TOP NEWS

Selangor hails Raja Muda in official proclamation

By Anith Adilah
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KLANG — Tengku Amir Shah ibni Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah was proclaimed the Raja Muda of Selangor in a ceremony steeped in pomp, pageantry and tradition at Balairung Seri, Istana Alam Shah here yesterday.

Tengku Amir was officially decreed the crown prince and heir to the Selangor throne on May 3, 2002, when he was 11.

The grand event, which also saw the presence of other members of the royal household, began at 9.45am with 36 palace aides, clad in traditional Malay ensemble, marching into the Balairung Seri bearing insignia of royalty, sceptre and other traditional royal ornaments used at a proclamation, and taking their positions on the left side of the grand hall.

At 10am, the gong was sounded three times announcing the arrival of Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah and Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin Abdul Rahman, who proceeded to take their places on the royal dais.

The Sultan's private secretary, Datuk Munir Bani, then sought His Royal Highness' consent to commence the ceremony, which saw the grand entrance of the 26-year-old Tengku Amir, accompanied by Tengku Indera Bijaya Diraja Tengku Muhammad Khalid Shah and Tengku Seri Perkasa Diraja Tengku Abdul Samad Shah.

The palace Grand Chamberlain, Tengku Sulaiman Shah, who is also Tengku Laksamana Selangor, took up his position next to Tengku Amir, who then took his oath of loyalty.

The prince swore allegiance to the Sultan and the state and pledged to discharge his responsibilities with honesty, integrity and sincerity.

This was followed by the signing of the instrument of proclamation, witnessed by Tengku Sulaiman Shah, Shah Alam High Court judge Datuk Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah and Selangor State Secretary Datuk Mohd Amin Ahmad Ahya.

Sultan Sharafuddin and Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin on the dais during the proclamation ceremony at Istana Alam Shah, Klang, yesterday. — Pictures by Zuraneeza Zulkifi

Following this, the prince proceeded to *menjunjung duli* before Sultan Sharafuddin and Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin.

Sultan Sharafuddin presented the Keris Kebesaran Duli Yang Teramat Mulia Raja Muda Selangor to the newly proclaimed crown prince and bestowed his blessings.

The Raja Muda of Selangor then exited the grand hall with the royal instrument, and the main doors were closed behind him.

A royal cannon salute was sounded nine times — representing the nine districts of the state — marking the completion of the royal proclamation ceremony.

Dignitaries and invited guests then stood to attention as a mark of respect as the state anthem was played.

As the royal tradition dictates, the Raja Muda will return to the state after seven days and, another ceremony, the *Istiadat Menghadap dan Menjunjung Duli*, would be held on Oct 15 at Istana Alam Shah.

Also present were Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein and his wife Datin Seri Tengku Marsilla Tengku Abdullah, Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Noh Omar, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar, Armed Forces Chief General Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin, state executive council members, assemblymen and government officers.

The ceremony ended with state mufti Datuk Mohd Tamyes Abdul Wahid reciting the *doa*.

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Guests praise 'beautiful and grand' ceremony

PETALING JAYA — The proclamation of Selangor's ninth Raja Muda yesterday was an eye-opener for first-timer invitees which included Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar and Selangor executive councillor V. Ganabatirau.

Khalid said he was happy to be given the opportunity to witness the royal tradition which was rarely seen in this modern era, and wished that more people got to experience the ceremony.

"It was my first time witnessing such a grand ceremony. I wished it was aired live on TV so that the younger generation would be part of such an elaborate and interesting custom of the monarchy," he told *Malay Mail*.

He was looking forward to the completion of the tradition when the Raja Muda returns next week.

"I am also curious as to what will happen during the next ceremony. I will surely be there," he said.

Ganabatirau, who was also grateful for the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, said it was exciting to see the Selangor royalty embracing their customs, which have been passed down for many generations.

"I was among those fortunate enough to have witnessed the auspicious proclamation. Everything about it was interesting, even the way each person approaches His Royal Highness," he said.

"It made me realise that there is much to learn about culture."

Historian Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Khoo Kay Kim said he found the event beautiful mostly because it brought people of different ideologies and school of thought together.

"Today, we see people disregard their political and societal identities to gather at this Balairung Seri and celebrate the proclamation of the Raja Muda. It is harmonious and just lovely," he said.

Khoo said the elaborate ceremony, which took place for about two hours, reassured him that customs are still being practised in this fast-paced world.

"It made me happy to be part of this historical event where customs are neither forgotten nor changed," he said.

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TOP NEWS

mail Explainer

What is 'menjunjung duli'?

It is a traditional practice performed during proclamation ceremonies when a person, who has been proclaimed as "Orang Besar" or conferred with the title of "Orang Besar" and higher, would bow and lower their body as a sign of utmost respect for the sultan.

Why does Raja Muda Tengku Amir Shah have to leave the state for seven days after 'menjunjung duli'?

This has been customary since the proclamation of Selangor's first sultan, Raja Luwu (Sultan Salahuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Daeng Chelak), when he was conferred the title by Raja Kimas of Perak (Sultan Mahmud Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Muhammad Shah Aminullah) in 1745. The first sultan was instructed to face away from Raja Kimas, who conferred him the title, as a sign of respect before observing the *tempoh larangan* (forbidden time) of seven days. This tradition, which originated in Perak, has since been in practice in Selangor.

Tengku Amir enters the Balairung Seri.

What happens after seven days?

The Raja Muda of Selangor would return to the state on Oct 15 for another ceremony, *Istiadat Menghadap dan Menjunjung Duli*, at Balairung Seri, Istana Alam Shah, Klang.

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Humble prince wins hearts of many

By Danial Dzulkifly
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Tengku Amir performs the 'menjunjung duli' during the proclamation ceremony.

PETALING JAYA — Tengku Amir Shah relates to the concerns of the people as he participates actively in welfare activities.

He is the royal patron of Selangor Cheshire Home Welfare Foundation and the Selangor Youth Community but often lends a helping hand at Yayasan Raja Muda Selangor, which his father, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, is the royal patron.

Selangor Cheshire Home Welfare Foundation honorary secretary, major (Rtd) Habibah Bahrom, said Tengku Amir's role as royal patron has been a boost to their cause.

"The Raja Muda has been a great contributor to our cause and he is accommodating when we invite him to our home and events. He even joined several of our physically-challenged children during a Mount Kinabalu expedition several years ago," she said.

"He is polite and down-to-earth. The children love him and it's no surprise that he loves to be around them too."

She said the home was "deeply honoured and proud" of having Tengku Amir as their royal patron.

Yayasan Raja Muda Selangor executive director, Aminah Abdul Rahim, said Tengku Amir was committed on youth development.

The foundation was established by Sultan Sharafuddin in 2000 to assist those between the ages of 18 and 29 by providing training, consultation and financial assistance to those who were gifted in other skills but not academically-inclined.

"Being a young adult himself, Tengku Amir is able to relate to youths," Aminah said, adding the role of the youth is fundamental in improving the community.

Aminah said Tengku Amir had presented certificates to Yayasan Raja Muda Selangor-sponsored students after they completed their skill-based training courses.

Aminah said the Selangor prince had been involved with the association activities since he was a teen.

"He joined our self-discovery for young adults workshop in the past and was extremely energetic. He even helped facilitate one of the sessions and everyone loved his enthusiasm."

She added that Tengku Amir had supported the foundation in various activities, including the Talent for the World programme where they trained the less fortunate to enhance their skills.

"Tengku Amir oozes a great sense of inspiration, and his humble character and mannerism have made people love him even more."