

## **MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER GILLANI ON THE OCCASION OF 57<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF SHAHEED MOHTARMA BENAZIR BHUTTO AND THE WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY**

World Blood Donor Day is celebrated annually on June 14 as a global celebration of the 'Gift of Blood' given by voluntary donors to save the lives of those in need. The day aims to raise awareness among the people about the need for safe blood and to thank and honour those who donate blood. It will also encourage the existing and the potential donors to donate blood regularly on a voluntary basis.

This year the World Blood Donor Day celebrations will be coincided with the 57<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. The week long blood donation campaign (June 14 to June 21, 2010) will start from the World Blood Donor Day and culminate on the birthday of Shaheed Mohtarma. In this way, the nation will not only pay homage to the voluntary blood donors who donate blood for the anonymous patients but also acknowledge the supreme sacrifice of our great leader.

The present Government has taken concrete steps to ensure that every person in this country has access to safe blood for transfusion. Safe blood for transfusion to all has been emphasized in the forthcoming National Health Policy. In addition, the Ministry of Health has assigned the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) to implement a safe blood transfusion project in Pakistan. And I am pleased to note that the NACP has already prepared and got approved, from the Planning Commission, the National Blood Transfusion Service project PC-1s. The Ministry of Health deserves to be appreciated for these efforts. The project, which is jointly funded by the Governments of Pakistan and Germany, has already been launched throughout the country.

I wish the NACP and the Ministry of Health all the best in successfully implementing this project of immense public health significance. Voluntary unpaid blood donations will be foundation and cornerstone of this important project. I hope that this year's celebrations of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's Birthday and the World Blood Donor Day will go a long way in making this project a realization of the promise of this government's determination to improve the healthcare of the nation.