

**Government of Pakistan  
Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division  
Press Release**

**SAPM Dr. Nishtar urges graduates to face challenges with courage and perseverance**



November 30, 2019- Karachi: Three hundred and fifty graduates celebrated the completion of their programmes at the Aga Khan University's convocation ceremony on Saturday where they were urged to remember the importance of courage, perseverance and agility in the years to come.

The chief guest at the event, Dr Sania Nishtar, special assistant to Pakistan's prime minister on social protection and poverty alleviation, spoke to the graduating class about integrity, or staying true to one's moral principles. "The crux of my experience leads me to believe that in order to make lasting and sustainable change you have to root your actions in integrity."

"It has become a bit cliché but the time-old adage of doing the right thing for the right reasons is something that you must hold very dear to your heart as you walk into the real world," she stated.

The real world is beset by many challenges: widening inequities, demographic challenges, rapid urbanization and a context in which collusive behaviours are deeply entrenched. But such challenges also offer huge opportunity. For example, advancements in artificial intelligence and pharmacogenetics – the study of how genetics impact an individual's response to medicine –

are transforming medicine and today's graduates have the opportunity to change the world dramatically.

In his welcome address, AKU President Firoz Rasul called on graduates to make the most of their education by embracing challenges and to never let setbacks hold them back from achieving their goals.

"There is no such thing as a life without setbacks," Mr Rasul said. "Remember that those who survive disappointment with their determination intact, and learn the hard lessons it has to teach, are forces to be reckoned with." He called on graduates to remember the value of courage in difficult times and to develop an agile mindset that would enable them to overcome all obstacles in their way

This year, students received degrees and diplomas in different disciplines including nursing, midwifery, medicine, education, dental hygiene and Muslim Culture. This included 181 graduates from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, 143 from the Medical College, 16 from the Institute of Educational Development and 10 from the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations.