

## Age is no barrier as 81-year-old grandmother receives PhD from UMT

By Bernama - October 20, 2024 @ 6:53pm



Christine Longuet, or Rohani Abdullah, receiving her doctorate scroll from Sultanah of Terengganu, Sultanah Nur Zahirah, at the 22nd Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Convocation Ceremony. BERNAMA pic

KUALA NERUS: Age is no barrier for a grandmother who received her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at 81.

After 10 years, Christine Longuet, or Rohani Abdullah, from Kampung Pulau Duyong, Kuala Terengganu, is finally proud to be the holder of a PhD in the field of human ecology and ethnobotany through her thesis titled 'Tempat, Tumbuhan dan Masyarakat di Terengganu; Penilaian Berdasarkan Dua Era'.

Rohani, who was born in Paris, said she began her thesis in 2013 with the support of her late-husband Wan Othman Wan Abdullah and their eight children.

She said she faced many challenges in completing her thesis, including health factors, family problems and the Covid-19 pandemic.

"A study involving two eras indirectly requires systematic comparison and a long period of time," she said when met at the 22nd Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Convocation Ceremony here today.

"There were times when I almost gave up, but I am grateful for the strong support from my family, the experienced young supervisors as well as the assistance from the (UMT) management itself.

Rohani, who holds a Bachelor's degree in History from Sorbonne University in France, said she intends to pen her autobiography as a legacy for her family.

In fact, she intends to publish the autobiography in three languages, namely English, French and Bahasa Malaysia, all the languages that she speaks.

"I have written several books before including *Amabah: An Architect's Journey* (2013) and *The Visible Trail of Chang Fee Ming* (2000)," said Rohani, who also holds a Master's degree in Architecture from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) in 2006.

Sharing her story, Rohani said she came to Terengganu in 1971 to order a yacht and sail across the Pacific Ocean.

However, the octogenarian who has 27 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren decided to set roots there in 1975 after falling in love with the sailing industry, local culture and captivating Malay architecture.

"In 1982, I conducted a study on traditional Terengganu medicine for several firms and institutes in France.

"Among the articles I have produced are 'Kulit Manis: A Taste of Terengganu's Heritage', 'Menelusuri Jati Diri; Chapter Perahu Pinis: The Role of Craftsmen in the Creation of Sailing Ships in Terengganu' and 'Malaysia Contemporaine, La disparition de l'habitat traditionnel dans le Trengganu'," she added.