

Bismillah Hir Rahma Nir Raheem,

Faculty Deans, Faculty members and all other members of
Bangladesh University of Professionals

And Most Importantly the Students of Various Departments.

Good Morning and Assalamu Alaikum.

Your arrival here at Bangladesh University of Professionals is a remarkable achievement, and is the culmination of an extraordinary amount of inspiration, perseverance, and hard work. You did have to work for years -- diligently, creatively, and intelligently -- to have made it here.

However, as wonderful an achievement as it is for you to have landed at BUP, what is really important is what lies ahead. If your only achievement over the next four years is to have gotten admitted to BUP, then -- truth be told -- you really have not achieved much at all, your mission is just beginning and your truly important achievements lie ahead.

Actually, this is always the case. As you go on to achieve things in this world, there will always be the potential for an even greater achievement in your future. Imagine if Einstein, after having discovered what is called the "photoelectric effect" -- a turning point in our modern understanding of physics, and, in fact,

the discovery that earned Einstein his Nobel prize -- and if he had decided that this singular achievement was enough, and never went on to develop his Theory of Relativity. Imagine if Beethoven, after writing his Fifth Symphony -- a defining point in the history of Western music -- and if he sat on his laurels after that and never went on to write the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, or Ninth symphonies. Imagine if Steve Jobs thought that producing the first Macintosh computer was enough and never went on to develop the iPod, the iPhone, or the iPad.

My point is this: Every achievement is an invitation to a new set of opportunities to achieve something more. You have all achieved much in your lives, even at your young age -- that is why you are sitting here in this Auditorium. And becoming part of BUP's Class of 2018 is perhaps your most recent great achievement. But do not let it be your last. Achievement is all about looking forward, not looking backward.

Let me be clear that I am **not** advocating for a life of **overachievement**. I am not saying that you should think of collecting achievements like merit badges, so you can say you have done a lot of stuff -- that you have joined more clubs, taken more courses, had more internships, completed more majors, just for the sake of doing it. Do not mistake **doing** something for **achieving** something.

What I **am** saying is this: Now that you have been given this opportunity -- now that you have landed at Bangladesh University of Professionals – it is time to look forward and ask yourself -- thoughtfully -- what do you want to do with this opportunity? What do you want to achieve next?

I will go further and suggest, this is a good habit to form. At every point in your life when you feel you have accomplished something, you should both celebrate that accomplishment and use it as a touchstone for reflection, asking yourself, "Now that I have done this great thing, what does it allow me to do next?"

As you embark on your own exploration here at BUP, I am sure you all have some kind of plan in mind. This plan may be very specific or your plan might be more general, but whatever your plan is, it would be wise to remain open to changing that plan as you encounter new ideas, new insights, and new perspectives.

Let me assure you, that you know **some** of what you can do, but I will bet, you have yet to learn your full potential. So a big part of your mission here at BUP will be to stretch yourself and find out what your limits truly are. The way you do this is easy: try new things, go out of your way to meet people different from you, take a class in something you never thought you would study or start an extracurricular activity that expands your boundaries.

Significant achievements often occur when someone stretches beyond what they think they are capable of doing. Pablo Picasso, one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, put it this way: He said, "I am always doing things I can not do, that is how I get to do them."

Now that you have joined this university, you have the entire Bangladesh University of Professionals backing you up all the way. Your faculty and staff, your fellow students and your new-found friends are all here in support of you, to give you whatever help you need and to make sure that you succeed. Class of 2018, you have landed. Now let us all get to work.

Allah Hafez