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Aug 5, 1957: Picture taken before the signing of the Federation of Malaya 1957 agreement. Seated, third from left are: The Regent of Johor, the Sultan of Perak, the Raja of Perlis, the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan (Yang di-Pertuan Agong-elect), the Sultan of Kedah, Sultan Badlishah, the High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray, the Sultan of Pahang, the Sultan of Selangor, the Sultan of Kelantan and the Sultan of Terengganu. Standing, between Sultan Badlishah and Sir Donald, is Tuanku Abdul Halim.

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Long live the King

Today is the 85th birthday of the Sultan of Kedah, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah. **Laveda Charles** digs into NST archives

THE Sultanate of Kedah is said to be one of the oldest monarchies in the world, and Kedah Darul Aman one of the oldest states in Malaysia.

Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah was installed as the 27th Sultan of Kedah in 1959. He is also the first Sultan to be installed as King twice, 1970-1975 and 2011-present.

Going back 1,200 years, the first ruler of Langkasuka (and later Kadaram, as Kedah was then known) was said to be named Merong Mahawangsa. The ninth ruler, Phra Ong Mahawangsa, converted to Islam in 1136 and took the name Sultan Mudzafar Shah.

Tuanku Abdul Halim was born on Nov 28, 1927 at Istana Anak Bukit near Alor Setar to Sultan Badlishah

and Tunku Sofiah Tunku Mahmud. He received his early education at Alor Merah and Titi Gajah Malay schools and later at Sultan Abdul Hamid College in Alor Setar. He went on to Wadham College, Oxford to take a Diploma in Social Science and Public Administration.

He married Tuanku Bahiyah, daughter of Tuanku Abdul Rahman of Negri Sembilan, in 1956. They have three daughters — Tunku Soraya, Tunku Sarina and Tunku Intan Safinaz — and five grandchildren. The Sultanah passed away in 2003.

Tuanku Abdul Halim married Cik Haminah Hamidun, who was given the title Che Puan Kedah. In 2004, Che Puan Kedah was proclaimed the Sultanah of Kedah.



Aug 5, 1957: The Sultan of Kedah, Sultan Badlishah (right) watches while the British High Commissioner, Sir Donald MacGillivray signs the Federation of Malaya Agreement in Kuala Lumpur. Tuanku Abdul Halim became Sultan of Kedah in 1959.



Sept 5, 1963: Tuanku Abdul Halim (left) arriving to declare open the new \$405,000 airstrip at Pulau Langkawi, Kedah. He is accompanied by the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman (second from left) who is his uncle. Works, Posts and Telecommunications Minister Datuk V.T. Sambanthan is third from left and the Transport Minister Datuk Sardon Jubir is fourth from left.