

Biography of Sultan Muhammad Shah II as the 12th Sultan of Terengganu

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Abstract

This study emphasizes the biography of Sultan Muhammad Shah II as the 12th Sultan of Terengganu. Sultan Muhammad Shah II assumed the leadership of Terengganu in November 1918 after the passing of his father, Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III, until May 1920. From an early age, Tengku Muhammad was nominated as Tengku Kekik Muda and was subsequently elected as Raja Muda or Yang Dipertuan Muda. When he was 30 years old, Your Highness was assigned as the 12th sultan of Terengganu. Having a good biography and personality convinces that the government that stands conducted will also be good. These refute the British claim that Sultan Muhammad Shah II was a frightened leader and did not have high supervision power. Therefore, to unravel the biography of Sultan Muhammad Shah II, the acquisition of data is focused on primary sources such as documents and manuscripts from the British Adviser of Terengganu, the Secretary of the Government of Terengganu, the Office of the Sultan of Istana Badariah, and the Office of the Chief Minister. In addition to the primary sources, secondary sources such as journals and books are being used to strengthen the research findings obtained from the National Archives of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, and Terengganu branches. In addition, data was also obtained from the Terengganu State Museum and Terengganu State Public Library. This source proves that Sultan Muhammad Shah II, in his youth, had a high attitude and went on to serve as an authoritarian and responsible leader.

Keywords: Sultan Muhammad Shah, Biography, Terengganu

Introduction

The state of Terengganu is peaceful and peaceable. In terms of the sultanate administration, Terengganu had 13 very authoritative sultans before the Second World War. The first sultan

to govern the state of Terengganu was Sultan Zainal Abidin I, followed by the second sultan; Sultan Mansur Shah I. Sultan Zainal Abidin II was the third sultan. Next, Sultan Ahmad Syah I, Sultan Abdul Rahman, Sultan Daud, Sultan Mansur II, Sultan Muhammad I, Sultan Omar, Sultan Ahmad Syah II, and then Sultan Zainal Abidin III, who is the 11th sultan. While Sultan Muhammad Syah II was the 12th sultan of Terengganu, and Sultan Sulaiman Badrul Alam Syah was the 13th Sultan. Islam has a solid foundation in the state of Terengganu with the emergence of many famous Terengganu scholars. The sultan who governs the state of Terengganu is always deliberating with scholars, such as advisors and teachers, to the sultan of Terengganu. Likewise, with Sultan Muhammad Syah II, His Majesty's closeness with scholars is very evident in the characteristics possessed by His Majesty. At the age of six years old, his father, Sultan Zainal Abidin, appointed him as Tengku Kechik Muda and then Raja Muda or Yam Dipertuan Muda. When he was 20 years old, he was appointed as acting Sultan to take over the throne and rule the state of Terengganu. This describes that His Majesty's personality and leadership were evident from an early age. At the age of 30, His Majesty was installed as the 12th sultan of Terengganu after the death of his father, Sultan Zainal Abidin III.

The coronation of Tengku Muhammad as sultan of Terengganu was not chosen by the British. Sultan Muhammad Syah II was called a religious maniac by British officials because he was a sultan with strong religious notions and had a close relationship with the scholars in Terengganu (Mahmud, 2012). Sultan Muhammad Syah II's closeness with scholars was proven when Sultan Muhammad Syah II studied with a religious teacher known as Mualim Haji Musa. Sultan Muhammad Syah II loved and admired Haji Musa because of his knowledge. This is explained in the form of a poem that reads: *"Di dalam Seramai Alim Perkasa, Seorang Dikasihi Mahkota Desa, Gurunya Tua lagi Berjasa, Dipanggil Orang Nama Haji Musa."* This shows that even though Tok Ku Paloh had died, Sultan Muhammad Syah II continued to communicate with a scholar known as Haji Musa to study religious knowledge. The religious knowledge ceremony was held at the palace and attended by Sultan Muhammad Syah II and his wives and children, who also studied with Haji Musa. There is a poem written about a knowledge meeting attended by Sultan Muhammad Syah II that reads: *"Sangat dikasih muda bestari, ditanggung semua anak isteri, menuntutlah dia setiap hari, menjadilah ia seorang qari."* The religious obedience possessed by Sultan Muhammad Syah II is also described in a poem that reads: *"Mengerija sembahyang tiap-tiap waktu, mengaji kitab paduka ratu, anak isteri sama di situ, hamba sahaya semua begitu"* (Hashim, 1991).

