



**SPEECH BY**

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BERSAMA YAB PERDANA MENTERI***

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***DEWAN KONVENSYEN  
ALBUKHARY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
ALOR SETAR, KEDAH***

Assalammualaikum wa rahmatullah hi wabarakatuh.

*Alhamdulillahilladzi arsala rasulahu bil huda wa diinil haqq liyudzhira 'alaa dinni kullihiwa kafa billahi syahiida karim wa alihi wasohbihi ajmain.*

**Yang Berhormat Dato' Seri Haji Muhammad Sanusi bin Md Nor;**

Menteri Besar Kedah

**Yang Berbahagia Tuan Syed Mohammad Albukhary;**

Pengerusi Lembaga Pengelola Albukhary International University

**Yang Berbahagia Professor Dato' Ir. Dr. Mohd Saleh bin Jaafar**

Naib Canselor dan Presiden, Albukhary International University

Tenaga-Tenaga Pengajar dan Anak-Anak Mahasiswa.

1. Alhamdulillah kita dapat bersama-sama pada petang ini dan Albukhary International University tentulah universiti yang agak terkenal saya ikuti dari dekat. Tentu dari pengasasnya yang membantu mendirikan Tuan Syed Mohammad Albukhary,

Professor Muhammad Yunus sahabat baik saya. Jadi saya ikuti perkembangan dengan baik.

2. So, my dear students, let me suggest a few points. I'm very brief, but I need to apologise initially for being a bit late not my usual practice because I had an audience with His Highness the Sultan, and we had lunch, which took some time. I do apologize.
3. Now, you are here as students, this is an important centre of excellence in education but there are some fundamental questions you may need to ask. Why are you here? Why is there a necessity to acquire knowledge? For what purpose? These are fundamental questions I always urge my students and fellow students to ask and answer these questions with a strong sense of conscience and commitment.
4. Why are we here? Because we want to assimilate knowledge. For what? Purely for utilitarian purposes of getting a profession? Yes, nothing wrong but there must be an intention, a commitment to have a strong love for knowledge. Saidaina Ali bin Abi Talib used the phrase *lazzatul ma'arifa*—the love for scholarship.

5. You assimilate knowledge, yes, you love for scholarship. For what? The answer is for your own welfare, profession, and to equip yourself to face the real world. The real world is not here; the real world is outside, with all its challenges and difficulties. That is why we need to be clear that cultivating innovation, research, artificial intelligence, and business studies is where you assimilate knowledge.
  
6. The intention should be a love for scholarship so that knowledge is not just what you get in information. For those of you are familiar with the literary contributions of writers like T.S. Eliot who compare and differentiate between information that you have in abundance. You get ChatGPT, you get Google, and you get whatever knowledge you want and that is information, not all information is knowledge.
  
7. And, to be able to decipher what is good and bad, what is *adab*, what is *akhlaq*, and what holds good values, then it has to be wisdom. So, there are three categories: information, knowledge, and wisdom. Your intention should be not only be the acquisition of knowledge but to be able to be wise in making decisions.

8. Now wisdom comes from *aqidah*, from pure conviction. Wisdom comes from *adab* and *akhlaq* and the correct values. That is where I think is a major challenge. So, when they ask, "What is the aim of education? Assimilate knowledge". Yes, but as much as possible, for what? to disseminate fundamental truth and for that, you need to be wise and have wisdom.
9. This is a major challenge here in university. At Albukhari International University, they have done so much as a corporate player and as the family, the commitment to give the best for our students.
10. And I am proud to say that we are hosting in Kedah, a very significant International University that aims to contribute whatever we can from this country.
11. That is the first question. Now how do I defend this? in my dialogue with the students, I relate to them. One of the, I should say, critical reviews of education in recent times, Professor Miller of Harvard, I'm sure Professor Saleh is familiar, it's about excellence without a soul.
12. I've encouraged students to understand why a key member of the Harvard Faculty decided to write a strong critique of

Harvard University. It is a centre of excellence. It is one of the premier universities of the world.

