

**Tuanku Abdul Halim Installed As 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 11 (Bernama) -- In a ceremony steeped in royal tradition, Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'azam Shah, 84, was installed as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong today at the new, majestic Istana Negara, here.

The installation ceremony, attended by eminent guests, took place at the Balairong Seri or Throne Hall of the national palace, with Tuanku Abdul Halim taking his Oath of Installation, marking the formal commencement of his tenure as the Supreme Head of the Federation. The oath-taking ceremony was the culmination of today's installation proceedings.

Shortly after, the sound of nafiri (trumpet) and nobat (drum) reverberated in the Balairong Seri to the tune of "Perang", followed by three shouts of "Daulat Tuanku" (Long Live the King), led by the acting Datuk Maharaja Lela (Grand Chamberlain) Azwan Effendy Zairakithnaini.

This was followed by the firing of a 21-gun salute and the playing of the national anthem "Negaraku" by the Royal Malaysian Air Force band, led by Lt Sabri Abdullah.

Some 900 guests witnessed the colourful and glorious ceremony, including the Malay Rulers and their consorts, the Yang Dipertuas Negeri, the Prime Minister as well as cabinet ministers and foreign diplomats.

The ceremony today marked two historical significance for the country as well as for Tuanku Abdul Halim. Firstly, this is the second time that His Majesty was installed as the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, the first was as the Fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong in 1970 at the age of 42.

Now four decades later, Tuanku Abdul Halim was again installed to the position, as the 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong. Secondly, His Majesty is also the first to be installed at the new Istana Negara in Jalan Duta.

Adding to the uniqueness of the installation ceremony this time around is Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. When Tuanku Abdul Halim was installed as the Fifth Yang di-Pertuan Agong, the prime minister at that time was Najib's father, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, the second prime minister of Malaysia.

The installation ceremony was telecast live by Radio Television Malaysia (RTM).

It started with Tuanku Abdul Halim and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah making an entrance to the Balairong Seri, to the accompaniment of the blowing of the nafiri and the striking of the nobat by the Kedah Royal Nobat Group, playing the tune "Belayar".

It was preceded by the entrance of acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela who led the royal arrival procession which also comprised the Holders of the Royal Regalia and Maces -- the Cogan Alam (Mace of the Universe) and the Cogan Agama (Mace of Religion).

Both maces, which are made of silver, are part of the royal regalia and are also the Malaysian Government's 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, as well as the "Dendam Tak Sudah" headgear or "tengkolok", and embroidered long pants.

Other royal regalia are the Royal Buckle or the "Pending Diraja" which is made of gold and decorated with rubies, with an engraved centrepiece featuring the Federation Crest, while the belt is made of heavy ribbed silk and embroidered with floral motifs in gold thread.

There was also the Keris Pendek Diraja which was forged from the blades of antique keris. The hilt and sheath are made of ivory embedded with gold.

Her Majesty Tuanku Hajah Haminah was attired in the official dress of the Raja Permaisuri Agong which consists of a long dress, the "Gandik Diraja" or Royal Tiara and the "Kalung Diraja" or the Royal Necklace, both of which are made of platinum and studded with diamonds.

Their Majesties were then ushered to their thrones, marking the start of the installation proceedings.

The ceremony then proceeded with the entrance of the second group of bearers and Quran entrustment, with Datuk Pengelola Bijaya Diraja Datuk Awang Kechik Abdul Rahman bearing a copy of the Al-Quran, while other Istana Negara officials were bringing in the Keris Panjang Diraja, the Proclamation of Enthronement and Installation, and the Oath of Installation, accompanied by the striking of the nobat, playing the tune "Palu".

The Al-Quran, the symbol of the sanctity of Islam as the official religion, was then presented to His Majesty by the Grand Chamberlain.

His Majesty then kissed it and placed it on a "rehal" or Quran stand on a table placed in front of the Sovereigns' thrones.

At this juncture, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak proclaimed the enthronement of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

This was followed by the presentation of the Keris Panjang Diraja or the Keris of the Government by the acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela to His Majesty, who drew the sabre, kissed it, and returned it to its scabbard and placed it on the table next to the Al-Quran.

His Majesty then took his Oath of Installation, pledging among other things to perform his duties in accordance with the laws and constitution, and to protect Islam at all times.

This was followed by the blowing of the nafiri, and three shouts of "Daulat Tuanku" led by the acting Datuk Paduka Maharaja Lela and others in the Balairong Seri. Moments later, a 21-gun salute was fired, as followed by the playing of the national anthem "Negaraku".

The prime minister, representing the government and the people, congratulated His Majesty and pledged loyalty to the newly installed Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

His Majesty then delivered his Royal Address.

The installation ceremony was concluded with the recital of prayers by Istana Negara religious officer Datuk Abd Aziz Che Yacob.

Following the conclusion of the ceremony, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong left the Balairong Seri to the accompaniment of the blowing of nafiri and striking of the nobat, playing the tune "Belayar".

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.

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