

UMS grads advised on challenges, uncertainties

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) must have comprehensive human capital development and human resource in support of the Government's intention to produce knowledgeable and wise future generations who are conscious of their national values.

"The production of human capital with those characteristics is highly essential on the face of the 21st century which is full of challenges and uncertainties," said Head of State and UMS Chancellor Tun Juhar Mahiruddin at the 14th UMS Convocation ceremony, Saturday. Juhar said that nations that do not have high human capital intelligence and its own nationalism would collapse and fail.

"Every soul and body in UMS must come together and make every effort to ensure national aspirations can be achieved concretely. We have to fully support the transformation agenda of the country to ensure the agenda's implicit and explicit philosophy becomes reality," he said.

Juhar also extended his congratulations to Datuk Mohd Harun Abdullah who became the university's

fourth Vice Chancellor in June this year. "I hope under his leadership, UMS will fly higher and achieve more," he said.

Meanwhile, Juhar also congratulated the graduates and advised them that the ceremony is only an early step for them towards opening a bigger world outside the university.

"That degree you are holding is only part of what you need in order to achieve greater things in the future. Your ability to adjust yourself and to apply the knowledge you have learned is very important in determining a continuous success in your attempt to compete in the employment market. You must realise that globalisation is changing the way we think, communicate and react. All these would require physical and mental endurance," he said.

Juhar also cautioned the students that virtues do not mean that the students must be willing to be bullied because dignity must be upheld at all times.

"Your attitude and eloquence in words and actions must be fostered and presented according to your own religious upbringing."

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Lee (top) and Rahim receiving their doctorates.

Lam Thye, Melaka CM honoured

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"In other context, studies have shown that important criteria for employment are experience, ethics and mastery of foreign languages especially English.

"If we want to progress in this globalisation era, we must interact with other races and mastering foreign languages is a key to this progress," he said.

A total of 4,336 students graduated from the university this year. Twenty-four students completed their PhD programme, while 277 were awarded Masters degree in various fields.

Four students were awarded postgraduate diplomas, 55 medical diplomas, 3,948 undergraduates with 265 of them studied for their undergraduate programme off-campus, two students from the Advance Management and Technology Centre and 23 teachers awarded degrees through the Teachers Degree Programme. Posthumous degrees were awarded to two students who died before the convocation ceremony. A total of 60 students were awarded first class bachelor's degrees from various schools.

Meanwhile, two luminaries were conferred doctorate degrees during the UMS convocation ceremony.

Prominent social activist Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye was awarded the honorary Doctorate in Social Work while former Malacca Chief Minister Tan Sri Rahim Thamby Chik obtained his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History.

UMS Chancellor and Head of State Tun Juhar Mahiruddin said the doctorate conferred to Lee recognised Lee's efforts in the country's social development and for his concern for the welfare of the people in the country especially the well-being and safety of workers. "Lee's services are bigger than a piece of degree and I believe that he will continue to contribute to the intellectual and

social struggle for the development of our country," said Juhar.

In his acceptance speech, Lee who is the chairman of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Niosh) and the National Service Training Council said that education must become an important process to nurture the seed of unity among the people especially youths.

"Our education must prepare individuals who are perfect intellectually, physically and spiritually. Education must be the channel to nurture unity. Peace, unity and harmony must not be taken for granted," he said.

Lee said his involvement in several non-profit NGOs opened his eyes to various needs of the people, and that although many had been fulfilled, there is still much room for improvement.

"For example, my work as a Vice Chairman at the Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF) is extremely challenging. One of the objectives is to change the mindset and the culture of the people in order to build a safe and prosperous community and country.

"One must accept the ups and downs for the prosperity of all regardless of race and religion. In addition to that, through Niosh, I could promote employees and employers' awareness on the importance of safety and health in workplace," said Lee.

He added that the people must be careful in establishing and strengthening the socio-economic foundations of the country in order to ensure economic development and at the same time guaranteeing social justice.

Meanwhile, Rahim was awarded the PhD in History for his thesis entitled 'Umno and the Question of Political Leadership in a Multicultural Society 1969-1998'.

Rahim read for the doctorate in four years at the university under the supervision of Prof. Dr Sabihah Osman and Zaini Othman.