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'YOU DID THE VERY BEST AND MORE'

Raja Sarina recalls Sultan Abdul Halim's dedication in performing his obligations

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THE granddaughter of the late Sultan of Kedah, Raja Sarina Iskandar, moved Malaysians to tears when she posted a moving tribute to her late grandfather Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah.

Sarina posted a black-and-white photo of Sultan Abdul Halim kissing her on the cheek while holding her face.

The post received almost 7,000 likes within two hours of being uploaded.

"Today and forever, Kedah and Malaysia have lost one of their greatest kings.

"Your dedication to Kedah and Malaysia has inspired me growing up.

"When you were Agong for the second time at the age of 83, I moved in with you at Istana Negara.

"It was then that I saw for the first time the behind-the-scenes

gara, Raja Sarina recalled her grandfather's dedication and commitment in performing his obligations, even to the point of skipping meals to practise his speeches or to work in the office.

"Which 80-something man would do that?

"Most of us dream of retiring at 50 if we can!

"But you never could, even if you wanted to.

"And there were times, more often than people knew, when you were ill but still continued with your Agong and Sultan du-



**BIOGRAPHY OF
TUANKU
ABDUL
HALIM
MU'ADZAM
SHAH**

Born on **Nov 28, 1927**, at Istana Anak Bukit, Alor Star, Kedah to **Sultan Badlishah** and **Tunku Sofiah Tunku Mahmud**

EDUCATION

1930's

- Early education at Alor Merah and Titi Gajah Malay schools

1948

- Attended Sultan Abdul Hamid College in Alor Star

1952-1955

- Wadham College, Oxford
Graduated with a Diploma in Social Science and Public Administration

MARRIAGE

1956

- Married Tuanku Bahiyah, daughter of Negri Sembilan's Tuanku Abdul Rahman. She passed away in 2003 due to cancer.



of your life.”

Sultan Abdul Halim was installed twice as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, with the first installation taking place in 1970 and the second one in 2012 before ending his term as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong last December.

He was succeeded by Kelantan's Sultan Muhammad V.

Having stayed with the late Tuanku Abdul Halim at Istana Ne-

ties.”

She said even when Sultan Abdul Halim was unwell to the point of being warded at the hospital, he would sometimes attend official functions.

“When you would leave the ward, I would watch you on television looking normal as you greet the prime minister, ministers and the rakyat.

“But as soon as the event was over, you would return to the hos-

Sultan Abdul Halim kissing his granddaughter Raja Sarina Iskandar on the cheek. Pic courtesy of Raja Sarina Iskandar

pital ward with tubes connected to your body.

“Even on your sickest day, you would be on time.

“You would never make anyone wait,” she said in her post, adding that was a side of the king no one knew of.

“You don't simply sit on a throne and enjoy your riches despite what many ignorantly think.

“There are sacrifices because you can't have a normal life.

“Your status is an *amanah* (trust) from Allah,” she said, adding that her “Tok” always ensured that he tried his best.

“People are unforgiving when leaders make mistakes...

“When I told him this blog or that person insulted him, he was never angry.

“He was calm and would simply say, ‘I did my best’,” she wrote.

The journalism graduate ended her tribute message with “You did the very best and more your whole life Tok.

“The reason I know how to be a good princess is because you taught me how.

“The reason I know how to be a good princess is because you taught me how. I love you so much Tok; you're forever my Sultan. Al-Fatihah.

RAJA SARINA ISKANDAR

Granddaughter of Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah

“I love you so much Tok; you're forever my Sultan. *Al-Fatihah.*”

Tuanku Abdul Halim passed away at 2.30pm yesterday at Istana Anak Bukit in Alor Star.

He was 89.

Instagram user Nurwaznati commented on the post, saying, “My deepest condolences to your Royal family Raja @sarinaiskandar..Al-Fatihah and may Allah ease everything for a King..Aamin.”

2004

- Married Cik Haminah Hamidun with title 'Che Puan Kedah', later proclaimed as the Sultanah of Kedah.



CHILDREN



Tunku Sarina
born in 1960



Tunku Soraya
born in 1960



Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz
born in 1966

INFOGRAPHIC NST

Another user, “natchogirl”, said Sultan Abdul Halim was one of the greatest rulers in Malaysian history and the country had lost a great leader.

“He was one of the greatest rulers and today Malaysia weeps for a great loss.

“Al-Fatihah.”

“You will be missed.

“We surely belong to Allah and to Him we shall return,” said another user, Azhar_ul_amin.

NATION MOURNS SULTAN'S DEATH

The passing of Sultan Abdul Halim a loss to nation and state, says Kedah MB

KUALA LUMPUR

A SENSE of sadness has spread across the nation following news of the passing of Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah.

