

**Sultan Nazrin Shah's enthronement steeped in Perak royal tradition**  
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**By Azril Annuar**

Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah was enthroned as the 35th ruler of Perak at Istana Iskandariah in Kuala Kangsar today, nearly a year after the passing of his father Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah's on May 28, 2014.

In a ceremony filled with traditional Perak rituals, Sultan Nazrin ascended the throne and became a monarch in a colourful, festive atmosphere witnessed by some of the nation's and the state's top dignitaries.

Among the dignitaries who bore witness to today's historical event included Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, state governors, representatives of the other Malaysian royal houses, the Crown Prince of Brunei, academicians, ambassadors and other foreign dignitaries.

The VIPs began making their appearance at the palace at around 10.30am, ahead of the ceremony which began at 11am.

Sultan Nazrin Shah and the Raja Permaisuri Tuanku Zara Salim entered the Balairong Seri and took their place on the throne at around 11.15am.

The ceremony began with a request by the Shahbandar, one of the state's four noblemen, to begin the proceedings.

Once the Sultan gave his approval, a copy of the Islamic holy book, the Quran, was presented to Sultan Nazrin by the Imam Paduka Tuan, or the royal imam.

Upon accepting the Quran, Sultan Nazrin kissed it as a symbol of his faith to Allah and the Prophet Mohammad's teachings before placing it in an honoured position by the throne.

The article of Royal Authority, granting Sultan Nazrin the right to rule Perak, was presented to him after the Quran.

This was followed by the presentation of the Royal House's symbol of power and authority, which is a centuries-old sword, the Cura Si Manja Kini. This relic dates back to the Malacca Sultanate.

Upon accepting the ancient blade from the Raja Chik Muda Pawang DiRaja, Sultan Nazrin drew the sword and kissed the base of the blade three times to the chants of: "Daulat Tuanku!" by the gathered dignitaries.

At this juncture, the nobat (royal instruments) began playing together with a 21-gun salute symbolising Sultan Nazrin's ascension to the throne.

The Toh Seri Nara Diraja then approached the throne with two more royal regalia symbolising the Sultan's wisdom and authority. These ornaments were the Chap Halilintar, which is a brooch pinned to the Sultan's tengkolok (head dress), and the Mastika Embun, placed in his songket.

With the items in place, the Toh Seri Nara DiRaja then whispered Perak's royal secrets into the Sultan's right ear.

Another of the nobles then presented the article of Royal Authority for the Raja Permaisuri Tuanku Zara Salim. As the consort, Tuanku Zara received the blessings of office from her husband, the Sultan himself.

This was followed by a pledge of loyalty, allegiance, and congratulations by the Raja Muda of Perak on behalf of all of Sultan Nazrin's subjects in the state.

Finally, Sultan Nazrin addressed the gathering and pledged to continue the state's prosperity and protecting his subjects.

### **Traditional colour codes**

Earlier, the palace began filling up with guests, courtiers and the state's nobles (Orang-Orang Besar Jajahan) from as early as 7am.

The air was festive as the dignitaries with the help of attendants put on the finery of traditional clothing according to their office and symbols of authority.

Perak's customs and tradition dictates that certain colour codes be used for the official uniforms of its noblemen according to their standing and duties in the hierarchy.

Green is reserved for the four greatest Orang Besar Jajahan, who are known as Orang Besar Berempat (The Four Noblemen). They carry the titles Bendahara, Shahbandar, Temenggung and Laksamana.

Of the four, only the Bendahara post has broken from ancient tradition and is now appointed by the Sultan while the rest are hereditary titles.

The four are followed by Orang Besar Berlapan (The Eight Noblemen), whose colour is light blue and whose titles are also hereditary with the exception of its most junior member - the Imam Besar Paduka Perak, who is appointed by the Sultan.

They are then followed by Orang Besar Enam Belas (The Sixteen Noblemen) whose colour is grey, and the Orang Besar 32 (The Thirty Two Noblemen) whose colour is mustard.

These final two classes of nobility are not hereditary titles but are appointed by the state with the consent of the ruler.

Nobles who hold positions as palace courtiers or officers wear dark blue, while those designated as "panglima" (royal guards) wear red.

Members of the Sultan appointed Royal Advisory Council (Ahli Dewan Negara Perak) on the other hand are required to wear maroon. Needless to say the outcome is a pageantry of colours gracing an already memorable event.

### **More rituals to come**

Although today has marked Sultan Nazrin's ascension to the throne, there are a few ceremonies that the Sultan must conduct in the next few days.

Among them is "Istiadat Mengambil Air Bersiram Tabal" from seven river estuaries in Kuala Kangsar so he may bathe in the waters of the seven rivers tomorrow evening.

From May 8 till May 13, Sultan Nazrin will be paying his respects at the mausoleums and tombs of all of Perak's former rulers, including that of his late father Sultan Azlan.

Sultan Nazrin will also take part an early morning ceremony called "Beting Beras Basah" in Bagan Datoh on May 14.

The tradition stems from the time when the Malaccan Empire sent its Prince Mudzaffar Shah I to rule over Perak as the state's first Sultan. During the journey, the Prince's ship encountered a massive thunderstorm and the Prince recited a prayer to calm the storm and cast off his crown.

Thus began Perak's tradition of having a Raja Muda as opposed to a Tengku Mahkota as the heir designate, since the Royal family has no crown, so to speak.

After the storm ended, Prince Mudzaffar's ship ran aground near Beras Basah. With the ship grounded there, Beras Basah in Bagan Datoh became the first district in Perak that knew its ruler.

Ceremonies for Sultan Nazrin's enthronement began on May 3 and will last 15 days until May 17, with a closing ceremony at Istana Iskandariah. – May 6, 2015.

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