

Mahathir hopes for more joint research by NUS, UM

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From Massita Ahmad

SINGAPORE, Nov 13 (Bernama) – Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Tuesday he hopes the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the University of Malaya (UM) will engage in more joint research.

He said the two tertiary institutions have shown how they can work together in research to develop something to help society as a whole and sick people in particular.

“I was impressed with the cooperation, especially in the treatment of leukemia. It affects many children and it is important that you make progress in this field,” he said in his acceptance speech after being conferred the honorary Doctor of Laws degree by NUS, his alma mater, here.

Dr Mahathir said the governments of Malaysia and Singapore should support the work done together by the two universities.

He said he was glad that there is still cooperation between the two universities.

Earlier, President of NUS Prof Tan Eng Chye said “a shining example” of the two universities’ combined impact was the recent life-changing discovery that tailored chemotherapy for children with high-risk leukemia increased cure rates and reduced relapse rates.

“The two-country study, which involved the medical schools of UM and NUS, was the first in the world to prove this,” he said in his welcoming speech.

The two universities are partners in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities and the

ASEAN University Network.

Tan expressed the hope that the two universities will continue to work together to create sustained impact.

“NUS looks to collaborate with UM and other Malaysian universities to build a strong network of research, innovation and enterprise in Southeast Asia. This network will facilitate the flow of talent and ideas, to create and grow many shared opportunities for the region and our communities,” he said.

On the conferment of the honorary degree, Dr Mahathir said: “I would like to say this encourages me to continue and hope I will be able to contribute something to my country ... to our two countries and to the world itself.”

Singapore President Halimah Yacob, who is also the NUS Chancellor, conferred on Dr Mahathir the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at a special conferment ceremony held at the NUS Kent Ridge Campus here. Also present was Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong.

The conferment was in recognition of Dr Mahathir’s outstanding leadership of Malaysia as well as his enduring contribution to the longstanding bilateral relations between Singapore and Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir was a medical student at the King Edward VII College of Medicine, the forerunner of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. He graduated in 1953.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir’s wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali was presented with the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award as a tribute to her impact as a pioneer and an inspiring role model for women doctors in Malaysia, and as a recognition of her excellent and sustained service in the areas of public health in Malaysia and beyond.

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