Biography of Sultan Muhammad Shah II

Sultan Muhammad Shah II was crowned on 1 Ramadhan 1306 Hijrah corresponding to 1 May 1889 AD. He was born on Thursday at 7.00 pm in Kuala Terengganu. The mother of Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a commoner named Cik Khalthum binti Haji Daud. (Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA, 1985). Cik Khalthum binti Haji Daud comes from Pulau Duyong and is known as Cik Istana. (Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA), 1992). Grandmother of Sultan Muhammad Syah II, who is the mother of Sultan Zainal Abidin III is Tengku Khalthum binti Sultan Muhammad Muazzam Shah (1832-1841) from the relatives of the Daik sultanate who reigned in Riau-Lingga (Harun, 2017). The birth of Sultan Muhammad Syah II was celebrated with 16 cannon shots. On 3 Ramadhan 1306, corresponding to 3 May 1889 AD, two days after His Majesty's birth, the ritual of planting tembuni was held and accompanied by 16 cannon shots. When Sultan Muhammad Syah II was three years old, the mane-dressing

ceremony was also conducted with 16 cannon shots. When the tradition of trampling the ground was carried out, two cannons were carried to the cemetery of Tok Ku Tuan Besar (real name Sayid Muhammad Zainal Abidin Al Idrus, who is the father of Engku Sayid Paloh; Sayid Abdul Rahman) in Chabang Tiga, Kuala Terengganu, followed by 16 cannon shots fired (MISBAHA, 1985).

Sultan Muhammad Syah II is the eldest son of Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III from his marriage to Cik Khalthum bin Haji Daud. As the eldest son, of course the noble personality traits owned by Sultan Muhammad Shah II were inherited from his father Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III. The two sisters of Sultan Muhammad Syah II are Tengku Ngah Aishah and Tengku Nik Maimunah (Haji Muhammad Saleh bin Haji Awang (Misbaha, 1992). The siblings of Sultan Muhammad Syah II are recorded by Tengku Dalam Khalthum in Zainal Abidin's Tawarikh Poems as it reads: *putera yang tua masanya ada, Tengku 'Ah Aisyah dipanggil ayahanda, Cik Kalthum namanya bonda, tiga saudara usul yang syahda* (Hashim, 1991). Similarly, the poem about Tengku Nik Maimunah reads: *puteri kedua pada cetera, Tengku Nik Maimunah dipanggil betara, Wajahnya manis tiada terkira, Serta pandai kira bencana* . While the poem that describes Sultan Muhammad Syah II is as follows: *Putera ketiga ku dengar khabari, Tengku Muhammad dipanggil mahkota negeri, Terlebih elok muda bestari, Daripada kedua kekanda puteri*. The birth of Sultan Muhammad Shah II pleased Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III as described in a poem that reads: *Tersangat suka hati ayahandanya, Oleh menilik paras puteranya, Tiada banding pada masanya, Putera sultan sangat patutnya*. Based on this poem, the level of looks and good looks possessed by Sultan Muhammad Syah II is unmatched. This is also proven as a poem written by Tengku Dalam Khalthum: *Pada masanya kuberi terang, Puteranya cantik bukan sebarang, Padanya tidak suatu yang kurang, Laksana maknikam sudah dikarang* (Hashim, 1991)

Picture 1

Sultan Muhammad Syah II with his father Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III:



Sources: Muzeum Terengganu

During his lifetime, Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a serious and strict person in all matters, especially religious affairs. The firmness possessed by Sultan Muhammad Shah II is a characteristic inherited from his father, Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III. Furthermore, his

father, Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III, placed great emphasis on the upbringing and religious education of Sultan Muhammad Shah II. According to MISBAHA, one of Sultan Muhammad Syah II's favourite things was listening to melodious voices, such as reciting the Quran, zikr, and music (Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA, 1985).

Picture 2

Sultan Muhammad Syah II when he turned 20 in July 1909



Sources: Muzeum Terengganu

The personality possessed by Sultan Muhammad Syah II is the result of a process of traditional upbringing and Islamic education received by His Majesty in the realm of palace life in the state of Terengganu. Since childhood, Sultan Muhammad Syah II was brought up with religious education in addition to worldly knowledge. This is because his father, Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III, was genuinely concerned about religion in family life, and his orders were obeyed by all his people. It is clear that during the reign of Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III in Terengganu, it was rare to find his people who had not finished studying the Quran when they reached their age. Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III's tendency and interest in studying religion encouraged His Majesty to form a family and, subsequently, a state based on Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah (Haji Muhammad Saleh bin Haji Awang (Misbaha, 1992).

