary affairs. One reason for this is that Pakistan had to start from scratch. Almost overnight she had to form a Government and establish an administration to organise the nation. And this had to be done when refugees were streaming into the country by millions ...

“In two respects Pakistan was fortunate indeed. Of first importance was the spirit of her people. Proud of their historic background and elated by the opportunity to shape their own destiny, they worked and planned despite all their vicissitudes. Next in importance was the fact that their country was self-supporting in foodstuffs ...

“Against these advantages, however, were many disadvantages, some of which were thought by outsiders to be insuperable. At the time of partition of the sub-continent Pakistan inherited less than 10 per cent of its industries, and organised industry occupied only about 8 per cent of her people ... To secure even a measure of economic independence – essential for political independence – Pakistan had to set up, with the utmost speed, mills and factories and workshops, and also train technicians ...

“And so the story of reorganising the whole national life from the ground up goes on – new roads, new modern railway equipment, new and more powerful broadcasting stations, new research organisations, new industries, and more and more acres being brought under cultivation ...

“Australia's contribution towards assisting Pakistan and other industrially under-developed countries of South and south-East Asia is being made under the Colombo Plan, which was launched on the initiative of Australia ... Up to June last, 55 Pakistanis had come to Australia under the technical co-operation scheme of the Colombo Plan, while through similar arrangements with the United Nations and the United States many hundreds have gained or are gaining further experience abroad ...

“Pakistan has been acutely aware that all efforts to improve the lot of the masses would be frustrated in so far as war or the fear of war prevailed. She has therefore taken a very vigorous part in efforts to preserve peace and to promote co-operation. As a member of the British Commonwealth and as an Islamic country, Pakistan has been in a unique position to help in this way ...

“Hard work and dogged determination have made Pakistan a country which can look to the future with confidence. Working and planning, planning and working, the nation-building process continues. The story of Pakistan’s sixth year is a story of a nation on the move.”<sup>5</sup>

End of quote.

And on that positive note I will end by saying many congratulations on your 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Thank you.

[David invites Zainab Huzaifa to respond briefly]

---

<sup>5</sup> *Mercury*, Friday 14 August 1953, page 4.