Sultan Abdul Halim passed away at 2.30pm at Istana Anak Bukit in Alor Star, Kedah, yes-



terday. He would have been 90 in two months.

Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah said the death of the sultan was a great loss to the state and nation.

He said Sultan Abdul Halim was

caring and kind to the people.

Describing the sultan as humble and easy to approach, Bashah said the ruler was concerned about the people's welfare.

"I knew about his passing at 2.30pm upon arriving at the airport here after performing the haj. The last time I met him was several days before I flew to Mecca," he said after officially announcing the sultan's demise yesterday.

Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said: "On behalf of the Negri Sembilan government and its people, we would like to extend our deepest condolences on the passing of the Sultan of Kedah to the royal family and Kedah people. May Allah bless his soul."

Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk

Ahmad Yakob also expressed his condolences to the Kedah royal family.

Ahmad said Tuanku Abdul Halim was a fair and just leader to his people who safeguarded the teachings of Islam under his rule.

"I pray that Allah will bless his soul and forgive him, and that he would be placed among the pious."

Sabah Chief Minister Tan Sri Musa Aman described the sultan as a ruler who kept the people close to his heart.

Musa said Sabah people felt the loss just as much as the people and government of Kedah.

"We extend our condolences to the royal family of Kedah on his demise. Tuanku was a friendly, people-oriented and caring ruler. We share the sorrow and mourn

with the state government and people of Kedah.

"We pray that Allah will bless his soul," Musa said.

The Sultan of Kedah's senior private secretary, Datuk Elmi Yusoff said Tuanku Abdul Halim was a dedicated ruler.

Elmi, who has served under Tuanku Abdul Halim since 2002, said he had many fond memories of the sultan.

"Tuanku Abdul Halim was always punctual. He was always dedicated and compassionate on matters regarding his subjects.

"I followed him to Istana Negara when he was elected the Yang di-Pertuan Agong for the second time. He had good administrative skills and was always concerned about the people's wellbeing."

'Kedah sultan a people-centric ruler'

KUALA LUMPUR: Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah will always be remembered as a ruler who always had the people at heart.

He was a strong believer of the phrase that "there is no separating the king and the people" throughout his time as Sultan of Kedah as well as Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

The late sultan first ascended the throne as the fifth Agong in 1970, and in 2012, he was installed as the 14th king in a historic ceremony.

The April 11 ceremony was grand, with iconic regalia and sacred rites which gave many an insight into the nation's traditions and identity.

It gained the interest of Discovery Channel, which aired a special documentary featuring an insight into the royal history of Malay sultanates.

Having been king the first time during the premiership of Tun Abdul Razak, Sultan Abdul Halim took the throne again under the stewardship of the latter's son, Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"The king is the umbrella for the people and the people are the pillars of the king.

"The king's most important role is to ensure that there is no cruelty and destruction to the people and country.

"In a constitutional monarchy,

the king is the arbitrator and the balancing power so that there will be peace, stability and public order," he had said during his 85th birthday celebration as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong on June 1, 2013.

He loved his people and prioritised their wellbeing, and this was clear at every event he graced.

Sultan Abdul Halim never failed to stress the importance of unity and for Muslims to stay true to the teachings of Islam.

"The spirit of unity fostered by the people since Merdeka is key to the nation's achievements.

"I hope the people's living standards will improve so that they can continue to live in harmony, peace and prosperity," he had said at the same birthday celebration, adding that he was blessed that Malaysia was free of violence and racial tension.

In fact, his message remained consistent on each and every year he celebrated his official birthday as Agong – conserving the nation's multiracial harmony, peace, stability and prosperity.

On Dec 12 last year, the people-oriented ruler and his wife, Tuanku Hajah Haminah Hamidun, were accorded a symbolic royal send-off from Istana Negara upon completion of their five-year reign as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong.

Sultan Abdul Halim, an Oxford graduate with a Diploma in Social Science and Public Administration, was born at Istana Anak Bukit in Alor Star to Kedah's Sultan Badlishah Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah and Tunku Sofiah Tunku Mahmud on Nov 28, 1927.

On July 14, 1958, at the age of 31, he ascended the Kedah throne following the death of his father.

His installation as the 28th Sultan of Kedah was held on Feb 20, the following year.

He married Sultanah Bahiyah Tuanku Abdul Rahman, the daughter of the first Agong, in 1956.

The couple was blessed with three daughters – Tunku Soraya, Tunku Sarina and Tunku Intan Safinaz – and, later, five grandchildren.

However, the sultanah, who was much loved like her husband, died of cancer on Aug 26, 2003.

Sultan Abdul Halim later married Haminah Hamidun, who was given the title Che Puan Kedah.

In 2004, she was proclaimed the Sultanah of Kedah.

