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December 25: Birth Anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam

Muhammad Ali Jinnah*



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(By Ahsan Ansari)

December 25 marks the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a visionary leader, dignified politician, and the founder of Pakistan. Born in 1876 in Karachi, Jinnah's remarkable life and unparalleled contributions to the creation of Pakistan continue to inspire millions worldwide. His unwavering struggle for the rights of Muslims in the subcontinent laid the foundation for the birth of a new nation.

Jinnah was the eldest of seven siblings, born into a merchant family in Karachi. He began his early education at Sindh Madressatul Islam and later attended Mission School in Karachi. At the age of 16, Jinnah traveled to England to study law at Lincoln's Inn. He became one of the youngest barristers of his time, where he developed intellectual depth and strategic thinking. His exposure to Western education and politics profoundly influenced his ideology and shaped his vision for the future.

Jinnah's political journey began in 1906 when he joined the Indian National Congress. At the time, he believed in Hindu-Muslim unity and worked toward achieving it. However, the growing polarization in the political landscape of India and the neglect of Muslim concerns left him disillusioned with Congress policies. In 1913, Jinnah joined the All-India Muslim League, recognizing the need for a separate platform to safeguard Muslim interests. Over time, he emerged as the League's most prominent leader, uniting a fragmented Muslim community.

Jinnah's leadership took a transformative turn as he realized the increasing dominance of the Hindu majority within Congress and the disregard for Muslim concerns. He firmly believed that Muslims had their distinct identity, culture, and traditions that needed preservation. Advocacy for Muslim rights became the cornerstone of his political mission.

Jinnah's most significant contribution to the independence struggle was during the Lahore Resolution in March 1940. At this historic session of the Muslim League, the demand for a separate homeland for Muslims was formally articulated. The resolution called for the establishment of independent states in the northwestern and eastern zones of India, where Muslims were in the majority. In his powerful speech, Jinnah declared:

“The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither intermarry nor dine together, and indeed they belong to two different civilizations.”

This moment marked a turning point in the struggle for Pakistan, crystallizing the concept of a separate Muslim nation. As the demand for Pakistan gained momentum, Jinnah tirelessly engaged in negotiations with British officials and Congress leaders. His participation in pivotal events such as the Round Table Conferences, the Cripps Mission, and the Cabinet Mission Plan highlighted his diplomatic expertise. Despite strong opposition from Congress leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, Jinnah remained steadfast in his demand for a separate homeland. Jinnah faced significant challenges, including skepticism from some Muslim leaders who doubted the practicality of a separate state. However, his ability to articulate the aspirations of the Muslim masses and rally them under the Muslim League's banner proved highly effective. Through his

speeches and writings, Jinnah inspired the Muslim community to unite for their cause. He emphasized the principles of faith, unity, and discipline, which became the guiding values of the Muslim League. Under his leadership, the League transformed into a powerful political organization capable of challenging both Congress and the British Empire.

Jinnah's efforts culminated in the Mountbatten Plan of 1947, which led to the partition of India. On August 14, 1947, Pakistan emerged as an independent nation, fulfilling Jinnah's vision of a homeland where Muslims could live according to their cultural and religious values. Jinnah envisioned Pakistan as a progressive and inclusive state, where citizens of all religions and backgrounds would enjoy equal rights. In his landmark speech on August 11, 1947, he emphasized the principles of unity, equality, and justice:

“You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques, or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste, or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the state.”

Jinnah's health began to deteriorate soon after independence. Despite his failing health, he continued to work tirelessly for the stability and progress of the newly created state. On September 11, 1948, just over a year after Pakistan's creation, Jinnah passed away. His death marked the end of an era, but his legacy continues to inspire generations.

Every year, December 25 is observed as a national holiday in Pakistan to honor Quaid-e-Azam's services. The day is marked by seminars, public gatherings, and tributes to his leadership and sacrifices. Citizens reflect on his message of unity, discipline, and faith, striving to build a Pakistan that aligns with his vision. Jinnah's leadership proved that with unwavering determination and faith, even the most ambitious dreams can be realized. His efforts laid the foundation for Pakistan, not just as a geographical entity but as a safeguard for the social, cultural, and religious identity of Muslims.

Today, his legacy stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration for the nation. As Pakistan moves forward, it is imperative to uphold Jinnah's principles of justice, equality, and inclusivity. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah will forever be remembered as a symbol of steadfast commitment to the cause of freedom. Jinnah's journey from a young barrister to the founder of Pakistan is a testament to his vision, leadership, and dedication to his people. His life and legacy remind us of the power of perseverance and the importance of standing firm for one's beliefs. Let us pledge to follow in his footsteps and work towards the prosperity and progress of Pakistan.

“Pakistan Zindabad!”

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