

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH



Governor	: Mr. Tariq Bajwa
Title	: SBP's 70th Anniversary: Welcome Note by Governor SBP
Date	: July 01, 2018
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Venue	: SBP Head Office Karachi.

State Bank of Pakistan's 70th Anniversary

Welcome Note by Governor SBP

Governor Sindh Mr. Zubair,
Honorable Finance Minister, Dr Shamshad Akhtar,
Respectable Former Governors, State Bank of Pakistan, Dr. Ishrat Husain, Mr.
Yasin Anwar, Mr. Ashraf Wathra
Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam-o-aliakum and a very good morning!

It is my pleasant duty and distinct privilege to welcome you all to the 70th anniversary of the establishment of State Bank of Pakistan. On the auspicious occasion of the opening of the SBP on July 1st, 1948, the Quaid said:

“The opening of State Bank of Pakistan symbolizes the sovereignty of our state in the financial sphere. I need to hardly dilate on the important role the State Bank will have to play in regulating the economic life of our country. The monetary policy of the bank will have a direct bearing on our trade and commerce, both inside Pakistan as well as with the outside world and it is only to be desired that our policy should encourage maximum production and free flow of trade.”

The SBP as an institution has tried to live up to the expectations of the Quaid. From a modest beginning in borrowed premises, ladies and gentlemen, SBP rose to have earned the reputation of being a professional, progressive and forward-looking institution. The journey has been challenging, arduous, but rewarding. This has been achieved by the grit and determination of those who have served in this organization during these decades. The example was set by our first Governor Mr. Zahid Husain who guided the Bank through its infancy and laid the basis of a sound financial system in face of an almost non-existent banking system.

Over the years, the passion, commitment and integrity that the rank and file of this institution has exhibited is unmatched by any other organization in Pakistan. SBP is one of the few public institutions in the country that have adhered to excellence in all fields especially human resource.

With a competent and motivated human resource, the SBP has always strived to deliver the best and remained ahead of time compared to its regional peers. It is no wonder therefore, that SBP stands out in various fields:

- It was the first central bank in South Asia to have introduced a legal framework for microfinance in 2001;
- It was the first central bank in South Asia to develop a regulatory framework for branchless banking in 2008;
- It was the first central bank in South Asia, again, to have established an independent Monetary Policy committee in 2015.

Today, the SBP is a respected organization not only regionally, but also globally. SBP's professional excellence has been recognized at various international forums. Some of these, I will recall here to refresh our memories:

- Pakistan ranked No.1 in the world in microfinance regulatory framework by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2010 and 2011, and number 5 in overall financial inclusion environment in 2015.

- State Bank of Pakistan was voted as the Best Central Bank in Promoting Islamic Finance by a poll conducted by Islamic Finance News (IFN) in 2015 and 2017;
- SBP Governors have received accolades from different international organizations, which not only reflects professional excellence of the leadership, but also the institutional quality of SBP. My predecessor, Ashraf Wathra, was declared best Central Bank Governor recently. Earlier, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar and Dr. Ishrat Hussain were also conferred with such prestigious awards. Similarly, SBP's global partnerships with international organizations reached a new height during the tenure of Yaseen Anwar. Not just that, but the appointment of our former Governors at executive positions in leading international financial institutions, speak volume of their professional excellence.
- Moreover, SBP's senior staff have chaired and co-chaired various Groups and Committees at international forums, such as Alliance for Financial Inclusion and Islamic Financial Services Board.
- Not just that, but our staff has also been providing expertise to regional central banks and organizations such as Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority, Bank of Oman, the Central Bank of Oman, Qatar and Bahrain and Gulf Monetary Council.

Today, ladies and gentlemen, we are here to take stock of this institutional progress and celebrate our achievements. We will shortly play a documentary for you in which you will be able to experience this transformative journey that revolves around resilience, progress and modernization.

We will also take this opportunity, ladies and gentlemen, to strategize our future based on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead of us. To deliberate on these, we are privileged to have with us former Governors – the towering personalities of our country in the fields of economics and finance. We will seek their views and insight in understanding the granularities of evolving norms in the complex areas of political economy, institutional

management and inclusive and sustained growth. We will also seek their guidance in developing a long term vision for SBP.

Once again, I thank all our distinguished guests for joining us today in our celebrations, despite being a Sunday. Thank you!