

1,109 officers to be commissioned

By Rizalman Hammim

A TOTAL of 1,109 officers from Pasukan Latihan Pegawai Simpanan or Reserve Officer Training Unit (Palapes) from 14 public universities will receive their commissions at the 30th Royal Commissioning ceremony hosted by Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) in Batu Pahat, tomorrow.

The officers, who are from the three branches of the armed forces, will receive their commissions from the Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Ismail who is representing the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin.

Army field commander Lt-Gen Datuk Seri Ahmad Hasbullah Mohd Nawawi said the commissioning was the culmination of the officers' three years of training in Palapes, during an inspection of the preparations for the ceremony.

"It is a source of pride for us to see these officers receive their commissions because, despite having to divide their time between studies and other activities, they are still committed to join Palapes," said Hasbullah.

Hasbullah hoped the officers would use the knowledge they had gained from their

training to guide them in their future careers.

Also present were army commander of training Major-General Datuk Abdul Rahim Mohd Yusuff and UTHM deputy vice-chancellor Prof Dr Abdul Aziz Abdul Samad.

Aziz said there were significant differences in the students enrolled in Palapes.

"We find students who are also Palapes officers to be highly disciplined. They are always impeccably dressed according to university rules. Academically, they also perform well with some graduating with first or second class upper degrees," he said.

Hasbullah said about 30 per cent of Palapes officers continued to serve in the Territorial Army after graduating from university.

"However, only a small percentage of Palapes officers went on to serve in the armed forces after graduation," he said.

At the ceremony, the top 25 officers and their families will be presented to the Sultan and his consort Raja Zarith Sofia.

Since June 24, the officers have been gathered at UTHM for final training and preparations for the ceremony. They also held a community service programme called "Program Jiwa Murni" at 11 villages around Batu Pahat.



Lt Gen Datuk Seri Ahmad Hasbullah Mohd Nawawi rides in front during an inspection of the preparations for the 30th Royal Commissioning ceremony. — Picture by Mohd Farid Noh