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Uphold our charter, says king

JOHN TIONG

RESPECT LAWS: Ruler urges Malaysians not to undermine peace, harmony

YANG di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah yesterday said he is concerned with the attitude of some quarters in challenging the laws in the country, including the Federal Constitution.

He said their actions could undermine the peace and harmony enjoyed by people in the country.

Although Islam is the official religion of the federation, he said the Constitution also provides freedom for non-Muslims to practise their religious faiths.

"As head of the country, I wish to bring to attention the roles, responsibilities and obligations of all quarters to safeguard the country's peace and harmony.

"The people should always respect and uphold the law," he said when opening Universiti Utara Malaysia's (UUM) 26th convocation here yesterday.

He said it was the responsibility of all Malaysians to uphold the country's laws because that made

them responsible citizens.

"We may not be able to enjoy all the freedom provided in the Constitution if we are not law-abiding citizens."

Noor Aziah Noor walked on stage to receive the Bachelor Degree scroll on behalf of her late husband, Assistant Superintendent Zulkifli Mamat.

The VAT69 commando was one of the eight security personnel killed in the Sulu terrorists' intrusion in Sabah in March.

The Mu'adzam Shah Hall was in total silence when Zulkifli's picture appeared on the giant screen, followed by a narration on his factfile, accompanied by the *Last Post* song to honour his sacrifice for the nation.

Noor Aziah said it was a touching moment when she received the degree in Communications (Honour) scroll on behalf of Zulkifli from the king.

"The moment I held the scroll, I remembered his words when he finally completed his course in February, after having to put his studies on hold for four years.

"He told me to bring my mother-in-law, Khadijah Ismail, 64, to the convocation ceremony.

"I did not sense anything amiss

when he uttered the words back then until I received the scroll on his behalf today (yesterday).

"I realise now that he had a premonition he would not be able to be here today but we are grateful that my husband had fulfilled his promise to his mother that he would complete his studies," she said in tears after the ceremony.

However, Khadijah was not present to accompany Noor Aziah as she was unwell.

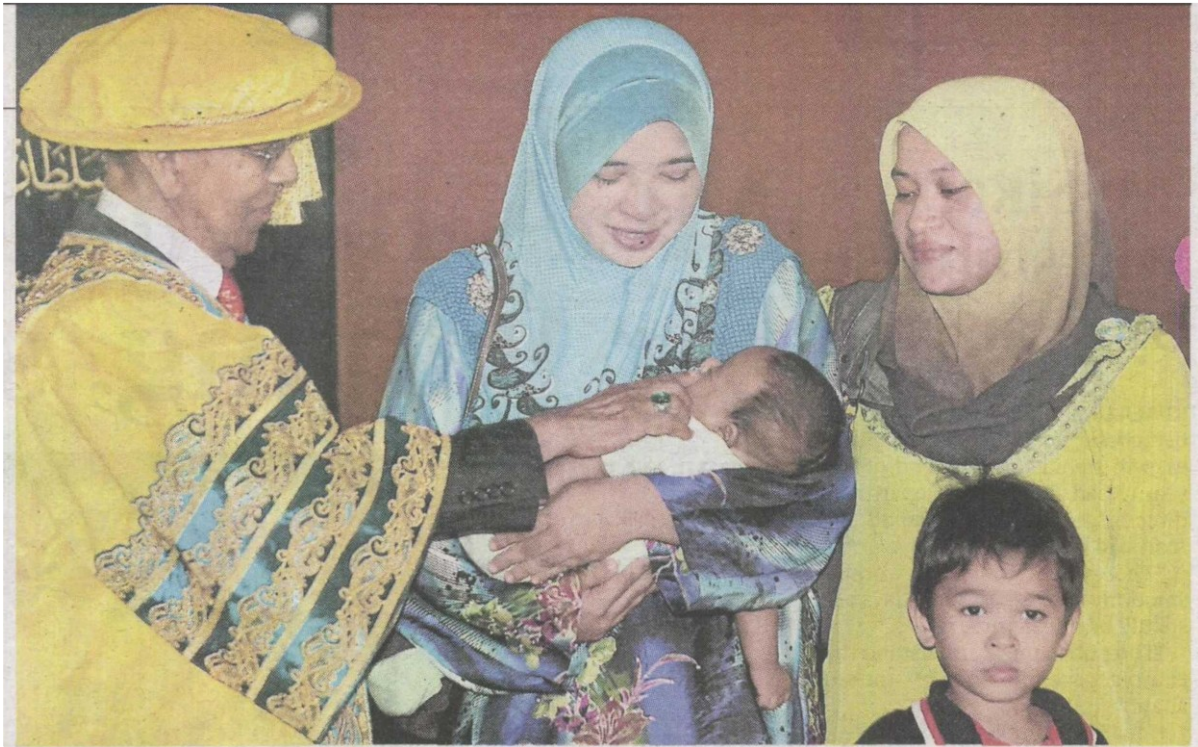
UUM also refunded RM13,000 from Zulkifli's tuition fees to the mother of three and handed over RM20,739 donated by its staff.

Zulkifli was to have been among 7,445 UUM graduates who were receiving their scrolls at the ceremony which will be on for four days.

Pro-Chancellor and former Chief Justice Tun Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim was conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy (Law).

Prominent politicians who received their scrolls included Housing and Local Government Deputy Minister Datuk Halimah Mohamad Sadique, International Trade and Industry Deputy Minister Datuk Hamim Samuri and Tanjung Piai member of parliament Datuk Wee Jeck Seng.

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Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah consoling **Noor Aziah Noor** (centre), who is carrying her youngest son, at UUM's convocation ceremony in Sintok yesterday. Pic by Sharul Hafiz Zam