

UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI

CONVOCATION ADDRESS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR.

Honorable Chancellor, Pro Chancellor, Members of Senate and Syndicate of the University of Karachi, honourable members of the diplomatic corps, parliamentarians, provincial ministers, eminent citizens, distinguished guests, faculty members, parents and my dear graduating students.

It is an immense pleasure for me to welcome you at the convocation 2009 in the University of Karachi. The organization of this remarkable event every year provides great opportunity to share with you the information about this important seat of learning---the University of Karachi. It must be mentioned here that today the University of Karachi is one of the largest Universities in Pakistan. At present teaching and research is conducted under its nine Faculties; Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Management and Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Science. The University now runs 54 teaching departments and 21 research institutes and centers of excellence. I am

delighted to say today that this University is growing with the passage of time in a meaningful way.

The academic programmes offered by the University include B.S., M.S., BBA, MBA, BPA, MPA, M.A., M.Sc., M.Com., BE., B.L.I.S., M.L.I.S., Pharm-D, Ph.D., D. Lit., and D.Sc. In addition to these, Certificate and Diploma courses are also offered not only in languages such as: French, German, Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Sindhi, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, Urdu, and Bengali, but also in subjects, like, Petroleum Technology, Environmental Science, Statistics, Actuarial Science and Public Administration. Currently, the leading Departments and Centres of the university are imparting quality education to about 24000 students. The University of Karachi is also an affiliating and examining body for 145 colleges. Each year the University conducts examinations of about 150,000 students studying in these colleges.

At present the university has more than 800 highly qualified and experienced teachers and amongst them 300 have Ph.D. degrees; many of them have obtained foreign degrees and enjoy an international repute. In addition, there are 200 research associates working under different programmes with around 200 supporting staff members.

Today, the University is recognized as a premier centre of learning and research in Pakistan and abroad. A number of scientists and scholars affiliated with the University hold important positions both within and outside Pakistan and have won recognition. Students from several foreign countries are pursuing Doctorate and post-doctoral programmes in International Centre of Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) ----- a center that has been designated as WHO centre for Pesticides Analysis for Eastern Mediterranean region, COMSATS centre of excellence, TWAS centre of excellence, and NCSTD centre of excellence.

The research and academic output of the university is well recognized both nationally and internationally. The University has a very good concentration of research scholars who have been awarded Ph.D degrees in their respective fields. The University awarded 1304 Ph.D degrees in different disciplines during the years 1958-2009. At present more than 2600 students are enrolled for M.S. / Ph.D programme. The faculty of Science has an excellent publication record in national and international journals of high impact factor. And it is worth mentioning that according to a survey by the Times Higher Education 2009, the University of Karachi occupies the 223rd place in the field of natural sciences in the whole world and number one

position in Pakistan. The **QS World University Ranking 2009** placed the University of Karachi in the list of 600 top universities. It would not be out of place to say that the University of Karachi owing to its high standards is a major source of highly skilled and qualified manpower. A large number of its graduates have been serving the nation in various capacities: Governors, Federal Ministers, Provincial Ministers, Diplomats, Judges and Advocates in High Courts and Supreme Courts, Academicians and healthcare providers are performing their duties in several private and government institutions.

The University of Karachi has founded the Institute of Sustainable Halophyte Utilization, which is one of its own kind in the entire world. In recent times, the world renowned research journal *Science* has published the cover story about this institute. The UNESCO Chair in ‘Sustainable Halophyte Utilization’ has recently been established at the Institute.

International seminars, conferences, workshops and extension lectures are conducted on regular basis in almost all the departments of the University of Karachi. There is hardly any day when there is no such activity in one

department or the other. In the faculty of Arts, department of International Relations, Mass Communication, Library Science, Sindhi and Sociology are specially prominent, in this regard. Apart from national conferences and workshops international conferences are held in the faculties of Arts, Science and Pharmacy. International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences and Area Study Center for Europe have established a tradition of holding international conference every year.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

You will be happy to learn that we also have the facility for video conferencing and now our faculty and students are able to attend programmes at foreign universities and become a part of international interaction. The modern computer laboratories having internet facilities have been established particularly in Social Sciences where 300 students can utilize this facility. A Professional Development Center with private sector assistance has also been established for various training courses. The Higher Education Commission has provided Distance Education Learning Programme which is in the final stage and will soon be launched. The Higher Education Commission has agreed to give a USAID-FUNDED Hub Pre-STEP project

to the University for professional training of the prospective teachers in the area of Education.

