

**PAS' Nizar is new Perak MB**  
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Pasir Panjang state assemblyperson and Perak PAS secretary Mohamad Nizar Jamaludin was today confirmed as the new menteri besar of the state.  
MCPX

mohammad nizar jamaluddin perak menteri besarThe decision was reached after the Regent of Perak Raja Nazrin Shah met with the three nominees for the post this evening.

The other two candidates for the post were state DAP chairperson and Sitiawan state assemblyperson Ngeh Khoo Ham and PKR's Behrang assemblyperson Jamaluddin Mohd Radzi.

Also decided today is that Ngeh would be made the deputy menteri besar (1) while an Indian candidate would be made deputy menteri besar (2).

Earlier, the Penang state government has announced a similar multiracial arrangement for its top leadership.

The Indian deputy MB will come from one of the five elected assemblypersons - four from DAP and one from PKR

They are DAP's A Sivanesan (Sungkai), KS Keshvinder Singh (Malim Nawar), VN Sivakumar (Tronoh) and A Sivasubramaniam (Buntong) and PKR's S Kesavan.

Nizar will be sworn in as the new menteri besar at 4pm tomorrow.

Under the state constitution, the menteri besar has to be a Malay Muslim, but there is a provision that allows the sultan to waive the requirement.

Of a total of 59 state seats, DAP controls 18 seats while PKR has seven and PAS six, making a total of 31. The remaining 28 are in the hands of BN.

### **A down-to-earth guy**

Nizar apologised for causing some anxiety among the public in the late announcement of the post.

perak state seat breakdown"I would also like to give my assurance that all state decisions will be made collectively," he told reporters.

Nizar, 51, is one of the professionals who made it to the top echelon of the PAS leadership in the state.

An engineer who obtained his degree from United Kingdom's Aston University of Science and Technology in Birmingham, Nizar was highly respected for being a Quran reading champion.

"He is the religious type and a successful businessman," said cousin Shuib Hussin, 70.

Meanwhile, close friend Khalilul Rahman Abdul Samah described Nizar as a down-to-earth person.

"He has good rapport with the people. I was with him once when he stopped by the roadside to help some stranger fix his car."

### **A potential political minefield**

Nizar is expected to announce his two deputies tomorrow prior to the swearing-in ceremony.

Under the Perak constitution, there are 10 state exco members and one menteri besar. It is understood that the two deputy menteris besar would have to hold exco portfolios as well.

lim keng yaik visit pantai remis 010308 ngeh koo hamNgeh (right) told reporters that all three parties have in principle agreed that DAP would be holding the majority of exco positions as they command the largest number of state seats.

"In a normal democratic process, we would be invited to head the state. But in the special circumstances of Perak and to be sensitive to Malay Muslims, Nizar was appointed menteri besar," he said.

Newly re-elected Pantai Remis DAP assembly person Nga Kor Ming, who accompanied Ngeh, expects mixed reactions from all political parties to the latest development.

"But I stress that the appointment of the menteri besar is the prerogative of the sultan," he said when asked if Nizar's appointment would go down well with DAP supporters.

DAP had vehemently rejected PAS' conservative religious agenda in favour of a secular 'Malaysian Malaysia' and had even left the PAS-PKR Barisan Alternatif coalition in protest in 2001.

With the appointment of a PAS menteri besar and DAP's clout in the state exco, both DAP and PAS would be navigating through a political minefield due to their ideological differences and polar-opposite party make-up.

However, with the swearing-in ceremony confirmed for tomorrow, Perak residents can now sigh a breath of relief in the midst of protracted speculations over the menteri besar post and the possibilities of DAP-PKR-PAS members crossing over to Barisan Nasional.

In a sudden twist of event late this evening, DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang issued a statement saying that the party had rejected Nizar's appointment as MB and that all party assemblypersons would boycott tomorrow's ceremony.