

**PRIME MINISTER SYED YUSUF RAZA GILANI'S MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL  
LITERACY DAY  
ISLAMABAD, 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010**

International Literacy Day is an occasion to review the progress towards hundred percent literacy goal and to affirm the centrality of literacy for sustainable human development.

Literacy equips people to improve their livelihoods, and participate effectively in community decision-making. Above all, it enables individuals to realize their rights as citizens and human beings. International Literacy Day puts spotlight on the role of literacy and its importance for human development and citizenship. It also provides an opportunity to focus attention on the World's literacy needs and mobilize governments and international partners to do more to meet this challenge.

Pakistan is signatory to the Dakar Declaration of 2003 and we are committed to enhance literacy rate to 85 percent by 2015. To achieve this goal, Government of Pakistan is committed to address major causes of illiteracy like budgetary constraints and is resolved to universalize primary education. The year 2010 has been declared as the "Literacy Year" with a focused resolve to accelerate the pace of efforts to achieve the set targets. Hence along with further increase in the education budget in the coming year, it has been decided to extend the "National Literacy Year" to next year carrying forward the activities planned to enhance the literacy rate in the country as our nation is facing the worst ever natural disaster. One fifth of Pakistan's total geographical area has been inundated, flood water had washed away standing crops worth billion of dollars, destroyed infrastructure and paralyzed our economic activity. Consequently, Education along with other sector will be adversely affected.

The Federal Government will make every effort to promote literacy and non-formal basic education. In the flood affected areas, adults will be imparted knowledge regarding life skills and the children who are out school will be provided with transitional educational facilities to ensure continuation of their education till complete reconstruction of schools.

I urge the international community, donor organizations and Pakistani philanthropists to extend a helping hand in combating illiteracy.