



ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ
BE BOUNDLESS

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ
BENGALURU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (BCU)

ಪ್ರೊ. ಎನ್. ಜಾಫೆಟ್
ಕುಲಕರ್ತ

Prof. S. Japhet
Vice-Chancellor

Dear Principals and Colleagues,

It is with mixed feeling that I share this last communication, more as a personal word of farewell, with all my distinguished heads of institutions at the University and at the affiliate institutions of the Bengaluru City University. It is mixed because I have a heavy heart as I set down these thoughts. And yet there is a deal of happiness at the warm memories and strength of relationship that you all, together, offered during this tenure of mine as the founding Vice Chancellor of BCU.

For the last time as Vice Chancellor, I pay my respects to all of you who are dedicated to education, and are doing your very best to keep the traditions of good teaching alive and vibrant. It has been my privilege to have known you as a custodian of knowledge. Thank you so much for all your warm words all these years and for doing your bit to set the foundations for this new University.

In some places it feels like you've been there for years, even when you haven't. And in others where you've been for a great number of years, you have the strongest sense you've only just arrived. And as I write to this to you on a day like this, with less than a

week of my tenure at the University, it doesn't really seem like I am leaving at all! That sums up my feeling about BCU. What's new about this feeling is that you and I can now measure the stages of our educational careers by the technological disruption we ushered in on two significant counts - of examinations and of affiliations.

Parting is inevitable, and I have known that this day was coming. Yes, it is definitely time to move on. It seems like only yesterday when I assumed charge at these historic buildings four years ago, sat on a quiet evening in the first week of my joining in, and had told myself, 'There's a place to do something really interesting. It's open to new ideas and ready to make a difference.' I think in the final analysis we did make a difference, however small, yet lasting. I am indebted to you for the support and the encouragement you offered in creating the basic plinth for the research and teaching, and the employability of our graduates. But our defining purpose went beyond. The initial Mission document that many fathers of higher education helped shape and mould for the BCU identified a clear mission around innovation, impact and engagement with the city, with multiple communities, with a more integrative approach to business education.

This foundation that you helped lay, offers a sound platform to move forward with a distinctive approach for those leaders who will now inhabit these spaces at the BCU and work to extend the frontiers of education at the University. When I took over in late 2016, we had a long hard look at our capability and future direction, to visualise where we wanted to be as a leading City University, and how we wanted to be positioned in 5 years' and in 10 years' time.

One major challenge that became apparent was that more integrative thinking and the deep collaboration it required met a constraint in the buildings we had with the labyrinth of corridors and disconnected spaces that are part of the chequered history of the Central College and of the historicity and culture of Bengaluru. In the very first year of my taking charge as Vice Chancellor, we adopted a strategy that helped us take a step with State approval for restoration of existing buildings which were unsafe for students and faculty. Then we set about inviting experts and doyens of planning to create a vision for a set of new buildings that could come about on the 40-acre sprawl of lands that the BCU gained as legacy. We did not stop there. Our aspiration led us to create strategic approaches to make the entire campus green and sustainable on natural resource efficiency.

Universities are inherently risk-averse but we decided that if we were ever to take a chance this would be the one, and we are forever grateful for your foresight and that of our university senior teams and councils and various committees. We can now be proud that the work we accomplished has paved the path for the State Government to go beyond the work we have accomplished, to create a new landmark that reflects and reinforces our vision of the future in its architecture.

Inspired by ಆರು ನೀ ಅನಿಕೇಶನ immortal lines, Be Boundless, the University's motto was created. Be Boundless is not just a tag line but an ethos, a philosophy that will continue to guide the Bengaluru City University in its contribution to the ongoing state and national interest in how Karnataka and India faces up to the big economic, social and environmental challenges before us. A former Vice Chancellor once said: 'We may have a tower but it's certainly not an ivory one'. This is a university without walls. It's embedded in the

deeper value of reaching out to citizens, to the city's aspirations and hopes. It's a university that has already established a strong relation and historic relation with business and industry, when it signed a first-of-its-kind Memorandum of Understanding with the 125 year old Confederation of Indian Industry. Clearly, CII wants to do business with the University, where government wants to talk policy with an evidence base, and where students want to study, get a job - or increasingly create one for themselves in BCU's vibrant entrepreneurial precincts.

I've had the privilege of working in other distinguished universities here in India and elsewhere around the world, but rarely if ever does one find such a cohesive sense of purpose among a university leadership from the Vice-Chancellor to heads of faculties, schools, disciplines, course directors, or such a collegiate environment among fellow academics and professional staff of all the extended community of affiliate colleges.

Of course there are bumps in the road that we all have to negotiate and sometimes trip over. But generally we pick ourselves up here, regroup and carry on. This is the hallmark of a healthy, open and participative learning organisation that values its community.

I owe an eternal debt of gratitude for all those innumerable officers, advisers, members of Syndicate and Academic Council and leaders from various walks of life to thank for working with me, putting up with my occasionally misplaced enthusiasm, and collaborating to achieve ambitious goals. As they say, 'Vision without execution is hallucination' - and a university in a hurry like BCU, with a fierce determination to succeed, can't afford that. I had an enjoyable

and productive partnership all through my tenure, with these well-wishers and committed visionaries who offered BCU such a great start with all of us. I look forward to providing support from time to time in my post-retirement as BCU repositions and continues to build our capability and performance in the innovation space. I hope also to maintain relationships, personally, with my fellow deans Principals and others across colleges in the City and at the University. I can't thank you enough for all you have done. My successors will be well served by your expertise and candour. Last but certainly not least is our dedicated professional staff, who keep this complex operation of over 100,000 students running on a daily basis. A big thanks to you.

I know I can't thank you all individually but each and every one of you has been part of my life at BCU and I hope that this will continue to be the case as I move to the next stage, whatever it may bring. All in all it has been such a lucky and original life that I can't understand my ever being for a moment cross or difficult or dissatisfied or cast down...

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. JAPHET', written in a cursive style.

S. JAPHET