

UMS awards honorary doctorate to Mustapha

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) awarded veteran state politician Tun Datu Mustapha Datu Harun a posthumous honorary doctorate in philosophy.

His son, Datu Amir Kahar Tun Datu Mustapha, received the degree from Sabah Yang di-Pertua Negri and UMS Chancellor Tun Ahmadshah Abdullah at the convocation ceremony here yesterday.

"Our family is overwhelmed by this honour. I am sure our joy at this recognition is shared by all the people of Sabah, regardless of race.

"Mustapha helped free Sabah from the British colonialists. My father had always advised Sabahans to continue his struggle to develop the state further," he told reporters later.

Mustapha is considered the Father of Sabah's Independence and was appointed the state's first Yang di-Pertua Negri in 1963.

Two years earlier, he had formed the United Sabah National Organisation.

He also founded Yayasan Sabah in 1966 to help poor and rural students by sponsoring their studies both locally and abroad.

He died on Jan 2, 1995 at the age of 76.

Former Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia deputy vice-chancellor and noted psychologist Professor Datuk Dr Abdul Halim Othman received the professor emeritus title. Datuk Dr Noramly Muslim, Datuk Jamdin Buyong and Datuk Kelvin Tan Aik Phen also received honorary degrees at the two-day convocation, which ends today.

It was a sad moment for UMS Alumni medal winner Gan Kim Soon as only his mother made it to his convocation.

"My father passed away earlier this year. I wanted him to be here as I am sure he would have been very proud of me today. I would have liked to thank him for giving me an education," said Gan, a first-class honours student in Bachelor of Computer Science (Software Engineering).