

Prime Minister

ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO

SPEECH AT
FOUNDATION LAYING
CEREMONY OF
PORT MUHAMMAD BIN QASIM



AUGUST 5, 1976

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The text of address by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at the foundation stone laying ceremony of Port Muhammad Bin Qasim on Phitti Creek near Pipri, some 50 Kilometres east of Karachi, on August 5, 1976.

*Mr. Governor, Mr. Minister for Communications,
Your Excellencies and Honoured Guests and Workers :*

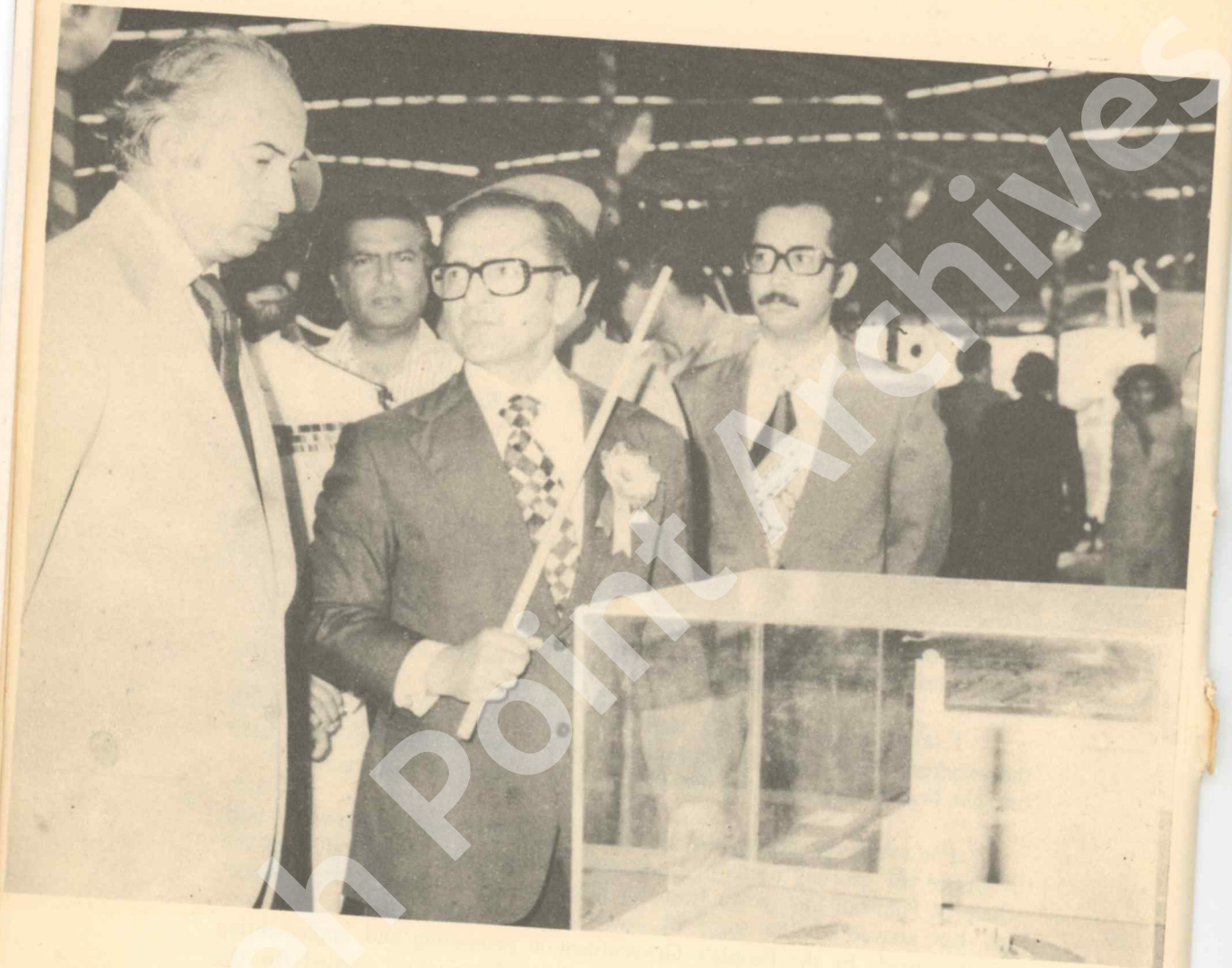
I take pleasure in being here today and in associating myself with the workers, technicians, engineers, designers and managers who have brought Port Muhammad Bin Qasim to its first phase of construction.

