

**Pro-Chancellor's Speech  
Perdana University 3<sup>rd</sup> Convocation  
on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2018**

Yang Amat Berhormat Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia,  
Yang Amat Berbahagia, Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali  
Yang Berhormat, Yang Berhormat,  
Your Excellencies High Commissioners and Ambassadors,  
Yang Arif,  
Yang Berusaha Dr. Maurice Manning, Chancellor of the National University of Ireland,  
Yang Berusaha Prof. Cathal Kelly, CEO and Registrar of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland,  
Yang Berusaha Dr. Mounir Soliman, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Executive Director, University of California San Diego Health Sciences International,  
Yang Berbahagia Professor Dr. Zabidi Hussin, Vice Chancellor of Perdana University,  
Members of the Board of Governors of Perdana University,  
Members of the Senate,  
Graduates, Students, Parents, Staff and Faculty of Perdana University, and Distinguished Guests,

I wish to commence with a saying by Swami Rama. "Peace is only an ambition, a desire and a thought of those who must learn to understand the diverse ways of the two principles in life and the universe".

I congratulate the graduates and students celebrating their accomplishments today. Your goal should include striving hard to fulfil your dreams and ambition through hard work. Be innovative, create your own initiatives, seek as much knowledge as you can as there is no shortage of it in the modern world. Be the master of your own destiny, and your own life. Perdana University commenced in 2011 and has grown at a moderate pace. There were delays in implementing the new campus development due to various factors. Despite being classified as a national transformation project, we did not receive the support from some quarters for a seamless, obstacle-free growth.

However, in spite of the numerous hurdles, we persevered and brought the University to where it is now.

It has been my dream and desire since Perdana's inception that if we were to ever confer an honorary doctorate, the first and second recipients must be our Founding Chancellor Tun Dr. Mahathir and Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah.

And today we are most honoured again to receive our very revered Prime Minister and the equally revered Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah at Perdana University. Having them twice in the campus within the last 2 months is awesome and I think overwhelming for all of us.

I thank you both for agreeing so very graciously to accept these conferments. I am personally indebted to both of you in more than many ways since 1993. You have been like parents to me, expressing fondness and love, and giving me advice when I needed it.

Thank you Tun Dr. Mahathir and Tun Dr. Siti. Like me, I believe millions of Malaysians express the same love and appreciation for you.

Two weeks ago, during a Bernama interview in conjunction with the Ageing, Learning & Technology Conference, you shared the ways to keep the mind occupied.

You said, "Muscles would deteriorate if they are not used, and therefore, it is important for them to actively engage in activities. The tendency for them to do nothing is bad because when you do nothing, you don't exercise your muscles and your body, and you don't exercise your mind too.

When the mind is not exercised, it behaves in the same way as the muscles. The muscles regress, the mind also regresses and it becomes quite useless." This simple explanation says it all. **One must not retire.**

During your most recent travels, at the dialogue session at the Asia Society in New York, it was reported that you spoke for 20 minutes without referring to a single note, prompting Kevin Rudd, the former Prime Minister of Australia, to describe this as a "bravura performance".

Malaysia is placed 20<sup>th</sup> out of the 30 countries globally for connectedness – due to its good infrastructure, strategic location and sound policies. Recently it's reported that the new government had inherited debts of over RM 1 trillion. The government must quickly endeavor to create a bigger entrepreneurial community instead of only a professional community. The focus on the entrepreneurial community will enable us to bridge the economic wealth gap and the inequality that prevails.

It is important for the government to be less involved in business and concentrate in governing the nation. As the Education Minister in 1974, and then Trade and Industry Minister, followed by being the Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister, Tun has shaped the important policies of our country for 29 years out of 55. The new Pakatan Harapan government provides hope for unity in Malaysia's diversity.

I have personally learnt to:

Speak only what is beneficial, and realise that sincere human effort must always be accompanied with knowledge of any subject. And this will help one to break the fetters of ignorance and bring success.

At a dialogue in Brunei on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, you highlighted some of the crucial initiatives for education in Malaysia. You stated: "Education is important. The ability to read and write is education. However, the content of what is being read is important. Education must suit the ambition of the country. We should focus on engineering sciences, IT, electronics, and similar fields.

We need to think of the future of the people we are educating, and suit the requirements of the market. For the people to be employable, education must be related to the future of the country.”

As students, you must learn to lead a balanced life in the search for perfection in your careers. You should not ignore your own potentials. Lack of awareness creates ignorance. The human potential is immense and when you probe deeper in the subconscious mind you can achieve unbelievable results.

In a recent survey done by Accenture, to determine what ordinary citizens want for Malaysia, it was found that a digitalized nation that leverages on technological innovations can overcome existing challenges.

1. To attack graft and enhance governance, utilization of digital data must be transparent.
2. Malaysia Baru now has an opportunity to reinvent itself through digitalizing processes so that real-time data is made available.
3. These data that are available are currently in bits and pieces and not yet synchronized.

The Perdana University School of Data Sciences, the only one of its kind in Malaysia, can help the nation to enable these changes. A centralized data bank that is interactive, secure, and easily accessible by the citizens can vastly improve our daily lives. Seamless integration with the banking system will also enable cashless transactions, which will dramatically reduce corruption.

This is already being implemented in countries like India, where the AADHAR card is utilized by over 1 billion residents. I hope to see our very own scholars and innovators pioneer the digital transformation of our country.

Once again, my heartiest congratulations to all the graduates. I pray that you will proudly carry the name of the university and prove yourselves as the best in the nation.  
Thank you.