

Perak MB's swearing-in put off
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breaking news In yet another dramatic twist to the formation new state government in Perak, the swearing-in ceremony of Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin as menteri besar today has been cancelled.

Mohammad Nizar, a PAS assemblyman, was to be sworn in at the Istana Iskandariah in Kuala Kangsar at 4pm today.

However, palace officials made an announcement at 4.20pm that the ceremony had been put off.

"There are some uncertainties as to whether the three parties... are able to work together to form a coalition, and form a stable government," the royal palace said.

It is learnt that the three candidates for the menteri besar post were involved in a prolonged meeting with the Regent of Perak Raja Nazrin Shah at the Kinta Palace in Ipoh just prior to the swearing-in ceremony.

The meeting lasted from 2.30pm to 4.05pm, hardly leaving any time for them to be at the 4pm swearing-in ceremony at the Kuala Kangsar palace, which is about one hour from Ipoh.

It is not clear what had transpired at the close-door meeting.

Yesterday the DAP-PKR-PAS coalition in Perak agreed to appoint Pasir Panjang state assemblyperson and Perak PAS secretary Nizar as the new menteri besar.

State DAP chairperson and Sitiawan state assemblyperson Ngeh Khoo Ham and an Indian state representative were to be the deputy menteri besar (1) and (2) respectively.

Along with Nizar and Ngeh, PKR's Behrang assemblyperson Jamaluddin Mohd Radzi's name was also submitted to the regent by the DAP-PKR-PAS coalition.

More stumbling blocks

However the appointment of Nizar was objected by the DAP leadership with party stalwart Lim Kit Siang saying that the party had only agreed for a DAP or a PKR menteri besar.

perak state seat breakdownThis morning the problem seemed to have been solved with Lim apologising over his objections and Ngeh stating that all misunderstanding have been clarified.

But in another twist of never-ending problems, PKR today issued a statement threatening to pull out from the state administration on hearing that eight of the 10 executive council posts will go to DAP while the remaining two going to other parties.

Originally it is believed that an agreement was made whereby DAP would get six exco posts and two each for PKR and PAS.

However, there was a last-minute change where DAP was given eight seats in the exco, while PKR one and PAS one.

PKR disputes regent's choice

Meanwhile, more details are emerging on the meeting between the three menteri besar candidates and Raja Nazrin this afternoon.

According to sources, the main reason for the postponement of the swearing-in ceremony this afternoon was due to an objection by the PKR's Jamaluddin over Nizar's appointment.

Apparently Jamaluddin told the regent that he disputed the choice made by the regent yesterday to make Nizar the menteri besar.

A statement issued by Ngeh earlier today indicated that Nizar was the regent's choice to be the state's menteri besar.

According to Ngeh, the regent had rejected his (Ngeh's) and Jamaluddin's name although these were the first two choices.

For now, all 31 state assemblypersons from all three parties have to sign a letter in support of the regent's decision to appoint Nizar.

At press time, all 18 DAP and six PAS assemblypersons have signed the letters. It is uncertain if the seven PKR assembly have done the same.

It is uncertain when Nizar, if at all, will be sworn in as the menteri besar.

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