



Aman Sapari receiving the scroll on behalf of his late brother from Musa (left).

Brother receives scroll of UMS grad who drowned

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By Chris Maskilone

IT was a proud – yet sad – moment for Aman Safari Abdul Wahab who received the scroll on behalf of his brother, Zurairi Abdul Wahab, who drowned in the Mandahan river in June.

Zurairi, 23, fell into the river while pushing his motorcycle across a railway bridge after the nearby box culvert had collapsed, temporarily cutting off the link from the State Capital to Beaufort.

"I was touched, I thought there was nothing anymore but the UMS had several times invited (his family) to attend the convocation," Aman Safari told reporters.

Aman Safari, 33, received his late brother's Business (Marketing) second class honours from Pro Chancellor Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman during the second session of the convocation, Saturday.

According to him, UMS vice chancellor Prof Datuk Mohd Noh Dalimin went personally to invite his father in Kuala Nerang, Kedah to attend and receive the scroll on Zurairi's behalf.

But his father could not make it since he suffers from gout, he said, adding even if he were healthy it might be difficult for his parents to come since there were still reeling from the loss of the youngest of their six children.

Aman Safari, the third among the siblings, said he was close to Zurairi since they were both in Sabah. He is teaching in SK Klias Baru in Beaufort and married to a local from Tuaran.

Although from Kedah, Sabah was not foreign to them since their father used to be a religious teacher before returning to Kedah upon retirement. During the fateful day, he said his brother was making his way to the State capital from

Beaufort to meet up with his roommate, Zulkifli Osman.

"His friend told him that he need not rush because he heard about the collapsed culvert but as fate would have it the next thing I heard was someone had fallen into the river and when I heard the motorcycle plate number I knew it was him," he said.

Meanwhile, winner of the Royal Education Award, Ali Andrea Hashim attributed his success to involvement in the students' council and welfare work he did during his studies.

The Ipoh lad said he found it difficult at first to move to Sabah but that it turned out to be a very delightful experience.

"I think it is God's gift because it (Geology) was not my first choice," he said, adding that he initially applied for the social science course with the intention to major in international relations.

The UPU however decided to enter him for the geology course, which he thought he would not enjoy at first.

"I will miss my days of being a student but I hope to pursue my studies up to the PhD level," he said.

The Chancellor Gold Medal winner, Norhafizah Zainal Ariffin from Pahang, hopes she would be able to assist her family, especially her siblings, who are still schooling.

Majoring in International and Offshore Banking, she hopes to carry out her responsibility as the eldest in the family.

The other winners were Lim Siew Hooi under the Royal Education Award (for non-Bumiputeras), Tan Soon Foon (Vice Chancellor Gold Medal) and Gan Kim Soon (Alumni Medal).