

Message from the Presidency Mentor Group, 1st Baisakh 1420

Since receiving news of the appalling incident of vandalism at Presidency University on April 10, 2013, we have stayed in close touch with the Vice-Chancellor through our Chairperson and have received regular updates from her. As we begin a New Year, we wish to state as follows about recent events and our vision for the future:

- 1) We publicly affirm our full support for Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar and commend her for the wisdom, courage and dignity with which she dealt with a most aggravating situation.
- 2) We demand a thorough and impartial investigation of the violence perpetrated by outsiders on our campus. We want to see the guilty swiftly brought to book.
- 3) We appreciate the sentiments expressed by the Chief Minister to the Vice-Chancellor, as widely reported in the national media, about Presidency being “a dream project” for her and her determination to support and protect it. We are thankful to the Chancellor for visiting Presidency, interacting with our students, assuring steps to ensure the safety of women, and applying a healing touch.
- 4) We recognize the need for adequate security and policing given our location in a difficult urban environment. However, a gated community militates against the ethos of Presidency and locked gates undermine the principle of academic freedom. We want to see peaceful conditions restored so that faculty, staff and students of Presidency can walk freely and without fear on College Street and in the neighborhood. We also wish to welcome academic visitors on our campus.
- 5) The efforts of the Presidency Mentor Group to rejuvenate this iconic institution as a world-class center of excellence have always transcended party political divisions. The last twenty-one months have been extraordinarily positive in the history of Presidency, free of political interference and enabling the recruitment of an outstanding new faculty based on academic merit alone. The challenges of the last few days have strengthened our resolve to work for the betterment of Presidency in that spirit of generosity rising above petty acrimony and animosity. We extend to all faculty, staff, students, alumni and well-wishers of Presidency our best wishes for a peaceful, prosperous and productive New Year.