Sultan Abdul Halim was well known as an avid collector of exotic birds and was passionate about reading, golf and photography.

He was also a great supporter of the state football team.



Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah at his installation as the 5th Yang di-Pertuan Agong in 1970. With him is the first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.

The only king to witness 2 different economic eras

KUALA LUMPUR: Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah ruled as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong over two different economic eras after Merdeka.

He was the oldest among the Malay rulers to be elected as Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

He was also the only ruler who had the privilege to witness two different economic eras under the administration of Malaysia's second prime minister, the late Tun Abdul Razak, and his son, Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

When he was elected the first time in 1970, the country was placed under the administration of the National Operations Council, which resulted in the creation of several important policies, including the New Economic Policy, which aimed to eradicate poverty

and restructure society.

During his second tenure, he had the chance to see the country moving towards achieving the Vision 2020 under Najib's helm.

He was also among the youngest rulers to hold the position when he was appointed as the fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong at the age of 43.

During his installation as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong in 2011, Sultan Abdul Halim recalled the May 13, 1969 incident, which occurred just months before he ascended the throne as the fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong in 1970.

"It was a bitter incident and it should not be allowed to recur."

He also advised the people to strengthen the unity, adding that it could be done by putting the nation's interest first.



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TUANKU ABDUL HALIM

1949

Proclaimed
Raja Muda of Kedah on Aug 6

1955

Tuanku Abdul Halim
joins the Kedah civil
service as Alor Star
district officer

1957

Serves in Kedah
state treasury

Appointed regent of
Kedah when his father,
Sultan Badlishah
Sultan Abdul Hamid, is

2016

Completes five-year
reign as the 14th Yang
di-Pertuan Agong
in December

2012

Formally installed as the
14th Yang di-Pertuan
Agong in April

2011

Takes oath of office as the
14th Yang di-Pertuan
Agong for a second time in
December



abroad from March 12
to July 3

1958

Ascends the Kedah throne
in July after the passing of
Sultan Badlishah Sultan
Abdul Hamid

1959

Installed as 27th sultan of
Kedah on Feb 20

1965

Appointed as fourth Deputy
Yang di-Pertuan Agong
in September where he
served for five years

1970

Elected Yang di-Pertuan
Agong on Jan 21 at the
age of 43, the youngest
ruler to hold the post

Chosen as the 14th Yang
di-Pertuan Agong by the
Malay rulers during a
Meeting of the Conference
of Rulers in October

2008

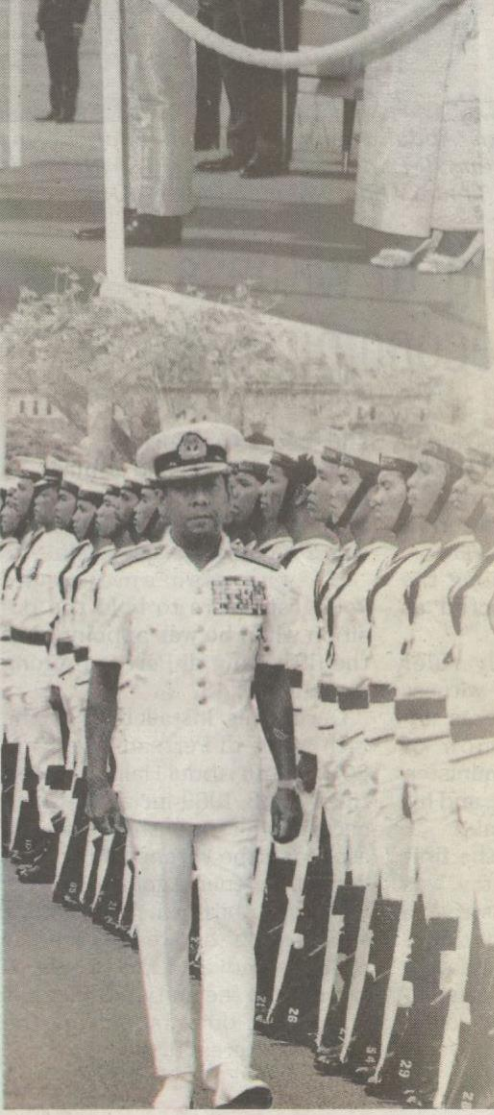
Celebrates 50th year of his
ascension to the throne

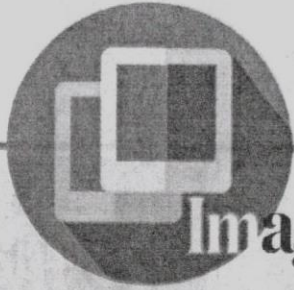
2006

Appointed
13th Deputy
Yang di-
Pertuan
Agong

1983

Celebrated
silver
jubilee on
the 25th
anniversary
of his rule
as sultan of
Kedah





Images



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1. The Kedah royal family in a photograph taken in August 1986, from left: Tunku Sarina, Tunku Intan Safinaz, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, Sultanah Bahiyah and Tunku Soraya. FILE PIC

2. Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Sultanah Bahiyah arriving at the swearing-in ceremony as the fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base in Kuala Lumpur on Sept 21, 1970. FILE PIC

3. The then Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah receiving a speech from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the second session of Parliament, together with Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Aminah, at Parliament on March 10, 2014. PIC BY MOHD YUSNI ARIFFIN

4. Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah being introduced to the New Zealand hockey team after officiating the launch of the third Hockey World Cup at Stadium Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur, on July 2, 1972. FILE PIC

5. Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah shaking hands with tribe leaders in Miri, Sarawak, on June 23, 1972. FILE PIC



BELOVED BY THE PEOPLE

A RULER WITH A COMMONER'S HEART

Late Sultan of Kedah,
who freely mingled with
his subjects, was
loved by the people



SHARANJIT
SINGH



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NEW STRAITS TIMES BH Metro

RIMALU

A cartoon tiger mascot wearing a white and yellow uniform, standing next to a smartphone displaying a selfie.

THERE I was, on the grand stage, face to face with this great man everyone loved, mentally giving my little head a pat.

I glanced a few metres away to my right to see the man I wanted so much to impress, giving his nod of approval.

The son of Tara Singh was being honoured by the Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah himself.

My school, the famous Sekolah Rendah Iskandar, had made all the preparations to greet the Ruler and everyone had been briefed on the protocols involved.

The year was 1979 and the Sultan had obliged to grace my school's year-end prize-giving ceremony, where those who scored 5As in their Standard Five exams were feted.

The exams, which were then known as Ujian Penilaian, not only "determined" your future, but more importantly for us Kedahans, it decided if you were worthy of a place at the prestigious Sultan Abdul Hamid College (SAHC).

"It's 5As... or you can only dream of going to College (as SAHC was commonly known)."

These words had been drummed into me my entire primary school life.

However, I believe the family was more excited that the Sultan was there in person, more than me having aced the exams.

As I set to put my best foot forward in my euphoria, the protocols I was convinced were etched in my memory thanks to the endless rehearsals, chose to suddenly abandon me.

All I remembered was that I had to do something with my hands.

I didn't know why the hall erupted into laughter, and my dad turning blue, as I clasped my hands to my chest and bobbed



Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Tuanku Hajah Haminah waving as they returned to Alor Star after completing his second term as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. FILE PIC

my head. The sense that I must have screwed up quickly crept in.

As I looked up to the King with my hands outstretched, I know that everything was going to be alright. My Tuanku's eyes were sparkling with the kindest look and, at the same time, he wore the most sympathetic look on his face.

Immediately, I was awash with this nothing-else-mattered feeling, when he wished me a bright future ahead and tapped me on my head just to make sure I didn't beat myself up too hard.

That was my first encounter with my Sultan, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah.

Like most who who grew up in Alor Star, Tuanku Abdul Halim to us was an integral part of the people's lives.

The celebrations that were held in conjunction with the Sultan's birthday at the riverfront of Sungai Kedah, and cuts

through the town centre, was an annual affair marked out on the calendar of most households.

Thousands would gather to take part and watch the parades but the highlight, without fail, would be the part when the Sultan, who never failed to join his people, mingle with his subjects.

This would not be the only occasion for the people of Kedah to get up close with their Sultan. Not many outside of Kedah knew that the grounds of Istana Anak Bukit, where he lived, used to be accessible to the people.

Those familiar with the palace grounds those days would remember fondly how they could walk in and out of the grounds with a little more than a salute and handshake.

Years on, I crossed paths with the Sultan again, thanks to the love we share for football and the fact that we were both ardent supporters of the "Sang Kenari" Hijau-Kuning football team.

I had assigned myself to cover the football league games at Stadium Darulaman

and, like the Sultan, I was caught in the traffic snarl.

I decided to abandon my car and was hurrying my steps when I realised that on his foot was the Sultan himself, who was in the exact predicament as I was.

What ensued next was a one-kilometre, highly restrained march to the stadium that he had inadvertently led.

The thought of how much the people of Kedah loved their Sultan immediately struck me.

The same thought struck me again in 2011 when I read how 30,000 people had gathered by the roads leading to the Alor Setar airport to send off, as he assumed for the second time the throne of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Kedahans, along with the rest of the country, mourn the loss of their beloved Sultan, a ruler with the commoner's heart.

Rest in peace, my beloved Sultan.

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Sharanjit Singh, an ex-'College' boy, is a proud, true-blue Kedahan and NST news editor