For over two decades the building of a second major deep-water port to service the pressing needs of trade and industry, and other traffic, of the whole of Pakistan has grown from an idea to a plan and now to a project that has arrived at the stage of construction. I take pride in the contribution made by the People's Government in promoting and implementing this project which is a vital segment in the infrastructure needed for the economic development of the country. The Port of Karachi has served the Nation well, and it will continue to do so, but its heavy burden will, in the near future, be shared by the new Port.

This should be welcome news not only to all of Pakistan but to the international mercantile community which trades with us, and for all those who use our seaports for the good of their economies as we do for ours.

NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE DEEP-WATER PORT

The need for a second major deep-water port has long been felt in Pakistan. The People's Government, as soon as it could, took decisions and translated them into reality to relieve the growing congestion at the Port of



A landmark of the new Port Qasim would be an impressive monument commemorating the landing in early 8th century A.D. of the first army of Islam in South Asia at Daibul, not far from the present site of the Port. This army was led by 16-year old Muhammad Bin Qasim after whom the Port is named. Chairman of the Port Qasim Authority showed a model of the monument to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at the foundation stone laying ceremony



Mr. Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, Federal Minister for Communications, presented a monogram of Port Qasim to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at the foundation stone laying ceremony on August 5, 1976.

Karachi. As a short-term measure, new berths were added to handle the increasing number of ships which came to Karachi's Harbour to discharge their loads — essential for our economic development, including food requirements — and pick up cargo which brought us increased foreign exchange earnings. But, obviously, this was not a permanent solution, and we, therefore, established the Port Qasim Authority to advise the Government on the location of the new Port, on its design and to supervise its construction. I am gratified that the Port Qasim Authority has acquitted itself well in completing the first two of its tasks.

The Minister for Communications made a reference just now to what I said, at the start of the construction of the Karachi Steel Mill, about the role of Port Qasim in our national development. The Federal Government's decision to build the Karachi Steel Mill and Port Qasim was anchored firmly in our national development plans. Their priorities were based on our assessment that no self-sustaining industrialisation or mechanisation of farming could move forward without indigenous production of iron and steel, and also on our inter-linked appraisal that we should considerably expand and improve our communications and our distributive mechanism.

Without adding to the capacity of our seaports and airports, and modernising their equipment, we cannot expect a greater frequency of ship sailings and airplane take-offs. Our objective in building Port Qasim is to reduce turn-around time for carriers coming to and going from Pakistan to increase the frequency of their calls and attract new ships.

The relationship between the tonnage of cargo handled and the efficiency of shipping services is fully recognised by the Government which is also providing for proportionate development of our rail and road systems. With this parallel expansion the Government feels that it will now be able to accomplish an important social purpose of its development efforts in the country's industrial and agricultural sectors.

PROGRESS WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE

This very important purpose I speak of is social justice, the achievement of which will be helped by an evenly balanced distributive system. It is this consideration that has determined our policy for developing a workable and purposeful communications system, a system which will expedite the opening up of the backward regions of Pakistan to the benefits of social and economic progress and link them with centres of trade and education not only in Pakistan but with all those parts of the world where we can earn and learn. In this way, through a properly planned and expanded communications system, we hope to build into our development infrastructure a physical mechanism which will help us fulfil our ideological commitment to an equitable distribution, in all areas of the country, of the fruits of an integrated national endeavour.

