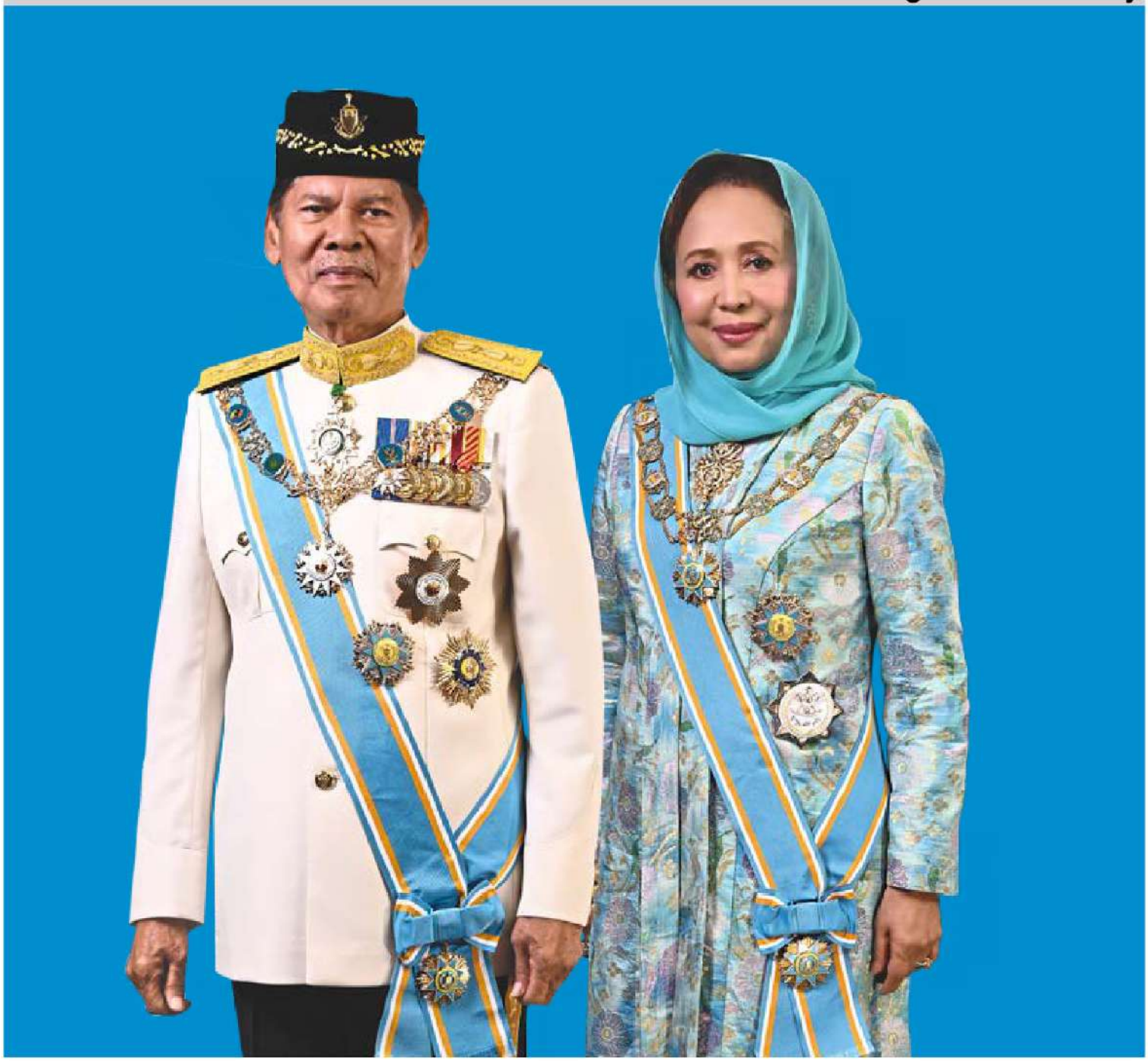
Star Special

THE STAR, SATURDAY 12 JULY 2025

Penang TYT's Birthday



# Driving Penang forward

Yang di-Pertua Negri Tun Ramli Ngah Talib shares his vision for the state's future, championing advancement through AI and innovation while protecting its unique identity and nurturing the well-being of all, particularly its ageing population.

# 'Pursue progress, preserve roots'

## Penang TYT envisions balanced approach to modernise state while safeguarding heritage

PENANG welcomes a new chapter with the appointment of Tun Ramli Ngah Talib as the ninth Yang di-Pertua Negri, effective May 1, 2025.

The former Perak Mentri Besar and Dewan Rakyat speaker took over the reins from Tun Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak, who had held the post since May 1, 2021.

