

**SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER
SYED YUSUF RAZA GILANI
SHELL ECO MARATHON SEND
OFF CEREMONY
AT THE SERENA HOTEL,
ISLAMABAD
ON 28 MAY, 2010**

**Bismillah ir Rehman ir Rahim
Excellencies
Minister for Petroleum
Mr. Zaiviji Ismail, Managing Director Shell Pakistan
Officers of the Ministry and Esteemed Corporate Guests
Members of the press and media
Students and university professors
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Assalam-O-Alaikum

It is a matter of great pleasure to attend this event organized by Shell to promote the talented youth of our country. The Shell Eco Marathon is an excellent way to inspire the youth to work on cutting-edge solutions by inculcating in them the competitiveness and courage to outshine. I commend Shell for its long-term commitment in creating a global platform where Pakistani students have the opportunity to compete with teams from around the world using innovative vehicles that can drive longer distances while using less fuel. It is pertinent here to quote the words of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: “Pakistan is proud of her youth, particularly the students, who are nation builders of tomorrow. They must fully equip themselves by discipline, education, and training for the arduous task lying ahead of them”

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a matter of pride that Pakistan is the first country from the South Asian region which is participating in the Eco-Marathon. The credit for this feat goes to the teachers who have educated the youngsters to apply their

knowledge and skills to such a worthy cause. To me, these teachers are the real leaders of our country who are at the forefront of a remarkable revolution that is now sweeping through the fields of science and technology. Motivating the youth for noble causes such as this one represents a great national service, which should be acknowledged and encouraged by all and sundry. Our motherland is blessed with an ideal geographic, strategic location, and a variety of abundant natural resources. But to top it all, we have extremely creative, talented and hard-working youth, who are a major chunk of our population. History has shown that our countrymen have the capability to rise to any challenge. I hope that they would repeat history in this Eco-marathon and add laurels to the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pakistan's energy requirements are increasing every year and meeting the rising demand constitutes a major challenge. I fully realize that sustainable development and energy conservation are central to our national development. In order to address the emerging challenges, the government of Pakistan is actively engaged with different stakeholders for diversification and development of oil exploration and production. However, in a world of depleting energy resources, increasing energy-efficiency, and making energy affordable and convenient for the people is need of the hour. This is possible if we decrease our dependence on consumption of oil, which eats our precious foreign reserves and explore alternative domestic resources through long-term policies. This is where the youth of Pakistan have a great role to play. They have the power and capacity to foster a change in the mindsets of people, and come up with innovative solutions to the problems confronting the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

With the support of masses, I am convinced that our government can not only overcome energy crisis and but also employ innovative and effective alternative methods for energy generation and conservation. We need to take a leaf from the book of other countries that have successfully developed renewable energy sources based on sun, wind and bio fuels to minimize the dependence on fossil fuels. I urge you all, ladies and gentlemen, to guide, support and stand by our youth for active participation in national campaigns as well as activities through which they continue to bring this country prestige and pride. I wish all the teams the very best of luck. Before I wind up, I would like to thank Shell and Mr. Zaiviji Ismail for offering such a unique opportunity to the Pakistani youth.

This competition is truly a worthy cause and will set a strong precedent for the succeeding generations to carve out their place in future. I also urge other national and multinational entrepreneurs to take part in such healthy activities which simultaneously help to strengthen the social sector of Pakistan. My government is ready to support you in whatever way you want. We have a responsibility to work for welfare of our people and I am sure that together we can make this happen.

Thank you all

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