

23 SEP 1999

King-Installation

M'SIA INSTALS 11TH KING IN GLITTERING TRADITIONAL CEREMONY

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 23 (Bernama) -- Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Alhaj Almarhum Sultan Hishamuddin Alam Shah Alhaj was today installed as Malaysia's 11th Yang di-Pertuan Agong (paramount ruler) under the country's unique constitutional monarchy.

The Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Siti Aishah was also present at the glittering ceremony at the Throne Room of Istana Negara here.

The ceremony commenced with the traditional palace orchestra playing "The King Goes Forth" accompanying their majesties' arrival and ascent of the throne.

The Grand Chamberlain Datuk Zubir Ali then presented a copy of the Quran to his majesty and invited Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to read out the proclamation of installation.

Zubir then presented the short-sword of state and the oath letter to his majesty.

Sultan Salahuddin then kissed the Quran, symbolising the sanctity of Islam and Islam as Malaysia's official religion.

Prior to his majesty reading out the oath of office, Dr Mahathir proclaimed aloud Sultan Salahuddin's installation as the 11th Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

His majesty was then presented with sword of state which he later held upright and kissed.

Sultan Salahuddin, in taking the oath of kingship, said; "I, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Alhaj Almarhum Sultan Hishamuddin Alam Shah Alhaj thank Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala for the divine blessing that I am appointed Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

"I hereby pledge to rule Malaysia fairly according to the laws and the constitution of the country and at all time to look after the well-being of Islam and uphold a fair and peaceful reign of the nation."

Upon reading out the oath of office, the palace orchestra played "Raja Bertabal" (the King is crowned) followed by three shouts of "Daulat Tuanku" (long live the King) by those in attendance.

Dr Mahathir then addressed the ceremony pledging allegiance to Sultan Salahuddin on behalf of the government and the people and congratulating his majesty for being installed Malaysia's new king.

A 21-gun salute followed simultaneously with the band playing the national anthem "Negaraku".

Istana Negara religious officer Datuk Abu Hassan Din Al-Hafiz then recited prayers solemnising the close of the ceremony.

Present were the Crown Prince of Brunei representing Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah, the Malay Rulers, the Yang Dipertuas Negeri, the Regents of Selangor and Perlis, the acting Sarawak Yang Dipertua Negeri and the Tengku Mahkota of Johor.

Members of the Cabinet and the diplomatic corps also witnessed the ceremony which was telecast live nation-wide.

At the outset of the palace function, Sultan Salahuddin inspected a ceremonial guard of honour at the Istana Negara ground.

Under Malaysia's unique rotational constitutional monarchs, who each serves a five-year term, Sultan Salahuddin, 74, was elected Yang di-Pertuan Agong by his brother rulers last April 26.

He succeeded Tuanku Ja'afar ibni Almarhum Tuanku Abdul Rahman whose term as paramount ruler ended last April 25.

As part of a five-day celebration marking their installation as Malaysia's new king and queen, Sultan Salahuddin and Tuanku Siti Aishah Permaisuri are scheduled to grace several functions.

These include opening a "Raja Kita" (our king) exhibition at the National Museum later today and attending special prayers at the National Mosque tonight.

Tomorrow morning, their majesties are scheduled to attend a children's party at the Mines in Sri Kembangan near here and a state banquet at Istana Negara later in the evening.

-- BERNAMA

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