

Maizulina was so close

MASTER'S DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION: She died of leukemia five days before convocation

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JUST four more days and Maizulina Zulkeply, 33, would have received her master's degree scroll herself, but due to unforeseen circumstances, her father, Zulkeply Harun, 60, had to accept the scroll on her behalf.

Maizulina was diagnosed with leukemia last month after completing her Master's degree in Communication.

"We noticed that she had started losing her hair and looked pale. We found out about her illness in September and she started going for treatment. She seemed energetic. Even during Hari Raya, she ate normally and spent time with her siblings as usual.

"But, on Oct 18, at 1.25am, she left us. I was holding her in my arms when she died," said Zulkeply at Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) 40th convocation.

The convocation was presided over by Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, who met Maizulina's parents after the ceremony.

Her mother, Maimunah Abd Samad, 59,



Sultan of Selangor **Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah** presenting a master's degree scroll to **Zulkeply Harun**, father of the late Maizulina Zulkeply, at Universiti Putra Malaysia in Serdang, Selangor, yesterday. With them are Maizulina's mother, **Maimunah Abdul Samad** (second from left) and UPM Vice-Chancellor **Datin Dr Aini Ideris** (right). Pic by Rosela Ismail

said on the night when her daughter died, they were talking like it was any other day.

"It was a normal mother-daughter conversation," she said briefly while holding back her tears.

Zulkeply said although the family was sad over her passing, they were proud of Maizulina because she had achieved what she

had always wanted.

"She did say before she died that if she got better, she wanted to pursue her PhD."

Sultan Sharafuddin, in his speech, expressed his happiness over UPM's achievements.

UPM is the 270th best university in the world, according to the QS World University Rankings 2016.

"UPM was recognised by Thompson Reuters as the most innovative university in the country and the third in Southeast Asia.

"The first silver medal for Malaysia in the recent Olympic Games in Rio was also scored by a UPM student. Congratulations to the university for all of its achievements," Sultan Sharafuddin said.