



HAPPY DAD: Dr Gunasegaran sharing his success with his only daughter, 11-month-old San Anozyka, after receiving his doctorate at the convocation ceremony at UPM in Bangi yesterday.

Perseverance, hard work pay off for ex-teacher

BANGI: Determined to improve the field of special education in the country, Dr Gunasegaran Karuppannan set out to conduct a four-year research on hearing-impaired pupils, which earned him a PhD.

The former English-language teacher from Kuala Selangor said he realised that there was a lack of facilities and schools for special students.

"A lot needs to be done in making sure there are adequate facilities and teaching staff in the special schools," added the Education Administration graduate of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Gunasegaran was among 32 who were conferred their doctorates at the university's 28th convocation ceremony. A total of 4,092 students will be

awarded their degrees in a three-day ceremony, which commenced yesterday.

"It was tough collecting the information from schools but I persevered and did not give up," said Gunasegaran, whose research was on the "Perception of schools heads and teachers towards the success of hearing-impaired pupils based on the KBSR syllabus."

His wife Ananthi Kuppusamy, who is also a teacher, said she was in full support of her husband's research as she herself graduated from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in 2002 with a degree in special education.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was conferred an honorary doctorate in science at the same ceremony. The award was in recognition of his contribu-

tions to the country during his 22 years at the helm.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir urged local universities to lead the way to make agriculture a major national industry by commercialising its research.

He said agriculture-based universities such as UPM should view agriculture as modern science.

"It is as important as information technology and other scientific fields, which in fact can also contribute to the advancement of agriculture science," he added.

In line with this, Dr Mahathir said there should also be more agriculture science researchers, well-equipped laboratories with impressive facilities and a bigger slice of the country's budget to conduct more extensive research in the field.