Appointment as Young King or Yang Dipertuan Muda

During the reign of Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III, His Majesty appointed his son Tengku Muhammad (Sultan Muhammad Syah II) as Raja Muda or Yang Dipertuan Muda. This appointment was reported in the form of a poem by Tengku Dalam Kalthum which reads: *Digelar oleh mahkota negeri, Yang Dipertuan Muda nama diberi, lalah bakal merintah askari, Menjadi ganti ayahandanya sendiri.* While Tengku Sulaiman was appointed as Young Tengku (Embong, 2012). Based on the writings of Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (1992), in the monograph of the Terengganu State Museum Board, the appointment of Tengku Muhammad as Yang Dipertuan Muda and the title of Tengku Kechik Muda in 1895 when Tengku Muhammad was six years old (Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA, 1992). This is proven through Zainal Abidin's Tawarikh poem which reads: *Kerana sangat kasih baginda, Kepada seri paduka anakanda, Daripada kecil diangkat baginda, Nama dipanggil Tengku Kechik Muda.* When His Highness Tengku Muhammad was 14 years old, there was a poem that described him as follows: *Apabila umur sudah sempurna, Empat belas tahun pada rencana, Diangkat pula oleh sultan, Akan anakanda sifat mengerna* (Hashim, 1991).

The tremendous role entrusted to Tengku Muhammad as Yang Dipertuan Muda in 1913 was appointed as the acting Government of Terengganu. This nomination was given because the Sultan of Terengganu at that time, Sultan Zainal Abidin III, was about to depart for Mecca to accomplish the obligatory Hajj in October 1913. Sultan Zainal Abidin III's journey to Mecca by boarding a ship from the port of Singapore was escorted by 15 escorts consisting of several family members, courtiers, and dignitaries. As long as Sultan Zainal Abidin III was in Mecca, the throne of the Terengganu kingdom was fully occupied by Yang Dipertuan Muda Tengku Muhammad. Tengku Muhammad was given absolute authority to manage the administration of the Terengganu state government. This act of authority was notified to Sir Arthur Young, the Governor of the Straits Settlements and high commissioner to the Federated Malay States (NNMB), on 31 March 1913. This administration must be accomplished with the authority of the Government Meeting. When assuming the throne, Tengku Muhammad dismissed two police officers in Terengganu by giving a notice on 21 May 1913 to Haji Awang, a mine operator who did not comply with the rules set by the Terengganu government (Embong, 2012).

Indeed, anti-British feelings influenced Yang Dipertuan Muda Tengku Muhammad as long as Tengku Muhammad held the position of Regent. Yang Dipertuan Muda Tengku Muhammad also turned his back on the British Agent in state administration affairs. This caused Sir Arthur Young's displeasure with Tengku Muhammad. Sir Arthur Young has sent a letter for Tengku Muhammad to come to Singapore to discuss this matter (Embong, 2012). This invitation was made through Sultan Zainal Abidin III, who had re-occupied the throne of the Terengganu kingdom after returning from Mecca. Sultan Zainal Abidin III confessed that he would send Tengku Muhammad with J.L Humphreys to Singapore. In a meeting in Singapore, Tengku Muhammad acknowledged that he would attend the Government meeting and resolve this matter.

However, Tengku Muhammad was seen as a strict person in administration and did not follow British orders (Ghazali, 2012). In addition, when Tengku Muhammad was appointed as Sultan's Regent, His Majesty also received letters of appeal from the common people, including letters from Lim Chu Tong, Bee Seem, Othman bin Idris, Mek Kim Hwa, and Cik Tong's children. Among others are letters from Cik Abdullah bin Daub, Haji Ali bin Ahmad, Tuan Saiyed Abu Bakar bin Saiyed Zin, Encik Salim bin Jumat and a letter from Tengku Ngah bin Tengku Abdul Rahman (Muhammad Salleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA, 1992).

While in terms of administration, Sultan Zainal Abidin III divided the state area of the Terengganu and handed it over to his close heirs and government officials. The distribution to the close heirs is an effort to guarantee a stable political position in the state and prevent power struggles between heirs and government officials. At that time, Yang Dipertuan Muda Tengku Muhammad was in charge of the Marang River area, handing over the river and surrounding areas to dignitaries and royal relatives to guarantee administration, tax collection, and revenue. Despite this, the penghulu-penghulu are still maintained but only in power in certain villages. The system introduced by Sultan Zainal Abidin III continued until the reign of Sultan Muhammad Shah II.

Appointment as the 12th Sultan of Terengganu

In terms of the personality of Sultan Muhammad Syah II in the administration of the state of Terengganu, His Majesty is a sultan who always preserves the lives of the people through a systematic and people-oriented government by improving the teachings and practices of Islamic law. Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a sultan who tried to defend the integrity of the system of government of the Malay kings, build harmony, and relationships with dignitaries, scholars, and the people, significantly to fortify the intervention of the British in the administration of the state of Terengganu. Sultan Muhammad Syah II is a sultan who values the customs and traditions of the kings and people of Terengganu in the past. Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a sultan who continued the legacy of his father's administration by eliminating customs and community practices that conflicted with Islamic teachings, such as gambling, enmity, slavery, and evil things. The culture of love of knowledge remains in the life of a sultan by emphasizing religion in the family and common people. It is clear that Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a sultan who was educated with vital religious teachings from childhood until the end of His Majesty's life. The customs and traditions of the legacy of the Malay sultanate were also strengthened so that the identity and cultural values of Malay-Muslim life in Terengganu at that time could be maintained (Harun, 2017).