EMPHASIS ON COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

It is because of this objective that the Federal Government has invested heavily in the Communications Sector. We have purchased over sixty new diesel railway engines to replace an aging fleet. Another rail bridge is being built over the Indus at Kotri to remove a bottleneck there, and a modern marshalling yard is being built here at Pipri which will not only serve Port Qasim and the Karachi Steel Mill, but will also reduce the turnaround time for our rolling stock. A major new Highway on the right bank of the Indus is being designed and when completed will remove the present congestion on the National Highway.

The Minister for Communications has informed us that our *Entrepot* trade would register a three-fold increase within a decade. This is evidence of our confidence in our efforts in the Public and in the Private Sectors of our Economy.

This confidence is comparable to the assurance with which Muhammad Bin Qasim came to this part of the world at the head of a devoted army of Islam. Confidence was as much his watchword as the faith, the fighting skills and the determination of his soldiers were the bases of his trust in the success of his enterprises, the consequences of which have reverberated through the centuries — Pakistan itself being a consequence of that event.

This port has been named after this Great Commander to whose memory somehow no tangible monument was raised by those who came after him. In acknowledging him and his intrepid achievement, by naming this new port after him, we do honour to ourselves. And I can only hope and pray that some of his intrepidity rubs off on us in our battle for the economic and social betterment of all of our people.

In this battle, the People's Government has tried to make the best use of the means and resources at our disposal. It is because we are accountable to the people that we take every opportunity to tell them what we are doing and what are the problems involved in national reconstruction and development.

It has been my Government's policy that our developmental effort must be for the maximum good of the maximum number. To me the ultimate aim of every development activity is to bring about an improvement in the living conditions of our people.

This development, whether it takes place in any part of the Frontier Province or Baluchistan, in the plains of Punjab or Sind or any part of our coast, is an inter-linked and integrated effort. Yesterday I laid the

Foundation Stone of the Pakistan Marine Academy. With Port Qasim in operation, the national shipping industry will expand and the Marine Academy will cater to the national demand for executive and other personnel of our mercantile fleet.

The signing of a contract for the construction of four berths at Port Qasim for handling bagged cargo is evidence of progress here and I am glad to note that tenders are soon to be invited for the construction of an exclusive berth for iron ore and coal for the Steel Mill. I must stress the importance of the concurrent completion of this berth with the Steel Mill going into production. I hope that the construction of the first four berths will be followed in quick succession by the construction of three more berths to complete the target of seven berths in the first phase of the construction programme. Port Qasim has a vital role to play in the service of the Karachi Steel Mill which is being constructed with the assistance of the Soviet Union.

FIRST VESSEL TO BE HANDLED WITHIN 20 MONTHS

Once Port Qasim is in operation it should be a boon for international trade and shipping. Insha-Allah, within 20 months from today, Port Qasim should be operational and receive its first cargo vessel. With that the pressure on Karachi Port will begin to ease and its chronic congestion, which has caused substantial losses to the national economy in general and to the shipping industry in particular, will begin to dissipate.

I would like to take this opportunity of publicly thanking the Governments of Canada, United Kingdom, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Belgium whose co-operation at one stage or another has contributed to the development of the Port Qasim Project.

I hope and pray that vessels touching Port Qasim will be well served and with promptitude. I am confident that Karachi Port and Port Qasim will vie with each other in servicing their clients and both will earn the reputation of being among the most efficient ports of the world. Such a reputation will make Port Qasim bustle with purposeful activity. I am confident that with the facilities we are providing, and the skills that our workers and managers possess, Port Qasim will come to be known as possessing an efficient force that can launch and receive a thousand ships!

I now have much satisfaction in laying the foundation stone of Port Muhammad Bin Qasim. And in so doing I wish all workers, engineers, technicians, planners and managers success in their assignments in this project which is of great significance to the whole nation.

PAKISTAN ZINDABAD

Print Order.....Five Thousand

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