13. So, it is an excellent centre, a centre of excellence. But what is lacking is a soul, it is absent. You have an important international centre of excellence, the best brains collected there, the best professors and bright, energetic students, but completely, at least in general terms, soulless. There's poverty outside, it doesn't concern them.
14. There's gross abuse and discrimination based on colour. The blacks, the Hispanics are outside Boston, it does not concern those in the ivory tower called Harvard University. Why would the university provide excellence in education but not the wisdom to appreciate that there's more to knowledge than just understanding without passion, without *ihsan*, without *rahmah*?
15. So, you don't care about there's so much plundering, massive, endemic corruption, doesn't bother people. There is poverty in the midst of plenty. It doesn't concern you. There is gross abuse and discrimination against the blacks. It doesn't bother you. Why? Your focus is to assimilate as much knowledge so that you are qualified to be a great professional.

16. So, that is why I think universities like AIU is to me is important, because from the beginning, from the start, it is established to provide opportunities, particularly for those who have been marginalized the system, yes. But what is to my mind rather important or critical is to imbibe with that sort of understanding and values.
  
17. You see the world now, particularly in the Muslim World or generally, general politics. What is lacking? It's a trust deficit. You don't believe anymore. People talk about struggle about sacrifice, about contribution. Then you realize they have embezzled wealth beyond their means. They don't set a good example. Yes, knowledge, yes, some level of competence, but no values. There's a trust deficit. You see in the multilateral system; they don't care about rules.
  
18. We see in ASEAN, which I happened to chair this year. I was in Vietnam yesterday, we were talking about the cornerstone of progress, rule based. Who cares about rules based now? If you follow the rules, they will not be plundering and colonization, exploitation and dehumanization of Gaza, Palestine. So, you have this complete dehumanization, degradation of the quality of men and women.

19. So that is why is a major challenge for the young. You must have that sense of conviction, the tenacity of purpose to say that you're studying. You have to have knowledge, you have to work hard, you have to read as much. You have to have a better understanding, better than your elders, for what? To affect change in your society, your country and the international community. That is and must be our driving message.
20. You are with me on this? You have a great task ahead. Because what do you see? The Muslim World is helpless. You can bomb every day, you can kill as many children as you want, not much difference. Why? Because we are poor, we do not focus on education, not on technology. We are bickering over petty issues, don't look at the fundamentals.
21. That's why you ask me in the MADANI government here. I say whatever is being said, we use this power and the unity to focus on the economy, to focus on quality education, to bring back that sense of confidence and some form of confidence and power – economic power dan social power. Otherwise, you can shout as much but nobody effectively cares.
22. So, in conclusion, that's why we say soft power. Utilize this opportunity to your best, your level best, get the proper



understanding, particularly as Muslims, because after all, was the aim education in Islam in the Hadith, Rasullullah SAW, '*Addabani Rabbi faahsana ta'dibi*'. This inculcation of adab and values is still central.

23. So, in this brief address, I just place my hope for the university, I've looked at the videos, but it is an impressive and thank you very much, I and the family and the foundation. It is an impressive infrastructure and the challenge is for you, my children, to give meaning and following this effect change, it takes a lot of hard work, patience and wisdom.
24. You return home, please send my Salam, say Uncle Anwar Ibrahim, send my Salam to your family, your parents but remember, the test is not excellence here, the test is excellence here with the commitment and the desire to affect change.
25. May Allah bless us all and rejoice the holy month of Ramadan in the spirit of *la'allakum tattaqun* and may the Ramadan give us greater strength spiritually with intention of spiritual enlightening because this is the month that we are given the *quraanu hudal linnaasi wa bayyinaatim minal huda wal furqaan*. And it is therefore my hope that you be the *Safwah al*

*Mukhtarah*, the core that can continue this mission to affect change in your society and the Muslim world in particular.

Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.