Star Special

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DAULAT TUANKU

Ruling with wisdom and heart

Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah continues to champion Perak's progress and social harmony as His Royal Highness celebrates his birthday this year.

Royal voice of compassion

THE Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, is well loved and respected by the people. Celebrating his 69th birthday this year, His Royal Highness is a kind Ruler who always has his subjects in mind – whether Perakians or Malaysians as a whole, His Royal Highness always finds time to be close to the people.

Sultan Nazrin inspecting the Royal Army's guard of honour during the Warriors' Day celebration in Ipoh in July. – RONNIE CHIN/The Star

(Above, from left) Sultan Nazrin comforting a relative of one of the UPSI bus accident victims in Ipoh in June. His Royal Highness also offered support to the families of injured FRU personnel during a visit to Teluk Intan Hospital in May. – Photos from the Perak State Secretary Office's Facebook page

(Right) Sultan Nazrin observing a model of UTAR Hospital in Kampar, of which he officiated the opening in February. — RONNIE CHIN/The Star

Connecting with the people

During the month of Ramadan in March this year, Sultan Nazrin visited the Ramadan Bazaar at the Indera Mulia Stadium in Ipoh. Accompanied by Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad, the Perak Ruler spent about 20 minutes interacting with traders and visitors while purchasing a variety of food, including nasi briyani, fried koay teow and apam balik.

Sultan Nazrin also made time to grace the state-level Chinese New Year, Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Deepavali celebrations, which drew thousands of attendees.

As the head of Islam in the state, Sultan Nazrin also attended the state-level Nuzul Al-Quran celebration at the Sultan Azlan Shah Mosque in Ipoh on March 17.

Comforting grieving families

Sultan Nazrin, accompanied by the Raja Permaisuri of Perak, Tuanku Zara Salim, also visited the families of those affected by two road accidents in the state – one involving a Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) truck in May, and the other involving a bus carrying Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) students in June.

Sultan Nazrin visited the injured FRU personnel at Teluk Intan Hospital on May 17, met their families and personally presented contributions to them.

In the May 13 incident, a truck carrying FRU members crashed into a gravel-laden lorry on Jalan Chikus–Sungai Lampam in Teluk Intan as they were returning to their base in Ipoh, killing nine personnel and injured nine others.

Not long after, Their Royal Highnesses extended their compassion once again by visiting the families of the UPSI bus accident victims at Raja Permaisuri Bainun Hospital in Ipoh to offer their condolences.

In the tragedy that occurred early on June 9, a total of 15 lives were lost when the bus, carrying UPSI students, lost control and crashed at KM53 of the East–West Highway in Gerik.

Championing inclusive growth

Sultan Nazrin is widely regarded as an intellectual who is deeply aware of developments within the country and abroad, often offering thoughtful insights in his royal addresses and speeches.

During the 2025 Asean Inclusive Growth Summit in Kuala Lumpur on Oct 24, Sultan Nazrin said regional leaders must ensure that social progress advances in tandem with economic growth.

His Royal Highness noted that a strong economy cannot exist if public welfare is sidelined, citing that nearly 200 million adults still do not have access to banking services in the Asean region, while broadband coverage in rural areas still lags behind urban areas by about 30%.

"The risk is not only of exclusion, but of a widening divide that limits opportunity and weakens our social cohesion.

"A strong economy cannot exist in isolation from the welfare of its people. It is our responsibility to ensure that economic growth translates into tangible social progress – that it serves not just markets or capital owners, but communities," Sultan Nazrin added.

In his keynote address at the International Conference on Cohesive Societies 2025 in Singapore in June, Sultan Nazrin emphasised the importance of adopting four guiding principles – rebuilding trust, prioritising equity, embracing pluralism and fostering bold imagination – to realise a cohesive society.

Sultan Nazrin said these guiding principles are important for navigating the uncharted challenges of today's world, which the 2022 United Nations Human Development Report described as an "uncertainty complex", or a "confluence of destabilising global pressures, sweeping social transformations and deepening political polarisation".

Fostering unity

Sultan Nazrin, who is also the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong, is vocal in urging the people to foster unity, mutual respect and tolerance to maintain stability and peace. His Royal Highness emphasises that these actions are a shared responsibility of the people and their leaders.

"We must remain vigilant, choosing to meet challenges not with hostility or provocation, but with wisdom and a steadfast commitment to peaceful resolution," His Royal Highness said while opening the first meeting of the third year of the 15th Perak State Legislative Assembly in April.

Encouraging moderation and tolerance

During the state-level Maulidur Rasul celebration in September, Sultan Nazrin reminded the people that the spread of slander and hatred, especially on social media, is increasingly causing division within the ummah.

"The ummah seems to have forgotten the counsel of Prophet Muhammad, who forbade mockery, offensive labels, suspicion, gossip, slander and passing judgment without proper inquiry," His Royal Highness said.

