

# Humble and approachable Ruler



Tuanku Muhriz receiving a speech text from Aminuddin at a sitting of the state legislative assembly.

ASK anyone who has personally encountered Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan Tuanku Muhriz to describe the Ruler, and the first words you will hear are "humble", "approachable" and "down to earth".

These qualities are what Negri folk admire most about their beloved Ruler, who is often ready to roll up his sleeves and join the rakyat, whether to stir a wok of dakul at a community event or pick up trash during the clean-up of a local market.

Tuanku Muhriz, who celebrates his 74th birthday today, is also widely respected in the legal fraternity as someone who champions justice for all.

This passion for the rule of law goes back to the Ruler's days as a law student at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth (now called Aberystwyth University).

Graduating with an LLB (Hons) in 1970, Tuanku Muhriz may have gone on to carve an illustrious career in the corporate world, but the law has always been dear to his heart.

Speaking at the opening of the Tuanku Ja'afar Law Conference and Workshop 2021 organised by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in December, the Ruler drove home the importance of natural justice and the principles of fair play.

Touching on the theme of the conference, "Access to Justice: Substantive and Procedural Issues", Tuanku Muhriz stressed on the importance of upholding human rights.

"Everyone has a right to seek remedy by equal access to the laws of the country and the right to be judged fairly without fear or favour," the Ruler said.

"This right must be available to anyone regardless of his or her social status, political, religious or ethnic background."

Despite being soft-spoken, the Ruler does not mince words when it comes to duty and service.

"Equally, the government has the duty to enforce the laws of the country against perpetrators who infringe on the rights or safety of others, as well as against those who damage the nation itself by their actions whether by physical means or by misappropriation of the country's assets."

"The task of achieving the

correct balance of competing claims between legal protagonists and protecting society is incumbent upon lawmakers, the legal fraternity and ultimately the judiciary," Tuanku Muhriz said before launching the conference.

The Ruler is also always prepared to lend his support to community causes.

When a mobile vaccination centre was set up by Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz UKM (named in the royal's honour) in the royal town of Seri Menanti to ensure that those in rural communities would not miss out on their Covid-19 vaccinations, the Ruler and his two princes visited the site to encourage locals to participate in the effort.

In Negri Sembilan, the efforts of frontliners in the battle against Covid-19 did not go unnoticed by the Ruler too.

When opening the Negri Sembilan state Legislative Assembly sitting last September, Tuanku Muhriz made special mention of the "extraordinary individuals" who worked tirelessly on the front lines and behind the scenes to fight the pandemic.

While expressing his gratitude to all those involved for their commitment and dedication in the fight, the Ruler reiterated that it was a united front that helped the state move quickly into Phase Three of the National Recovery Plan.

The welfare of his subjects is always a main concern for the Ruler. When Covid-19 struck, many folks lost their incomes and were unable to put food on the table.

Tuanku Muhriz said that to ease the plight of those most affected, the state government had allocated RM30m to fund initiatives that included handing out food baskets to needy families and individuals, purchasing oxygen tanks for hospitals and making contributions to the next of kin of Covid-19 victims.

The state government also exempted stall owners from paying rent for four months to relieve the burden of small business owners.

Three months' rent and leasing fees were also waived for 3,395 housing units under the state government's public housing project and the People's Housing Project.

One-off cash contributions were also channelled to heads of households who had lost their incomes due to the pandemic.



Tuanku Muhriz, accompanied by Aminuddin (centre), meeting state assemblymen outside Wisma Negri.



Tuanku Muhriz being greeted by Aminuddin (left) upon the state Ruler's arrival to open the state legislative assembly sitting.



Istana Besar Seri Menanti in Kuala Pilah is the official residence of the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan.

The Ruler also urged everyone to practise the new norms to break the chain of infection and lighten the load placed on frontliners.

Besides observing standard operating procedures set by the Health Ministry, Tuanku Muhriz said the new normal would include greater access to digital services for both urban and rural communities.

The Ruler expressed his confidence in the implementation of Gerbang Digital Negri Sembilan, which will provide digitalised services in various fields including the economy, education, business, entrepreneurship, agriculture and tourism.

"Because of the pandemic, we've had to face situations that had

never before crossed our minds.

"Let this serve as a lesson for us to always be prepared and united in facing any challenge that comes our way," he said, calling for concerted efforts by community and religious leaders as well as NGOs to be stepped up to break the chain of infection.

Stressing that the fight against the virus was far from over, Tuanku Muhriz asked for continued commitment from assemblymen and community leaders to ensure that no member of society was left unaided or unattended.

The Ruler, who expressed his gratitude to Menti Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun and the state government for ensuring

that all state development efforts remained on the right track, also advised assemblymen to set aside personal interests and work together with integrity and accountability towards achieving common goals and to honour the trust placed in them by the rakyat.

"Those in positions of authority should reflect on their actions and carry out the duties accorded to them for the benefit of the rakyat."

"Mutual understanding and cooperation will ensure that all public services are delivered in a more efficient and effective manner," he said, urging assemblymen to serve with sincerity to realise common objectives for the benefit of the rakyat.