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Raja of Perlis elected as the new King (HL)

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Raja of Perlis, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Ibni Al-Marhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail, was elected as the 12th Yang di-Pertuan Agong today.

Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin Ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Mahmud Al Muktafi Billah Shah of Terengganu, who had been acting King, was re-elected Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

He was first appointed deputy King on April 26, 1999.

Both appointments are for five years, beginning tomorrow.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced in a statement that the Conference of Rulers made these appointments at the 191st (special) meeting held at Istana Negara this morning.

The Keeper of the Rulers' Seal conveyed the decisions to the Prime Minister and both Houses of Parliament, as required by the Constitution.

Bernama reports that the meeting, which started at 11.15am, was attended by all the nine Malay Rulers. The election was held following the death of the 11th King, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, on Nov 21.

The Raja of Perlis was the first to arrive followed by the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan of Terengganu, Sultan of Kelantan, Sultan of Pahang, Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan, Sultan of Kedah, Sultan of Perak and Sultan of Johor.

The meeting was preceded by a group photography session for the Rulers in front of Istana Negara's grand entrance.

In accordance with the Federal Constitution, the Rulers voted by secret ballot.

A Ruler is eligible to be elected King unless he is a minor or that the Conference of Rulers has resolved that he is unsuitable by reason of infirmity of mind or body or any other cause.

Perlis is at the top of the Election List.

(The Election List was drawn up in 1957, listing the States of the Rulers in the order which they then recognised precedence among themselves, in accordance with their dates of accession.

(The List is adjusted each time a new Yang di-Pertuan Agong is elected or if a Ruler declined election.)

In accordance with constitutional provisions, the new King will take his oath tomorrow before the Conference of Rulers and in the presence of Chief Justice Tan Sri Mohamed Dzaiddin Abdullah.

Incidentally, Dzaiddin is also from Perlis and his wife is the aunt of Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin. Dzaiddin's wife Tengku Noriah is the sister of the new King's mother, the Raja Perempuan Besar of Perlis Tengku Budriah.

The first function tomorrow will be held at Parliament where the new King and Queen will meet government dignitaries. There will be a 21-gun salute before the King inspects a guard of honour.

After this, the royal couple will return to Istana Perlis before proceeding to Istana Negara for the oath-taking ceremony.

The ceremony at Istana Negara, deemed as the 192nd (special) meeting of the Conference of Rulers, will begin with the National Mosque grand imam reciting the doa.

The Keeper of the Rulers' Seal will then present the oath of office to the King who will read it before signing it. Two Rulers will sign as witnesses.

The process will be repeated for the deputy King.

Dr Mahathir will then present the letters of proclamation of appointment as King and deputy King to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong for his signature.

After that, Dr Mahathir will read out the letters, followed by doa by the Federal Territory Mufti.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, born in Arau on May 17, 1943, was proclaimed the sixth Ruler of Perlis on April 17 last year after the death of his father.

The Ruler married Tengku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid, from the Kelantan royal house, on Feb 15, 1967. They have a son, Syed Faizuddin, 33, who is now the Raja Muda of Perlis, and a daughter, Sharifah Fazira, 28.

Sultan Mizan was made the acting Yang di-Pertuan Agong on Oct 8 when Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah fell ill.

He was born at Istana Al-Muktafi on Jan 22, 1962. He married Permaisuri Nur Zahirah on March 28, 1996 and they have two sons and a daughter.