

**Speech of the Prime Minister, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on the Occasion of Inauguration of the Bahauddin Zakariya University Gillani Law College**

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zafarullah,  
Vice-Chancellor, Bahauddin Zakariya University,

Learned Faculty Members,

Distinguished Guests,

And Dear Students

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure to address the gathering of distinguished academics and prospective lawyers in my home-town university on a day which is significant in the lives of young scholars of law. This day is equally special in my own life as the work that my ancestors started forty years ago has been brought to fruition.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pakistan owes a lot to the legal community. The Founding Father of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah was a renowned Barrister who achieved Pakistan purely through democratic and legal struggle. Even in the recent past, our legal community played an important role in restoration of democracy and rule of law in the country. Therefore, promotion of legal education and strengthening of legal institutions is of paramount importance for the progress of our society.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Legal education has a critical role in egalitarian society as it promotes awareness on public rights and obligations. Unfortunately in Pakistan, the legal education system has not received the kind of attention it deserves. In the past, no serious effort has been made to reform the key areas of legal education, particularly the underlying structural issues. A weak system of legal education has therefore continued to render pernicious impact on state of justice service delivery in the country. As a result, the economic development and overall performance of system of governance have been adversely affected.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Ordinarily, the primary goal of law schools should be to train generalists who can utilize their skills in a variety of responsible positions. Nevertheless, social and economic changes may create increasing demands for knowledge about complex affairs and specialized bodies of rules and demands for new kinds of counseling and representational skills. Many fields such as taxation, corporate finance and banking may require specialized lawyers. Lawyers in government may need to know more about economics, research methods, information systems and decision theory. Academic education should lead to originality and independence of the mind and the ability to think and work in a reflective and academic manner. A university graduate should receive not only schooling i.e. training but also education. Otherwise, programmes may become just apprenticeships and universities mere polytechnics.

Likewise, in training prospective lawyers, certain prerequisites should be kept in mind. There is a growing trend towards the assessment of the reasoning and critical-thinking skills of potential law students and lawyers, in addition to the assessment of their knowledge of the law. There is recognition that the ability to read and think critically is a vital skill for legal training and law practice. Our legal education programs should hone these skills while simultaneously providing instruction in the content of the law.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Prospective lawyers need keen analytical skills. The globalization of law practice should lead to a truly global system of legal education, with an international focus on training in the law and the development of critical-thinking skills. Wherever these needs are identified, assessment schemes both of legal knowledge and of reasoning abilities are sure to follow.

Our Law schools should establish graduate-level programs dealing with interdisciplinary subjects relating to important sectors of the development process. Studies for specialization, like the study of para-professionalization should become an important

component of the more general, but sophisticated field of delivery of legal services. It deserves more attention than it has so far been accorded.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am of the firm belief that we should promote education about law in the society. The needs may range from rudimentary, non formal law education at the pre-university level. The task may call for specialized knowledge regarding the use of mass media to convey information which is both elementary and technical for an audience which is not always motivated by a direct interest. It may call again for the collaboration of law trained people with other kinds of interest. It may call again for the collaboration of law trained people with other kinds of experts. The whole field of legal specialization is relatively unexplored, therefore, needs more attention.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The importance of legal education, both as an educational experience and as source of valuable practical skills for the development of the society, has been consistently underestimated in the developing countries. It is pertinent that the legal education should be planned within the context of and related to the local social situation and developmental stage, taking into account factors such as differences in the use of formal laws, legal processes and value system. It is necessary to approach law as a discipline which helps to understand and solve problems of development. Ideally, legal education should correlate to new developments in the planning of a system of education and in teaching methods.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I hope that the Bahauddin Zakariya University Gillani Law College will be instrumental in promoting innovations in legal education. It is heartening to note that the Vice-Chancellor Bahauddin Zakariya University and his team are striving hard to achieve high standards at this University. On my part, I will take all necessary steps to ensure the smooth flow of funds for the University so that the projects that are waiting for completion are not delayed any further.

Pakistan Painsdabad