

# Grand send-off for King, Queen

The Star - 13/12/2006

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A grand farewell ceremony was held yesterday for Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid who ended their reign as King and Queen.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, who was appointed the 12th Yang di-Pertuan Agong on Dec 12, 2001, for a five-year rotation period, left Istana Negara at 9.50am accompanied by minister-in-attendance Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid, who is Natural Resources and Environment minister, and his wife Datin Seri Normala Samsudin.

Before leaving for Parliament Square, the royal couple spent some time with the palace staff. Some of them were seen wiping away tears as they shook hands and bade the King and Queen goodbye.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, too, was misty-eyed while Tuanku Fauziah had to contain her emotions when one of the female palace staff members gave her a hug.

The royal couple arrived at Parliament Square to the sound of trumpets and were met on arrival by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

They were given a royal salute before the national anthem was played by the Royal Malay Regiment, accompanied by a 21-gun salute.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin later inspected a guard of honour mounted by 140 members of the Royal Malay Regiment.

The ceremony ended with a royal salute and the *Negara Ku* after which the King and Queen left the royal dais to meet Cabinet ministers, department heads and foreign dignitaries before leaving for KL Inter-

national Airport.

Schoolchildren and members of the public lined the roads from Jalan Parlimen to Jalan Duta to say farewell to the King and Queen.

At KLIA, the royal couple was given a send-off in accordance with the traditions of the Malay Sultanate.

A procession featuring an elephant and men dressed in traditional palace and warrior attire as well as women carrying flowers and the *sireh junjung* awaited the arrival of the royal entourage at the Bunga Raya Complex.

There was also a silat performance by 100 practitioners before the King and Queen boarded a special flight to return home.

The plane touched down at the Sultan Abdul Halim Airport in Kedah at 1.55pm where the royal couple was greeted by the

Regent of Perlis Syed Faizuddin Putra and Raja Puan Muda Perlis, as well as Perlis and Kedah state dignitaries.

More than 15,000 people from Perlis, including drummers and flautists, waited at the Kedah-Perlis border to welcome the royal couple's return.

During the drive home to Istana Arau, they were escorted by 2,000 motorcyclists, including 100 superbikers.

The royal couple arrived at Istana Arau at 3.20pm and were received by the Regent of Perlis and the Raja Puan Muda of Perlis, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, state VIPs and heads of federal and state departments.

Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin and Tuanku Fauziah will now resume their reign as the Raja of Perlis and the Raja Perempuan of Perlis. — Bernama