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Raja of Perlis takes oath as the new King

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Raja of Perlis Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail today took his oath of office as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong for the next five years.

The ceremony at the Throne Room of Istana Negara marked the 192nd and special meeting of the Conference of Malay Rulers.

The Conference, at its 191st meeting yesterday, elected Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin as the 12th Yang di-Pertuan Agong, succeeding Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah of Selangor who died on Nov 21.

Today's ceremony also witnessed the oath-taking by Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin of Terengganu who was re-elected the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong at yesterday's special meeting, reports Bernama.

Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin was first chosen as the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong when Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz was elected King in April 1999.

The ceremony commenced with the Keeper of the Rulers' Seal, Engku Datuk Ibrahim Engku Ngah, announcing that the 192nd meeting of the Conference of Malay Rulers was for the new King and the Deputy King to take their oath of office.

Engku Ibrahim then presented Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin the letter bearing the oath of office which the Ruler read out before signing it.

Engku Ibrahim then presented the document to the Sultan of Pahang and the Sultan of Perak who signed as witnesses.

The same procedure was repeated when Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin took his oath of office as the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Engku Ibrahim then announced that the 192nd meeting of the Conference of Malay Rulers would adjourn sine die.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad then rose and presented the letters of appointment to be signed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong respectively.

Dr Mahathir read out the declaration that Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin had taken his oath of office as the 12th Yang di-Pertuan Agong and that Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin had taken his oath as the Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

The ceremony, which was telecast by Radio and Televisyen Malaysia, embodied the rich and unique tradition of Malaysia's constitutional monarchy.

The Federal Constitution, under Article 38, empowers the nine Rulers to elect among themselves Malaysia's head of state for a five-year term.

Today's ceremony, which ended with recital of prayers by the Federal Territory Mufti Datuk Hashim Yahya, was also attended by the Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Menteri Besar, Chief Ministers, members of the Cabinet, the Dewan Rakyat, the Senate, royalty and senior government officers.

Dr Mahathir then led his Cabinet members and other dignitaries to an audience with Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin.

Earlier, an official welcoming ceremony for Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin was held at Parliament Square.

The King, who is also the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by 104 officers and men of the 1st Battalion Royal Malay Regiment under the command of Mej Mohd Arifin Suhaimi.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin and the Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid arrived at 9am and were met by Dr Mahathir and Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

The King took the royal dais and received a salute from the guard of honour. The Negara Ku was played by the Royal Malay Regiment band.

A 21-gun salute was fired as he proceeded to inspect the guard-of-honour. The Negara Ku was played again followed by the recital of the doa selamat.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin and Tuanku Fauziah were later introduced to Cabinet Ministers, their wives and other members of the Government.

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