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## Namibia's Minister of Education receives PhD at AeU

> More than 1,200 from around the world celebrate their graduation

**A**SIA e University's (AeU) recent 4th convocation ceremony saw the attendance of several ambassadors and representatives of foreign embassies, particularly from the 33 Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) countries.

More than 1,200 graduands from around the world received their scrolls and celebrated their success. Among them were 12 who received their Doctor of Philosophy and two who received their Doctor of Business Administration. The others graduated at other levels—including Master's, Bachelor's and Graduate Diploma.

The graduands included about 300 international students—among them, Namibia's Minister of Education Dr David Richard Namwandi who was conferred a PhD.

A notable figure who has received many awards for his efforts in advancing higher education in Namibia, Namwandi believes wholeheartedly in equality and quality education for all Namibians.

He is the founder of Namibia's first and only fully accredited private university, the International University of Management (IUM), in Windhoek. Established in 1994, IUM has a current student population of 8,500 in five satellite campuses around the country. Namwandi served as its chairman and vice chancellor until his appointment as Deputy Minister of Education in March 2010. He became the Minister of Education last year.

The many prestigious accolades to have come his way included the Education Leadership Award at the World Marketing Summit, Malaysia (2013) and the Outstanding Contribution to Education Award by the Central Bank of India. He is also the chairperson of the Namibia National Commission for Unesco.

Namwandi has been a PhD student with AeU since 2007. His thesis, *Implementation of the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Education and Training and its Impact on Economic Development: A Case Study of Namibia and Zimbabwe*, studied the reasons behind the failure to implement the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Education and Training (SADC-PET). This study reveals the significant factors that had hampered the implementation of SADC-PET, despite its clear



Syed Hamid and Namwandi were among the recipients of the Doctor of Philosophy at the convocation ceremony.

goals of developing comparable and harmonised education and training policies across all SADC countries.

Reminiscing on his learning experience at AeU, Namwandi says it has enhanced his learning aptitude and knowledge about Asia, the Saharan regions and beyond. He believes that interested researchers will be intellectually stimulated by the findings of his study, in carrying out similar research in the remaining 13 SADC countries.

"The programme has changed my outlook in life. I have learned a great deal, particularly about the research in education administration that I find very useful.

"Throughout my studies, my family was my staunch supporter. In PhD study, always give yourself a chance to pursue a lifelong learning experience, and to find a balance between your work, study and family. The outcomes may be more than meets the eye.

"I will continue to be a good ambassador for AeU. I will encourage my fellow students to do the same. AeU has moulded and shaped us academically, so now it's our duty to ensure that the reputation of this institution is greatly enhanced."

Another distinguished Doctor of Philosophy recipient at the event was Tan Sri Dr Syed Hamid bin Syed Jaafar Albar. A student in AeU since 2011, Syed Hamid believes the PhD degree has given him "better intellectual insights". It's an achievement he did not expect at the age of 70, he says.

His thesis entitled *National Interest in the Foreign Policy of Malaysia: The Mahathir Era (1981 - 2003)* showed how Malaysia was allowed to play a leadership role amongst the South-South countries, Islamic Ummah and East Asia (including Asean). His research findings indicate that domestic factors had influenced the Foreign Policy of Malaysia.

As a leading provider of open and distance learning since its inception in 2007, AeU provides working adults with the opportunity to further their studies through a flexible mode of learning. It offers more than 40 academic programmes at all levels through five academic schools, namely School of

Management, School of Education & Cognitive Science, School of Information & Communications Technology, School of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences and School of Graduate Studies.

AeU has been appointed as "Gateway University" for the development of international online

and distance learning. This is one of the Entry Point Projects as part of the government's Transformation Plan (GTP) to facilitate international distance learning.

For more details, visit [www.aeu.edu.my](http://www.aeu.edu.my)