Ramli, 84, brings with him a wealth of experience and notable achievements in both politics and the country's administration.

A man shaped by dedication in public service, his stewardship came at a time when the state is juggling modernity, tradition, sustainability and equity towards the balance it seeks.

With Ramli at the helm, the state will continue to embrace cutting-edge progress while preserving its distinct character.

Ramli, who is celebrating his official birthday today, said his wish for Penang, in an era where change comes in waves, is that the state stays true to its root and remains recognisable to its people.

Ramli (centre) with Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow officiating the Larian MAPPA 2025 at Aspen Vision City in Batu Kawan on June 28.

### No place like Penang

Ramli enthused that Penang holds a special place in his heart, from its enchanting landscapes, the vibrant traditions and cultures living in harmony to its fantastic food and architecture.

He said Penang has blossomed into one of Malaysia's most dynamic and industrious jewels.

"From the graceful stretch of new highways to the rhythm of modern transit weaving through the city's pulse, from the lifeblood of our ports to the heartbeat of our industrial parks, each development stands not merely as a monument to progress, but as a promise.

"A promise that Penang is poised, prepared and proud to embrace the winds of opportunity, the tides of investment and the dawn of innovation," said Ramli.

"As we journey into the future, I hope that everyone will see the Penang2030 Vision not only as ink on parchment but as a living beacon, a compass that guides us toward a future rooted in sustainability and grace.

"Let us inspire the creation of a state where every soul finds comfort, every street breathes safety and every heart beats in harmony with the land it calls home."

Ramli called on Penangites to welcome each wave of change and be ready to grow with the rhythm of progress.

He said the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a tale of tomorrow but the pulse of today. AI is weaving itself into the very fabric of how we live, work and learn.

"In this swiftly turning tide of the digital age, Penang must embrace AI in both economic progress and social renewal. I urge every responsible parties to take the initiatives to empower our youth with the tools of tomorrow and uplift our workforce with new skills so that no one is left behind."

"Yet even as we stride boldly into the future, we must not turn away from the fact that our people are ageing. I hope to see Penang grow into a society rooted in compassion, not only toward oneself but also the greater community.

"I want Penang to be a place where kindness is a common language and caring for one another is the heartbeat of everyday life. To care for our elders is to honour the hands that built the roads we now walk.

"It is to look beyond hospitals and medicine, and to create spaces where age is embraced, not endured. Let us shape cities that welcome every step and weave communities where the golden years are not silent, but celebrated."

He said Penang's strength lay in its unity between the old and young, between heritage and progress and between tradition and technology, as balance is everything.

"In the pursuit of worldly progress, the preservation of our cultural heritage and our identity as Penangites, and as Malaysians, must remain at the heart of our journey.

"I believe that one of the most meaningful ways to safeguard Penang's unique landscape and soul is to celebrate the humble food stalls, the corner sundry shops and the timeworn stores that have long stood as quiet guardians of our collective memory."

### Dedicated leader

Born on March 16, 1941, in Pasir Salak, Perak, Ramli demonstrated his leadership credentials as the eighth Perak Mentri Besar, a position he held for 17 years from 1982 to 1999, making him the longest-serving chief executive of the state.

His birthplace has great historical and personal significance as it was where both his great grandfather Tok Anjang Pelita and his great great grandfather Datuk Sagor alongside Datuk Maharaja Lela and other Malay warriors rebelled against the British occupation in Malaya following the demise of JWW Birch.

Birch, who had been sent to take up the position of the first British Resident in Perak, was assassinated as the result of a conspiracy involving the local chiefs Maharaja Lela and Sepuntum. The British responded with a military intervention during the Perak War.

Ramli's political journey began in 1978 when he was elected Kampung Gajah assemblyman and then appointed a state executive councillor.

After his tenure in the state administration, he went on to the federal level when he was elected as Pasir Salak MP in 2004.

He was Deputy Minister of Transport from 2000 to 2004 and Dewan Rakyat speaker from 2004 to 2008.

In his first term in Parliament, he was entrusted to chair the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), a key parliamentary oversight body.

On April 24, 2025, Ramli was appointed the ninth Yang di-Pertua Negri of Penang. He received the instrument of appointment from His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia, during a presentation ceremony at Istana Negara.

At the ceremony, he was also conferred the Seri Maharaja Mangku Negara (SMN) award which carries the title Tun.

Ramli's appointment was made in accordance with Article 1 of the Penang Constitution for a term of four years, until April 30, 2029. He was sworn in at Dewan Sri Pinang in Penang on May 1.

