

Message of Hans T. Sy
Turnover Ceremony
Henry Sy, SR. Hall, UP BGC
Taguig City
1 March 2016

UP President Alfredo Pascual, Professors of the University of the Philippines, my SM colleagues, distinguished guests, good morning!

It is with great pride that we turnover today the Henry Sy Sr. Hall to the highly esteemed University of the Philippines here at BGC. It is a precious gift befitting your institution for its commitment to academic excellence and the pursuit of higher education.

This 12,000-square meter building brings with it state-of-the-art engineering and school facilities which include 29 classrooms, three computer laboratories, learning commons, an auditorium, a moot court for your law students, a multi-purpose hall where you can hold various events, discussion rooms, conference rooms, office spaces, faculty lounges, and an executive lounge.

The building carries no less than my father's name whose prime advocacy is education. He worked hard and sacrificed so much early in his life just to be able to receive formal education. He wants the same for every Filipino. It is for this reason that our family and SM are invested in a number schools, among them are the National University, Far Easter University where my father went to college, and the Asia Pacific College. SM Foundation also supports over 1,500 college scholars, some of whom are enrolled in UP, and hundreds more are being trained for free in technical-vocation courses and vegetable farming.

We can never learn enough. In this day and age when technology enhances everything we do, new ideas, products, services, and business models constantly emerge.

We are in the age of disruption. As such, the saying that “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” has become a dangerous thing to say. Instead, we should say, “If it ain’t broke, make it better”. Our SM malls and stores are living testaments to this. They ain’t broke but we keep improving, redesigning and expanding them to keep up with the times so that we can provide better customer experience.

Disruption is about change, innovation, and sometimes completely discarding old ideas and inefficient ways of doing things. Gone these days are things we used to own such are analog phones, typewriters, film-based cameras, stereo sets, and main frame computers. E-commerce has exploded in many areas. Even taxis have to compete with the likes of Uber and Grab Taxi. Sometime soon, perhaps, we could be using watches to call our loved ones, phones to manage or secure our houses, and virtual money to buy from stores. Be that as it may, disruption is also about making this world a better place.

We hope that the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall here at the UP BGC will be a place where disruptive ideas can emerge so our country will be an even better place much sooner than we expect.

The place is all yours. Enjoy it and take good care of it.

Thank you very much and enjoy the rest of the day.