The University of Karachi published 276 and 419 research papers in the years 2008 & 2009 respectively which appeared in peer-reviewed journals indexed by Thomson - Reuters, ISI Web Knowledge and ranked at number two among 60 Universities / Institutions (Public and Private Sectors) of the country.

To promote research, various Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) were signed between the University of Karachi and the counterpart Foreign Universities. In the year 2008-09, interactions started with the University of ISFAHAN, Iran; University of HORMOZGAN, Iran; University of PEACE, Apartado, Mexico; University of Bedfordshire, U.K; University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy.

Collaborative Research Projects include projects of faculty members with University of Hamburg, Germany, Scientists at UAE University, Scientists at Institute of Med. Plant Devel., Beijing, China, UNSW Sydney, Australia, Max. Planck. Inst. Biochem., Munich, Germany, New York,

Blood Centre, N.Y., U.S.A., Scientists at KFSARC, Saudi Arabia and University of New Castle upon Tyne, UK.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Chaudhary of ICCBS has been recently elected as member of Executive Council for National Commission for Science & Technology. KU alumni, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Qaiser has been elected as Member of Third World Academy of Science and Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman has been conferred the TWAS Regional Prize for Building Science Institutions for the year 2009.

These collaborations also include partnership with other foreign universities, like: Gene Research Centre, University of Tsukuba, of Japan; University of Geissen, Geissen, Germany, and the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Biology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA.

It is worth mentioning here that the public-private partnership has prominently been visible in K.U with the establishment of the following institutes:

1. Hussain Ebrahim Jamal (HEJ) Research Institute of Chemistry
2. Syedna Burhanuddin Department of Genetics

3. Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences
4. Dr. Feroz Ahmed Institute of Mass Communication.
5. Khan Institute of Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering (KIBGE)
6. Dr. Panjwani Centre for Molecular Medicine & Drug Research
7. Umaer Basha Institute of Information Technology (UBIT)
8. Latif Ebrahim Jamal (LEJ) Information Centre

Simultaneously the Public Sector Funded Development Projects have come out prominently. For example: Institute of Sustainable Halophyte Utilization, Herbarium, Department of Botany, Hostel for Visiting Faculty, Botanical Garden, Department of Applied Physics, Department of Food Science & Technology, National Centre for Proteomics and the Institute of Clinical Psychology which has started giving treatment to the patients of mental disorders.

It seems to be appropriate to mention that during 2009 the total number of M.Phil /Ph.D degrees awarded is as under:

From January to December 2009

Faculties	M. Phil	Ph. D.	Total
Science	21	52	73
Arts	08	28	36
Islamic Studies	00	12	12
Science (BMSI)	22	00	22
Pharmacy	08	10	18
Medicine (MS/MD)	04	00	04
Management	00	05	05
Law	00	02	02
	63	109	172

It would also be apt to mention that during the last five years, the students enrolment has risen from 19000 to 24000, the number of faculty members increased from 623 to 826 and will be further increased to 922 in the year 2010; laboratory equipment for research also increased and hence the research productivity increased to three-folds.

Looking at all this it can be said with pride that the University has not stopped its journey of academic excellence and it is hoped that it will continue to strive for further progress in the field of higher education and research. However, this journey has to be made more fruitful through the efforts of all the faculty members and

the students, as no goal can be achieved without mutual cooperation. The teachers, administrators and students have to work together to make the environment of the university more learner-friendly and research-oriented. Then only we can reach the pinnacle of success and I am confident that *Insha'allah* we will be able to achieve our goal.

Last but not the least I congratulate the graduating students, their parents and the faculty on this arduous accomplishment. Dear students, be thankful and respectful to your parents and your teachers who have extended their full support to you for the achievement, extremely meaningful in your life.

May Allah bless His mercy on our nation, our beloved country Pakistan especially in these difficult times.

I extend my heartiest gratitude to the Honorable Chancellor and Governor Sindh, Dr. Ishrat Ul Ebad Khan for his gracious presence in the convocation 2009 and sincerely thank all my guests, parents and graduating students for attending the event and making it successful.