His leadership within Umno was equally significant, having chaired the Perak Umno liaison committee for 16 years (1984 to 2000) and being member of the party supreme council from 1980 to 2006.

He received his early education from Sekolah Melayu Pasir Salak, Saint Anthony's School and Anglo-Chinese School, both in Teluk Intan, and his tertiary education at the elite Malay College Kuala Kangsar.

Ramli read law at Queen's University, Belfast, before being admitted as barrister at Lincoln's Inn, London.

During his time in the United Kingdom, he was active in the students' union in Belfast and became political secretary and editor of the Kesatuan Melayu United Kingdom magazine.

Upon his return to Malaysia, Ramli embarked on an academic career, becoming a law lecturer at the Mara Institute of Technology (now known as Universiti Teknologi Mara, or UiTM). He also served as a part-time lecturer at the University of Malaya in the early 1970s.

In 1971, he made history as the first in-house legal adviser to the National Electricity Board or NEB (now known as Tenaga Nasional Bhd or TNB).

Demonstrating his entrepreneurial spirit and legal acumen, he went on to qualify as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya and co-founded the law firm Kadir, Tan & Ramli in 1977.

### Notable contributions

His political career aside, Ramli has also authored several books as well as written articles for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association magazine and Pasir Salak Historical Complex.

While still serving as Perak Mentri Besar, he penned the book *Pasir Salak: Sehamparan Sejarah Perjuangan*, which was about the Malay rebellion that took place on Nov 2, 1875, against British rule in Perak.

At the end of 2010, he completed *Meniti Zaman* which described the beautiful and simple but yet challenging rural existence during and after the Japanese occupation.

His next book, *Tuan Yang di-Pertua: Daripada Seorang Budak Kampung Sehingga Menjadi Peneraju Parlimen*, laid out in vivid details the proceedings in Parliament in a manner not done before.

His literary prowess was not limited to writing books as he has also produced various pamphlets and booklets on tourism for Pasir Salak and Perak.

Realising the importance of educating Malaysians on their history, Ramli commissioned the Pasir Salak Historical Complex, consisting of 42 dioramas done in wood depicting all the important events in the history of Malaysia and the Malays in the early 1990s.

He is also responsible for the setting up of the first UiTM branch campus in Perak, the construction of Proton City in Tanjung Malim, the Lumut Port and the development of Meru Raya in Ipoh.

His other notable contributions include the establishment of Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), the development of rural centres and the promotion of industrial pockets.

His most cherished recognition was however for his efforts in the eradication of hardcore poverty in Perak in 1996.

In his younger days, his busy schedule and commitments did not prevent him from pursuing his love for sports such as badminton, football and polo.

He also enjoys trekking and has trekked in Norway, Bhutan and Nepal, and has scaled Gunung Tahan – the highest mountain in Peninsular Malaysia.

The President of the Perak Aero Club since 2007, Ramli also has a pilot licence and likes flying ultra-light planes and small aircraft.

His achievements have not gone unnoticed. He was awarded the title Datuk Seri Maharaja Lela Mangkubumi by a panel of Acheh's customary chiefs for promoting good relations between Acheh and Perak.

He is also a permanent member of the Perak Privy Council and holds the title, Orang Kaya-Kaya Seri Agar Diraja (Datuk Sagor), which he inherited from his great great grandfather.

In 1996, Ramli was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws by the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom for promoting closer relations between Perak and the institution through the joint establishment of the Perak Medical College in Ipoh.

He was also appointed as the Pro-Chancellor of Universiti Malaya in 2014.

He is married to Toh Puan Noora Ashikin Raja Abdullah. The happy couple is blessed with four children.

# Setinggi-Tinggi Tahniah

**TUAN YANG TERUTAMA**
**TUN DATO' SERI UTAMA HAJI RAMLI BIN NGAH TALIB**
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**YANG DI-PERTUA NEGERI OF THE STATE OF PENANG**

ON THE OCCASION OF
**HIS EXCELLENCY'S 84TH BIRTHDAY**

ON
**12TH JULY 2025**

FROM

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Tun Ramli Ngah Talib and his wife Toh Puan Noora Ashikin Raja Abdullah attending the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) 2025 in Langkawi on May 22.

Ramli taking his oath as the ninth Yang di-Pertua Negri on May 1.

Ramli (in blue) waving to residents during a leisure cycling outing in Balik Pulau on July 5.

Ramli is all smiles as he was greeted by children after Friday prayers at Masjid Al-Mustaghfirin in Sungai Tiram on June 27.

*Heartiest Congratulations*

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ON THE OCCASION OF
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ON
**12TH JULY 2025**

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