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RANGSIT UNIVERSITY

DR M RECEIVES DOCTORATE FROM THAI VARSITY

He is the 4th high-profile public figure to be awarded the honorary doctorate

BANGKOK

THAILAND'S Rangsit University (RSU) yesterday presented an honorary doctorate in social leadership, business and politics to Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The university presented the honorary degree to Dr Mahathir at its 34th convocation at its main campus in Mueang Pathum Thani District, 30km from here.

Dr Mahathir is the fourth high-profile public figure to be awarded the honorary doctorate degree by the university, after the late Princess Srinagarindra (also known as Somdet Ya) of Thailand; King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck of Bhutan in 2009 and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2016.

The colourful ceremony at the Gymnasium Building was steeped in tradition, with Dr Mahathir ushered to the reception room, where he donned the red and black velvet doctoral robe.

Dr Mahathir's wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, was given the honour to don the blue and red velvet robe. She accompanied Dr Mahathir on stage.

The ceremony started with the national anthems of Malaysia and Thailand played by the 40-member Rangsit University Orchestra, conducted by Vanich Potavanich.

Then, RSU president Dr Arthit Ourairat delivered the citation, praising the achievements of Malaysia under Dr Mahathir and how he fought against social and economic injustice.

He also touched on how Dr Mahathir was trying to mend the country's economy, including recovering the wealth lost through the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) scandal.

After the citation, Arthit presented Dr Mahathir with the doctoral tam, a certificate and a plaque.

Dr Mahathir delivered his keynote address, saying: "I am humbled by the acknowledgements and pleased to accept the honour as the prime minister of Malaysia and on behalf of my country.

"I deeply value the recognition and I shall strive to contribute further to my people and nations across the globe.

"I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the students of this university. You are the leaders of tomorrow and hope for our future generation.

"To this end, universities play a significant role in providing opportunities and support for students to explore new knowledge and realise their potential."

Dr Mahathir said he was encouraged to note that RSU was moving towards a research university, adding that he looked forward to seeing further cooperation between RSU and universities in Malaysia.

After the speech, a song titled *Dreamland will Shine*, which was dedicated to Dr Mahathir, was rendered by Areeya Rotajanadit.

The music was conducted by RSU's conservatory of music dean, Dr Denny Euprasert, with the melody composed by Euprasert and the lyrics penned by Pisamai Chandavimol. The lyrics revolve around the efforts and sacrifices of a devoted leader.

Dr Mahathir, at a press conference later, said he not only felt humbled, but was also impressed with the song dedicated to him.

He said it was something new compared with the many accolades he had received.

RSU has established links with several Malaysian higher-learning institutions, among them Universiti Utara Malaysia and UniKL.

Present was the Malaysian delegation, including Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, government officials and representatives from Malaysian universities.

The graduation ceremony was broadcast live at <https://m.facebook.com/rangsituniversity>.

Bernama



Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, at Rangsit University's 34th convocation in Bangkok yesterday. With them is university president Dr Arthit Ourairat. BERNAMA PIC

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