

## ESM Goh receives highest honour from NUS



President Tony Tan Keng Yam, who is NUS chancellor, conferring an honorary Doctor of Laws on Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong yesterday. Also honoured were (seated from left) Sir Richard Brook Sykes and Professor Saw Swee Hock for contributions to their respective fields. ST PHOTO: LAU FOOK KONG

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Life of nation's second PM has been 'closely entwined with the fortunes of this country'

[Amelia Teng](#) ✉

Singapore's second prime minister yesterday received the highest recognition from his alma mater, the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, 74, who was prime minister from 1990 to 2004, was presented with an honorary Doctor of Laws for his contributions to public service.

He has been ESM and senior adviser to the Monetary Authority of Singapore since May 2011.

In his speech, Mr Goh offered life lessons to 150 accountancy graduands at NUS' main commencement ceremony. "First, while you cannot predict your future, you have control over some parts. You can scan and prepare for the terrain ahead - the geopolitical environment, the global economic outlook, Singapore's demography, society's changing attitude, technology, political developments.

"Second, have a sense of duty - duty to family and country.

"Be bold and carve out new paths... You do not have to take the path of politics but please do if you are invited for tea sessions."

NUS' faculty of arts and social sciences dean Brenda Yeoh, who delivered the citation, described Mr Goh as one whose life has been "closely entwined with the fortunes of this country".

Mr Goh graduated from the then University of Singapore with first-class honours in economics in 1964, and started as an Administrative Service officer in the economic planning unit in the Prime Minister's Office.

In 1976, he was persuaded by then Minister for Finance Hon Sui Sen to stand for elections in Marine Parade, of which he is still a Member of Parliament.

As prime minister, he set in motion social policies, from setting up the Workforce Development Agency to starting endowment funds for groups in need.

Yesterday, President Tony Tan Keng Yam, who is also NUS chancellor, awarded honorary degrees to two other eminent individuals.

Professor Saw Swee Hock, a professorial fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters for his contributions to the field of statistics and demography. The philanthropist has donated millions of dollars to universities here and abroad.

Sir Richard Brook Sykes was given the honorary Doctor of Science for his key role in Singapore's biomedical sciences field since 1987.

His career in the pharmaceutical industry began with Glaxo, subsequently Glaxo Wellcome - where he was chairman and chief executive; and then GlaxoSmithKline, which he left as chairman in 2002.

He was given honorary Singapore citizenship in 2004 for his contribution to the country's biomedical sciences industry.

Some 10,219 students will receive bachelor or postgraduate degrees in ceremonies till next Tuesday.

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