

SPEECH OF THE PRIME MINISTER

AT

1st CONVOCATION CEREMONY OF

GUJRAT UNIVERSITY

May 27, 2010

Honourable Mr. Salman Taseer, Chancellor University of Gujrat and Governor Punjab

Dr. Javaid R. Laghari, Chairman Higher Education Commission,

Professor Dr. Mohammad Nizamuddin, Vice Chancellor University of Gujrat,

Distinguished guests,

Respected faculty members,

Graduating students, their parents and guardians,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Asalamo-alaikum.

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to preside over the first Convocation of Gujrat University. I extend my heartiest congratulations to the graduating students, their parents and guardians, and the faculty of Gujrat University on this memorable occasion. Those who have won honours, medals and awards deserve special compliments for their outstanding performance.

I am very pleased to note that today around 660 graduates are receiving degrees in various disciplines. In this way, Gujrat University is making valuable contributions to the national growth. I have been informed that the University has enrolled 6250 students in social science, arts and humanities, basic and applied sciences, administration, engineering, medicine, and law. It is also commendable that out of these, 70% are female students which is indicative of a significant social change heralding silent revolution. This is indeed a remarkable achievement for the Gujrat University.

Dear graduating students:

Although this convocation marks the beginning of a new era for you, opportunities to learn from different experiences will not end. Education plays a pivotal role in the development of any economy. This country needs qualified scientists, engineers, administrators, lawyers and doctors, who can sincerely put in their best efforts in the service of Nation. Some of you today would be planning to pursue a career or further education in Pakistan or abroad. However, you must not forget that in the long run, your contributions as patriotic Pakistanis would be needed to strengthen the pillars of our society.

The report presented by the Vice Chancellor, Gujrat University, was quite impressive. This University has shown tremendous potential in the fields of academics and extracurricular activities. Its programmes that have been extended from the disciplines of engineering to administrative sciences and social sciences depict its keenness to contribute through diverse fields of education. With its focus on discipline and ethics, the Gujrat University is providing an environment that is very conducive for learning. I am very happy to note that the congenial environment of this university is promoting quality education and seasoned citizenship.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Globalization and the Information Revolution present increasing difficulties for many countries. These challenges are particularly acute for developing nations like Pakistan which possess meager resources. Knowledge as a factor of production within this new information based economy, is gaining importance in the era of globalization. To maximize effectiveness in the global environment, on one hand it is essential to retain a strong sense of identity and purpose. On the other it is essential to be open and engaged within the international community. Our Universities are supposed to be the repository of knowledge and to serve as a means to take the country forward. Being a developing country we need to go a long way to meet international standards of education, and to groom our students to understand the diversity of the global environment.

To provide education to each citizen of this country is a mammoth task, and the government is making all out efforts to increase the literacy rate. However, those who are literate must understand their role as responsible citizens who can participate effectively in the formal and informal activities of the society. The role that some of our institutes of higher learning like your university, are playing to meet these standards is commendable both in terms of maintaining their religious and cultural identity, as well as respecting global values and traditions. Universities impart and create knowledge. Today knowledge supplants land, labour and capital. Knowledge about the latest technologies, about the latest research, and contribution to these sectors, can help Pakistan to move forward. Our reliance on the developed countries for advanced knowledge and technology

adversely affects our economic capabilities, since major portion of that goes into its import.

Ladies and gentlemen:

We must become a self-reliant nation. For this a viable route is to education, education and more education. In my opinion, growth of this university in disciplines of social sciences, basic and applied sciences, law and business administration in addition to the vital fields of engineering and medicine will build the image of the institution responding to the socio-economic requirements of the Nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish the university all success in its sincerity to develop and expand in the fields of education and research. May it acquire a leading edge in all the disciplines it is offering. Ameen!

In the end, I once again congratulate all those who have graduated today. I advise you to work hard with total commitment, dedication and honesty to make your country, your institution, and your parents proud of you. I wish you the best of luck in all future endeavors.

Thank you.