Sultan Nazrin said Malaysians must adopt moderation and tolerance to build mutual understanding and respect while respecting boundaries that protect against encroaching on religious and ethnic sensitivities.

"Agreements made in the past must not be taken lightly or called into question, particularly at a time when mutual trust and respect are eroding, fanned by political rhetoric that chooses to exploit issues of race and religion," His Royal Highness added.

Sultan Nazrin also urged that mosques and surau be kept free of individuals spreading deviant teachings. The Perak Ruler noted an alarming trend in which misleading narratives and divisive ideologies are propagated by those assuming the role of religious scholars or clerics.

"Religious talks, sermons and discussions have increasingly become platforms for slander and false statements, often influenced by political biases," the Ruler said during the opening of the Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah Muzakarah on Feb 25.

"Mosques and prayer halls, originally intended to unite the ummah, are increasingly being exploited as arenas for spreading divisive ideologies and falsehoods.

"These transgressions have gone too far and must be addressed. Turning a blind eye to such behaviour is akin to allowing a malignant disease to spread, risking further division within the community."

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Dirgahayu Tuanku

SEMOGA DIRAHMATI DAN DIBERKATI ALLAH

Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Darul Ridzuan
Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah
Ibni
Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah

Sultan, Yang Di-Pertuan dan Raja Pemerintah
Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan

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Champion of education and knowledge

(Left) Sultan Nazrin tossing yee sang with other guests of honour during the state-level Chinese New Year celebration at the Indera Mulia Stadium in Ipoh in February. — Photo from RONNIE CHIN/THE STAR (Right) During the state-level Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house held at the same stadium in March, Sultan Nazrin and Tuanku Zara Salim presented duit raya to orphans and underprivileged children. — Photo from the Perak State Secretary Office's Facebook page

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Strengthen environmental protection through education

Sultan Nazrin is also deeply concerned about the environment and climate change.

When opening the Perak State Assembly in April, the Ruler called for stricter measures to improve plastic waste management in the country.

His Royal Highness noted that Malaysia, though relatively small, ranks among the top five countries globally for mismanaging plastic waste.

"Public awareness and education on sustainability initiatives are crucial, and greater emphasis must be placed on expanding these efforts.

"Education-based approaches are widely regarded as more effective in shaping long-term attitudes, and thus must be strengthened and broadened.

"Youth, students, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, as well as places of worship such as mosques, suraus, churches and temples, are strongly encouraged to take the lead in fulfilling this shared social responsibility to champion environmental sustainability," His Royal Highness added.

Sultan Nazrin also reminded the people that they are guardians of the Earth and should not politicise issues related to climate change.

"As the famous hadith says, 'The earth is green and beautiful, and God has appointed you His guardians over it.'

"We have a God-given responsibility to protect the planet and everything on it, for now and for the future – a duty to keep the Earth 'green and beautiful' for generations to come," Sultan Nazrin added.

While delivering a special address at the 16th Roundtable of the Securities Commission Malaysia and the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in Kuala Lumpur in September, Sultan Nazrin said the challenges of climate change demand bold, collective and innovative solutions.

Events and launches

Sultan Nazrin has also graced many other events and launched buildings and infrastructures throughout 2025. These include the opening of the Inland Revenue Board's Menara Hasil building in Teluk Intan, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Hospital in Kampar, Masjid Tuminah Hamidi in Bagan Datuk, the Sultan Muzzaffar Shah Bridge at Dataran Manong and the Solar Arch open air hall at UPSI in Tanjung Malim.

Among the functions Sultan Nazrin attended was the state-level Warriors' Day celebration in Ipoh, which included a pantomime tribute to the FRU crash victims.

Sultan Nazrin, who is Universiti Malaya chancellor, attended the UM-National University of Singapore (NUS) joint academic precision health symposium held in Ipoh on Aug 26.

The event was also attended by Singapore President and NUS chancellor Tharman Shanmugaratnam. Sultan Nazrin hosted a royal dinner in honour of Tharman and the NUS delegation at Istana Iskandariah in Kuala Kangsar.

Born on Nov 27, 1956, in George Town, Penang, to the late Sultan Azlan Shah and former Raja Permaisuri Tuanku Bainun, Sultan Nazrin is the eldest of five children.

His Royal Highness received his education at Sekolah Rendah Jalan Kuantan and St John's Institution in Kuala Lumpur.

Sultan Nazrin also studied at the Malay College Kuala Kangsar and later at Oxford University, attaining a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics.

The Ruler also holds a Master's in Public Administration and a PhD in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University.

His Royal Highness ascended the throne as the 35th Perak Sultan on May 29, 2014, following his father's passing.

Sultan Nazrin married Raja Permaisuri Tuanku Zara Salim on May 17, 2007. The royal couple have two children, Raja Azlan Muzzaffar Shah and Raja Nazira Safya Shah.

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