



The Sultan of Perak kisses the Pedang Cura SiManja Kini, symbol of power, after receiving it at the ceremony.

Clockwork precision at Sultan's installation

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KUALA KANGSAR, Mon. — Ceremonies marking the installation of Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah at the Istana Iskandariah here this morning went off with clockwork precision.

From the timing of arrival of VIPs down to the various events at the installation itself, the schedule was followed down to the minute.

This relatively sleepy royal town became the focus of national attention today as royalty from all over the country, their representatives, local and foreign dignitaries converged at the istana to attend the installation.

It was an occasion Kuala Kangsar had seen only during its former

ruler's installation 22 years ago.

The installation, steeped in Perak Royal customs and traditions that go back more than 450 years, took about 1½ hours.

On Wednesday there will be yet another important event — the Istiadat Mengambil Air Datu or Air Bersiram (collecting water for ceremonial bath).

Invocation

Seven vehicles decorated in yellow cloth will leave in a procession early that morning from the istana to the children's playground from where the procession will continue by boat to collect water from the mouths of seven tributaries of the Perak River, near the town.

The procession, which will include the Toh Seri

Nara Diraja and the Raja Muda Pawang Diraja and local bomohs, will bring the waters back in 16 silver decorated vessels to the accompaniment of the Nobat.

The water will be taken to the Panca Persada, an 11-tiered structure erected within the istana grounds.

The royal couple will then take part in a bathing ceremony atop this structure using the collected river waters.

They will take part in the Istiadat Makan Nasi Damai.

Earlier the same evening, an invocation of the guardian spirits ceremony will be held in the throne room in which their highnesses will also participate.

The final ceremony will take place between Dec 12 and 17 when the royal couple visit the graves of former Sultans.