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Unimas honours Dr Siti Hasmah

KUCHING, Thurs. - Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali was today conferred an honorary doctorate in science by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) for her contributions to the country, notably in rural health and the advancement of women.

Unimas chancellor Tun Abang Muhammad Salahuddin, who is also Yang di-Pertua Negeri, conferred the award on Dr Siti Hasmah, who is wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

She is the fourth recipient of the award.

The special convocation ceremony was held at Dewan Unimas. Among those present were Sarawak Chief Minister's wife Puan Sri Laila Taib, Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr George Chan, Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Abang Johari Tun Abang Openg, Unimas board of directors' chairman Tan Sri Bujang Mohd Nor, and its vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Yusuf Hadi.

Prof Syed Hassan Almashoor, the university's medical and health sciences faculty dean, said although Dr Siti Hasmah, who graduated from King Edward VII College of Medicine in June 1955, was very active in her career and social work, she never forgot her responsibilities as a mother and wife.

"Dr Siti Hasmah is a firm person, but good hearted and ever ready to lend a helping hand, especially to the less privileged," he said.

In her acceptance speech, Dr Siti Hasmah advised undergraduates to focus on their studies.

She said they would reap the fruits of their labour later in life.

"Time flies, and golden opportunities like what you have now come along only once. So, I hope you will work hard and will not let yourself, parents, siblings, race and country down."