

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE RETURN
DINNER IN HONOUR OF THE PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN
AND BEGUM ZIA-UL-HAQ AT ISLAMABAD,
ON 26TH JANUARY, 1979.**

Your Excellency, General Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq, the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, visited Pakistan in 1962. His successor Tun Abdul Razak attended the Islamic Summit Conference in Lahore in 1974. I am very glad to be able to visit Pakistan this time. I have been looking forward to it and I wish to thank Your Excellency for the kind invitation. I was in Rawalpindi 35 years ago. I was then a young army officer during the Second World War at the Malayan Police Training Centre at Mohan Camp. The Training Centre was a part of the organisation of the British Civil Affairs Malaya concerned with the civil affairs of the country after its liberation. We were recruiting and training personnel for the Malayan Police Force. The personnel were Punjabis and Seikhs. My recollection of Rawalpindi was that of a quiet and peaceful district with big and shady trees on both sides of the roads. Although there were a lot of soldiers, life was very orderly and serene. The war seemed very far away. When the time came for the invasion and liberation of Malaya, we moved to Madras and then to Calcutta, and embarked on ships in the invasion convey. We were still in the Bay of Bengal when news came of Japan's surrender.

Your Excellency, you told me that you were also in the Invasion Forces. You landed at Morib Beach and then on to Seremban and Kuala Pilah, and then finally to Kuala Lumpur. It could be said then that you are not really a stranger to Malaysia. I hope that you will make a pilgrimage to Malaysia which I know you will do in the near future.

Your Excellency, I told you this morning how the immediate despatch of a company from the Punjab Regiment to Batu Pahat in my home state of Johore had avoided a terrible racial clash among the population and had probably saved hundreds if not thousands of lives. The company of the Punjab Regiment was from a battalion which was commanded by General Sher Ali. My father was the District Officer.

Your Excellency, as you know, the main purposes of my visit to Pakistan are:

- a) to further strengthen the existing bilateral relations between our two countries;

- b) to discuss areas of bilateral cooperation in the economic, technical, trade and cultural fields; and
- c) to exchange views on regional and international issues.

This morning we had talks which were followed with discussions and exchange of views with members of your Government. We discussed and covered many areas, particularly those relating to trade, technical cooperation, shipping and cargo air services between our two countries. I found our discussions very stimulating and beneficial. I am optimistic that our countries' relations and cooperation will be further strengthened and expanded, InshaAllah.

Tomorrow morning, our two countries will be signing a Cultural Agreement. This, if I may say so, is only a beginning of our countries' strong desires to know more of each other and to have closer relationships. I hope the Cultural Agreement will be followed by an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement. Negotiations on this Agreement, I suggest, should be concluded as a matter of urgency.

Your Excellency, cooperation between our two countries is not confined to bilateral matters only. Pakistan and Malaysia have cooperated very well on many international matters as well. At the United Nations and the Islamic Conference, our two countries have worked very closely together. I am sure that it is our desires that the close cooperation should continue in the future.

Both Pakistan and Malaysia desire peace and stability. Malaysia will support any efforts to achieve these in whatever regions they may be.

Your Excellency, this is the first opportunity I have had of meeting and knowing you. I value your sincerity and friendliness of the reception which you have given me, my wife and members of my delegation. To Begum M. Zia-Ul-Haq, my wife and I are very touched by her charm and friendliness. When her General visits Malaysia, I would advise the Begum to insist, harass, and if necessary, nag her gallant husband to take her with him ——— never take no for an answer. Even a General cannot stand such an attack.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I sit down may I ask you to rise and join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency the President of Pakistan and Begum M. Zia-Ul-Haq, to the Government and people of Pakistan, and to the friendship between Pakistan and Malaysia.