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I express my heartfelt greetings on the Pakistan Day to everyone. Going through years of success, despite many an obstacle is indeed an accomplishment and I would like to extend my felicitations to every citizen.

Universal Service Fund was established by the Government of Pakistan to spread the benefits of telecom revolution to all corners of Pakistan. Since its inception in 2006/07, Universal Service Fund has successfully launched and sustained immensely productive programmes for the country. I take great pride in mentioning here that so far USF has provided basic telephony services in 3,446 unserved remote villages whereas work is in progress in 2,672. Similarly 22 Tehsils Headquarters and 05 towns have been connected with Optic Fiber cables (the information highways) that were still unserved with this modern-day marvel. Work on 2,502 Kms of Optic Fiber cables is in progress to connect 34 more Tehsil headquarters and adjoining small towns. Moreover 238 second and third tier cities and towns have been provided broadband internet, where 194,000 connections are already working. And 582 higher secondary schools, colleges and libraries have been connected with Broadband, while 591 are being connected in the unserved areas. Not just that, 130 Community Broadband Centres have also been set up

there for those who cannot afford to own computers, with 215 Community broadband centers in the pipeline.

Projects for 'Multi-purpose Community Telecentres' are also being initiated which aim at introducing and promoting e-services in villages especially where availability of PCs and computer literacy are the main issues.

USF has been able to achieve so many milestones in a short period of time that other countries are keen to learn from us. Presently we are helping Indonesia and Thailand to make similar achievement possible!

USF is making it possible for citizens of Pakistan to get better economic opportunities, regardless of age, gender or geographical boundaries leading to poverty alleviation and economic empowerment.

On this Pakistan Day, with profound dedication, we dedicate ourselves to put in our best efforts to assist our country in achieving technological prosperity. I hope that our organization will excel more and continue to make its contribution towards the progress of our country. In the end I may say that challenges are many but if we believe in ourselves, we can meet and conquer every challenge.