

DPM launches Usim chair

ACADEMIA: 'Tuan Guru Mohd Yassin Muhammad chair can conduct studies on nation's leaders'

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THE status of Islam as the religion of the federation and the freedom accorded to other religions to be practised in peace and harmony is the perfect balance for a multireligious and multicultural country like Malaysia.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said yesterday, after the launch of the Tuan Guru Mohd Yassin Muhammad Islamic leadership chair at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (Usim), that the foundations laid by the country's forefathers enabled Malaysia to become a model Islamic country that was democratic, stable and progressive.

He said non-Muslims could set up and manage any place of worship or religious institution in the country as "conflicts between religions leading to bloody confrontations does not happen here".

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said academicians should study the country's leadership style over the decades to record the nation's development into a modern Islamic nation.

"The Tuan Guru Mohd Yassin Muhammad chair could become the pioneer for comprehensive academic studies on the characteristics and values of contemporary Islamic leadership that relates to



Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (third from left) witnessing the handing over of a mock cheque for RM500,000 by a member of the Nurul Yaqeen Foundation's board of trustees, Datuk Dr Ismail Ibrahim (left) to Usim vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Musa Ahmad. With them is Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan (second from right). Pic by Iqmal Haqim Rosman

the demands of today's modern society," he said.

Islamic leadership, Muhyiddin said, does not only cover the spiritual aspects but also the nation's and its people's progress in economic and social development, education, science and technology.

In thanking Usim for setting up the academic chair named after his late father, Muhyiddin said: "The establishment of this chair is in line with our aim to raise the standing of the Muslim community in the world."

The chair was set up to embody the leadership qualities of Tuan Guru Mohd Yassin, who was progressive, proactive and champi-

oned the interests of the Malay agenda and Islamic development, particularly through education and administration.

"The government supports this initiative and I call on all academicians to conduct significant research through this chair."

The chair was established in collaboration with the Nurul Yaqeen Foundation, of which he is chairman. Placed under Usim's faculty of leadership and management, it will receive RM500,000 each year.

Former Universiti Sains Malaysia vice-chancellor Professor Tan Sri Dzulkipli Abdul Razak was appointed the first holder of the chair in August.

Dzulkipli is the president of the Paris-based International Association of Universities, a Malaysian Academy of Sciences fellow, and a member of the World Academy of Art and Sciences Management.

His columns have appeared regularly in the *New Straits Times* since 1995, focusing on issues related to education, science and current affairs.

Later, Muhyiddin witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Nurul Yaqeen Foundation and Usim on the establishment of the chair.

Present was Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.