

**PRESS RELEASE**

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Citation on Tan Sri Dr. Justice Mohamed Suffian  
by Assoc. Prof. Tommy Koh, Public Orator, on his  
being conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of  
Laws.  
Acc. No.

Mr. Justice Mohamed Suffian bin Hashim

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Mohamed Suffian springs from a humble origin. He was born the son of a kathi, on the banks of Perak River, at Kota Lamar Kiri. As a child, he attended the Malay School at Kampong Masjid Lenggong. Four years later, he was sent to an English-medium school, the Clifford School at Kuala Kangsar. Suffian was a brilliant pupil. He received three double-promotions, and consistently topped his class. With school completed, Suffian was advised by his principal not to apply to the Malayan Administrative Service as he lacked sufficient social connections but to compete for a Queen's Scholarship.

Suffian won a Queen's Scholarship and attended Cambridge University from 1936 to 1940. He gained the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in 1939, and in the following year, he was conferred the degree of Bachelor of Laws. In 1941, he was called to the English Bar.

War had, however, intervened and Suffian found himself in India. Here, he was to display the resourcefulness and versatility that were already evident in his career at Clifford where he was Captain of the School, Editor of the School Magazine and a King's Scout. In India, he worked as a radio broadcaster and became the Head of the Malay Section of the All India Radio. Towards the end of the war, he was the Head of the Malay Section of the British Broadcasting Corporation in London. When the war ended, Suffian resigned from this position and entered the Malayan Civil Service. He returned home in 1943, 12 years after leaving her shores.

His subsequent career has been so varied and eventful that time would not permit a complete recital of all the high posts he has filled and the many honours that have been bestowed upon him. Let me just mention a few land-marks in Suffian's versatile career, a career that is distinguished by many firsts. He was the State Secretary of Pahang. He was the first Malayan to be appointed the Legal Advisor of that State. He was a constitutional advisor to both the Malaysian Conference of Rulers and to the Sultan of Brunei. He was the first Malayan Solicitor-General of the Federation of Malaya. In 1961, at the com-

paratively youthful age of 44, Suffian was elevated to the High Court Bench of Malaya. In 1968, he was appointed a Judge of the Federal Court of Malaysia.

Suffian's contributions to higher education span the two sides of the causeway. He is the Pro-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, a post he has held since 1964. He is the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Higher Education. He has played a part in the conception and birth of the Universiti Sains Malaysia and the National University. In addition, he has, for many years, been an External Examiner in Law of the University of Singapore.

As a lawyer and judge, Suffian has always tried to be just. The technicalities of the law have never prevented him from doing justice. He has been particularly concerned with the interests of the humble folks. It was out of this concern that Suffian translated the Constitution of Malaya into the Malay language in 1963 and published an Introduction to the Constitution of Malaysia this year. Mohamed Suffian came from the people and he remains of the people. The high judicial office that he now occupies has not lengthened the distance between Suffian and the people, or blurred his perception of their interests or reduced his empathy for them.

May it please you, Mr. Chancellor, to confer upon Justice Mohamed Suffian, the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws.

T.T.B. Koh