

Kedah Sultan installed as King
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Sultan of Kedah, Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, has been installed as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong in a ceremony steeped in royal tradition at the new Istana Negara here.

The 84-year-old monarch took the Oath of Installation in the Balairong Seri or Throne Hall to mark the formal commencement of his reign as the Supreme Head of the Federation.

The *nafiri* (trumpets) were blown and the *nobat* (drums) beaten to the tune of *Perang*, followed by three shouts of "Daulat Tuanku (Hail to the King)" led by the acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela (Grand Chamberlain) Azwan Effendy Zairakithnaini.

A 21-gun salute was fired and the Royal Malaysian Air Force band, led by Lt Sabri Abdullah, played the *Negara Ku*.

According to Bernama, the 900-odd guests at the installation, which was telecast live over RTM, included the Malay Rulers and their consorts, the Yang di-Pertuas Negri, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his Cabinet and foreign diplomats.

This is the second reign of Tuanku Abdul Halim. He was installed as the fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong in 1970 at the age of 42. Tun Abdul Razak, the father of Najib, was then Prime Minister.

The acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela and carriers of the royal regalia led the procession to the Balairong Seri.

As Tuanku Abdul Halim and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah entered the hall, the Kedah Royal Nobat Group played *Belayar*.

The royal regalia include the Cogan Alam (Mace of the Universe) and the Cogan Agama (Mace of Religion) which are made of silver and are also the national insignia.

Tuanku Abdul Halim was attired in the official dress of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong called the Muskat, which is made of black wool and embroidered with gold threads. His pants were similarly embroidered and he had on the "Dendam Tak Sudah" headgear or "tengkolok".

Her Majesty wore the official attire of the Raja Permaisuri Agong, which consists of the Royal Tiara and the Royal Necklace, both of which are made of platinum and studded with diamonds.

After Their Majesties were seated, the acting Grand Chamberlain presented a Quran to Tuanku Abdul Halim, who kissed it and placed it on a stand.

Najib then proclaimed the enthronement of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

The acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela presented the Keris Panjang di-Raja to His Majesty, who drew out the long dagger, kissed it and returned it to its scabbard.

He placed it on the table next to the Quran.

The King then took his Oath of Installation, pledging to perform his duties in accordance with the law and Constitution, and to protect Islam at all times.

The Prime Minister, representing the Government and the people, congratulated His Majesty and pledged loyalty to him.

The King then delivered his Royal Address.

The ceremony ended with the reciting of prayers by Istana Negara religious officer Datuk Abd Aziz Che Yacob.

The *nobat* band played *Belayar* as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong left the Balairong Seri.

Tuanku Abdul Halim was elected the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong at the 226th meeting of the Conference of Rulers on Oct 14 last year, succeeding Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin of Terengganu.

Later, a royal banquet was held in conjunction with the installation.

The King and Tuanku Hajah Haminah arrived at the Istana Negara banquet hall at about 9pm, followed by the rest of the Malay Rulers.

Among the guests were Najib, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Cabinet ministers, foreign ambassadors and senior government officials.

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