Based on manuscripts or correspondence obtained, various information related to the personality of Sultan Muhammad Syah II in the administration of the state of Terengganu. This includes things related to family background, life as a teenager, education, training, character, thinking, and then the contribution to the progress of the state of Terengganu. Among them is a collection of files from Istana Badariah from 1918 to 1920, the poetry of Tengku Dalam Khalthum binti Tengku Wok Khazaki, and also the Terengganu State Annual Report.

The life history of Sultan Muhammad Syah II has not been written much by scholars, nor has it become research material for scholars, which is the reason it is hard to find papers related to the biography and leadership of Sultan Muhammad Syah II. What was seen and written was only the history pertaining to his descent from the throne and also the British-Terengganu agreement of 1919, while Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a very meritorious leader in defending the state of Terengganu from any foreign power. His Majesty's short reign did not prevent him from advancing the community and the state of Terengganu (Ghazali, 2012). Sultan Muhammad Syah II's reign of fewer than two years is not an obstacle for the historians of the Terengganu sultanate to crown Sultan Muhammad Syah II as the great leader of his time. In this brief period, there were many challenges faced by Sultan Muhammad Syah II in defending the sovereignty of the state of Terengganu so that the people could live in peace and harmony. However, the various contributions that have been made by Sultan Muhammad Syah II in ensuring that the community and the state of Terengganu are in peace and tranquillity, whether politically, economically, or socially (Sutherland, 1978).

During the coronation of Tengku Muhammad, the Deputy Menteri Besar, Haji Ngah Muhammad Yusof, read the credentials to Yang Dipertuan Muda Muhammad as the new sultan. A total of 17 cannon shots were fired. Immediately after the coronation ceremony, the body of Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III was brought to the Royal Tomb in Masjid Abidin, Kuala Terengganu, to be buried. The coronation of Sultan Muhammad Syah II is in accordance with the customs of the Malay Kings of Terengganu and the Laws of the

Terengganu State Government. Tengku Muhammad is the eldest son of Sultan Zainal Abidin III and the 12th sultan of Terengganu. He was installed as sultan of Terengganu when he was 30 years old. The coronation of Tengku Muhammad as sultan of Terengganu with the title of Sultan Muhammad Syah II (Sulaiman, 2019)

The noble personality of Sultan Muhammad Syah II was very evident when His Majesty's birthday arrived; in addition to holding a banquet for the royal family, His Majesty also held banquet and alms for the poor and members of the mosque. Studying at the tomb of Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III was also held. This is proven as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1

Expenses for the birthday of Sultan Muhammad Syah II

BIL	EXPENSES	TOTAL/\$
1	Dinner party in the Palace	150
2	A feast for relatives of the state, citizens, and wealthy man	350
3	A feast for poor people, and the mosque	200
4	A charity for the needy and payment for reciting at the tomb of the late Sultan Zainal Abidin III	100
TOTAL		800

Table 1 shows the expenditure used in conjunction with the birthday of Sultan Muhammad Shah II. The total cost is \$800. Of that amount, as much as \$350 was spent on banquets for state relatives, the general public, and the wealthy. While \$200 for a feast for the poor and the mosque. A total of \$150 was spent on an evening banquet at the palace. Almsgiving to the poor in conjunction with His Majesty's birthday and payment for reciting at his father's tomb, Al Marhum Sultan Zainal Abidin III spent \$100. This explains that Sultan Muhammad Syah II was a sultan with strong religious beliefs and ran the administration of the state of Terengganu systematically so that his people lived in peace and harmony (S.T. 99/1338).

Conclusion

After holding the reins of the government of Terengganu, Sultan Muhammad Shah II continued his life by migrating and settling in Mecca, Egypt, and Singapore. His Majesty then returned to live at Istana Gong Kapas, Kuala Terengganu. His Majesty finally passed away in 1956. Sultan Muhammad Syah II died at 11.00 am on Wednesday, 1 Ramadhan 1375, corresponding to 11 April 1956, at Istana Gong Kapas, Kuala Terengganu, when he was 67 years old. He was buried under the dome of the Abidin Mosque in Kuala Terengganu. Al Marhum Sultan Muhammad Syah II left three wives, the first being Hajah Tengku Ngah Aishah binti Al Marhum Sultan Abdul Rahman Riau. The second wife, Hajah Maimunah binti Embong, and the third wife, Hajah Kalsum binti Mohd Amin (left one son and two daughters. Al Marhum Sultan Muhammad Syah II is known as King of the Land.

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