

Dr Mahathir Conferred Honorary Doctorate In Thailand
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By Jamaluddin Muhammad

BANGKOK, Jan 27 (Bernama) -- Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was conferred the honorary doctorate in Political Science from Naresuan University, here, today.

Chairman of the Naresuan University Council Prof Dr Krasae Chanawongse in his citation said the award was in recognition of Dr Mahathir's life-long commitment to the people of Malaysia to create a sense of national identity and pride in Malaysia.

It was also in recognition of his stature as an extraordinary leader in Southeast Asia, he said.

The university's President Prof Dr Suhjin Jinahyon conferred the honorary doctorate on Dr Mahathir in a ceremony at a hotel, here, the first time the university with its main campus in Phitsanulok, conferred the award to a Malaysian.

The university is named after King Naresuan and started as the College of Education in 1967 and later became the Phitsanulok Campus of Srinakharinwirot University in 1974 before officially granted university status on July 29, 1990.

Dr Mahathir in his acceptance speech expressed sincere appreciation to the university for conferring the award.

In commending the university's vision and mission to transform the university as the beacon of knowledge, he said the culture of lifelong learning need to be nurtured in the minds and hearts of graduates as the world moved towards a knowledge-based economy.

"In today's world, lifelong learning is essential because continuous research leads to new knowledge and discoveries," he said.

He said with new knowledge comes innovation, agility and increased productivity that would eventually contribute directly to the nation building process.

"We have to learn from the examples set by Ibnu Sinna and Al-Khawarizmi in the fields of medicine and mathematics respectively and in more recent years, we should emulate the creativity and innovation displayed by Mark Zuckerberg and the late Steve Jobs," he said.

It was clear that education should be used as a vehicle for change, empowerment and emancipation, said the Malaysian fourth prime minister who took office from 1981 until his retirement in 2003.

Thomas Edison, he said, who created light bulb was often credited with the creation of the first industrial research laboratory in the 19th century.

He experimented more than a thousand times before he could eventually perfect his creation.

"But in his own assessment, he did not fail in his experiments for he learnt a thousand wrong ways to create light bulbs. That is truly the spirit that is much needed in this modern time which will without doubt benefit mankind as a whole," he said.

Dr Mahathir's wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and Malaysian Ambassador to Thailand Datuk Nazirah Hussain also attended the ceremony.

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