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Raja Mohar first chancellor of UTP

BANDAR SERI ISKANDAR, Sat. - Well-known corporate figure Raja Tun Mohar Raja Badiozaman will be appointed Universiti Teknologi Petronas' first chancellor at its inaugural convocation ceremony tomorrow.

UTP chairman Tan Sri Dr Azizan Zainul Abidin, who is to make the announcement, has also been appointed as the five-year-old university's pro-chancellor.

In accepting the appointment, Raja Mohar said that, for a person who has been associated with Petronas since its inception in 1974, his appointment as UTP's chancellor represents the height of his relationship with the national oil company.

In the early 1970s, Raja Mohar became known as the pragmatic negotiator during his time as head of the the Coordinating Committee on Hydrocarbons.

When Petronas was finally incorporated on Aug 17, 1974, with Tengku Razaleigh at the helm, Raja Mohar went down in history as the courteous, conciliatory but shrewd and firm negotiator who managed to get international petroleum giants like Shell and Esso to sign the production sharing contracts with the national oil company.

Born in Kuala Kangsar, Perak, in 1922, Raja Mohar had a distinguished civil service career that spanned 45 years.

An economics graduate from Cambridge University, Raja Mohar's last position, before retiring in 1988, was as Special Economic Advisor to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, a position he also held during the tenures of Tun Abdul Razak and Tun Hussein Onn.

Raja Mohar is a well-respected figure in the corporate world. He was chairman of major corporations like the Employees Provident Fund (1971), Malaysia Airlines System (1973-1991) and Petronas (1984-1988).

Raja Mohar is also well-known as a master negotiator in the international arena.

He led the nation's delegations in negotiating trade arrangements with Australia, Japan, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary and Korea, among others.

Raja Mohar was also leader of the first trade mission to the now disbanded Soviet Union in 1966.

In 1972, he was made Tun Abdul Razak's personal representative to meet Chinese Premier Chou En-Lai.

This historic meeting paved the way for Tun Abdul Razak's diplomatic mission to China in 1974.

In recognition of his services, Raja Mohar was conferred several honours and decorations, including the Seri Setia Mahkota (1992), which carries the title Tun, and Panglima Mangku Negara (1976) which carries the title Tan Sri.

In 1976, the Government of Federal Republic of Germany awarded him the Grand Cross First Class Order of Merit, while the Government of Japan gave him the First Class Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1981.

His contributions to Malaysian education spanned two decades, having served as Pro-Chancellor of two public universities - Universiti Teknologi Malaysia from 1982 to 1991 and Universiti Sains Malaysia from 1999 to 2001.

He has also received a total of five honorary doctorates in three fields - law, management and business - from local and foreign universities.

Raja Mohar was named the recipient of the Tun Razak Foundation Award in 1983, the Anugerah Tokoh Ma'al Hijrah 1414H in 1993 and the National

Productivity Award by the Asian Productivity Organisation in 1993.
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