

# Musa kept Tunship news secret

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BY JANE RITIKOS

**KUALA LUMPUR:** When Tun Musa Hitam received a phone call from Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi telling him he was being recommended for Tunship, he had to pull over and ask the Prime Minister to repeat himself.

"I was taken by surprise, having remotely hoped to get such an award but in my later years," said 72-year-old Musa, a former deputy prime minister.

"My reply to the PM was, 'With an offer like this, how could I refuse?'" he added.

Musa said he received the phone call two months ago and kept the news a secret, telling only his wife.

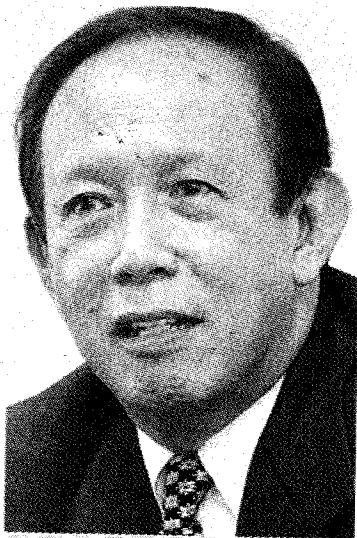
Yesterday, he was conferred the Seri Setia Mahkota (SSM), the highest federal award by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail.

Expressing his gratitude to the King for the award, Musa said the Tunship was particularly significant to him as it was usually given to prominent personalities in recognition of their services.

"I still hold a number of semi-government positions which have kept me very busy," he quipped.

Musa chairs several organisations including the Eminent Persons Group tasked to draft the Asean Charter, the Malaysia-China Business Council, and the World Islamic Economic Forum Foundation.

He is now also Commonwealth



Musa: 'This is dedicated to those who have been upholding the Bersih, Cekap Amanah principle'

adviser to the Maldives government on constitutional reform.

Musa, who was former Suhakam chairman, also sits on the board of several companies and is chairman of Kumpulan Guthrie and Lion Industries Corporation Bhd.

He dedicated the award to his family, friends and officers who worked with him during his Cabinet days.

"This is dedicated especially to those who have been upholding the Bersih, Cekap Amanah principle. Hurray for them, this one's for them!" said Musa.