

PRO-CHANCELLOR



YBhg Tan Sri Dato' Dr Yahya bin Awang

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DPMJ, DMPN, DSAP, PSM, Hon Doct (UKM)*

Tan Sri Dato' Dr Yahya bin Awang, an eminent cardiothoracic surgeon, graduated from Monash University, Melbourne in 1974. On his return to Malaysia, he served as a medical officer in Hospital Johor Bahru and Kota Tinggi. In 1980, he obtained his Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons and Physicians of Glasgow (FRCS) Scotland, United Kingdom. He trained as a Cardiac Surgeon from 1980-83 at the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in Brompton Hospital, London.

Dr Yahya returned to Malaysia in 1983 when cardiac surgery was in its infancy and there were inadequate facilities and medical personnel to cope with the number of patients requiring open-heart surgery. It was at this time that he played a significant and pioneering role in the development of cardiac surgery in the country. He was instrumental in training cardiac surgeons and cardiac paramedics to meet the needs of the nation.

He served at the General Hospital Kuala Lumpur from 1983-85 and later promoted as Head and Senior Consultant from 1985-92. In July 1992, Dr Yahya, together with colleagues, pioneered the establishment of the National Heart Institute (IJN). During his tenure at IJN, he established the Clinical Research Unit, which enabled the Institute to undertake clinical research and collection of relevant clinical data in cardiac surgery. He has published 23 scientific papers in local and international scientific journals and made 15 presentations at various conferences. Dr Yahya was a Co-Editor for the IJN Proceedings from 2000-03.

With his appointment as President of the Asian Cardiac Surgical Society (1992-94), he led and represented Malaysia in numerous international conferences on cardiac surgery. This has put Malaysia

on the regional map as an excellent training centre for cardiac surgery and has attracted trainees from Indonesia, Japan, Yemen, Myanmar and Bangladesh. In addition, he established the IJN Foundation, an organisation that provides financially disadvantaged patients with assistance in cardiac surgery, scholarships for cardiac trainees and research on heart diseases.

Over a span of 30 years as a cardiac surgeon, Dr Yahya performed no less than 5,000 open-heart surgeries and trained more than 50 cardiac surgeons. With a dedicated and trained team, he successfully performed the first heart transplant in Malaysia on 18 December 1997. The success of this operation and other cardiac surgeries performed, enhanced the confidence of the Malaysian public to have cardiac surgical procedures done locally. Dr Yahya is known for his role in successfully operating on Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, Malaysia's Prime Minister, for coronary artery bypass surgery in 1989.

For his service and contribution to the nation's medical industry, he received several awards and accolades. He was bestowed the titles Setia Mahkota Johor (SMJ) in 1989, Kesatria Mangku Negara (KMN) in 1990, Darjah Paduka Mahkota Johor (DPMJ) (Dato') in 1990, Darjah Yang Mulia Pangkuan Negeri (DMPN) (Pahang) (Dato') in 1994, Darjah Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang (DSAP) (Dato') in 2000 and Panglima Setia Mahkota (PSM) (Tan Sri) in 2003. He was also awarded the 2013 Merdeka Award for the Health, Science & Technology Category.

Dr Yahya held the position of President of the Association of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons of Asia from 1993-95 and was the Founding President for the Malaysian Association of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons from 1993-98. He is also member and fellow of several associations and committees including the Academy of Science Malaysia, Malaysian Medical Association, International Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons, the Malaysian Society of Transplantation, and Honorary Member of the Special Committee for Development of National Transplant Policy.

In 2012, Dr Yahya was awarded the Honorary Doctor of Medicine from International the Medical University (IMU) in recognition of his vast contribution to the healthcare arena. He also served as Chairman for the IMU Board of Governors from 2005-17 and continues to be a member of the board.

Today, he continues to serve as an Honorary Consultant for Hospital University Sains Malaysia, Visiting Consultant Surgeon for the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery in University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Adjunct Professor of the Medical Faculty of University Teknologi MARA, and Chairman of the Expert Panel of Heart and Lung Transplant of the National Transplant Registry. Dr Yahya is also currently the founder and Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at the Cardiac Vascular Sentral Kuala Lumpur.