

15/05/1997

Malacca Chief Minister dies (HL)

Sarban Singh

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Zin Abdul Ghani died at the Tawakal Hospital here today without regaining consciousness following a stroke on Sunday morning. He was 55.

Malacca Umno liaison committee deputy chairman Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam said Mohd Zin died at 4.05pm.

His wife, Datin Seri Fatimah Samdin, 11 children and relatives were at his bedside when he died.

Mohd Zin was appointed Malacca's seventh Chief Minister on Oct 14, 1994 to replace Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik who had resigned.

Mohd Ali said Mohd Zin would be buried at the Melekek Muslim cemetery in Alor Gajah, Malacca, either before or after zohor prayers tomorrow afternoon.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, who went to the hospital on receiving news of Mohd Zin's death, extended their condolences to the family.

Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail, the wife of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, arrived about 6.05pm.

Also present were several Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Malacca State Assemblymen and senior Federal Government officers.

Anwar, speaking to reporters after attending a gathering with the people at SRJK (Cina) San Min, in Teluk Intan, said Mohd Zin had served well throughout his career and had performed commendably as Chief Minister.

"We accept the news (of his death) with sadness and pray that Allah will bless his soul," he said.

Anwar extended his condolences to Mohd Zin's family.

Dr Mahathir and several Umno supreme council members had visited Mohd Zin on Sunday night.

Anwar and Dr Wan Azizah visited Mohd Zin at the hospital upon his return from Fukuoka, Japan, on Tuesday night after attending the Asian Development Bank meeting.

Mohd Zin was admitted after suffering a stroke about 4.30am in his hotel room on Sunday.

He was to have attended Umno's 51st anniversary celebrations at the Putra World Trade Centre that morning after Saturday's supreme council meeting.

His last public function was the opening of the Bachang Darat Umno division on May 5 where he called on members to go all out to get more people to join the party.

Malacca deputy State Secretary Jemal Zainal Kassim said the late Chief Minister was well liked by both the politicians and the people of the State.

In Parliament, both Barisan Nasional and Opposition MPs expressed sadness and shock over Mohd Zin's death which they described as a big loss to Malacca.

In the Dewan Rakyat, MP from Yan, Datuk Badruddin Amiruldin, who rose to debate the Higher Education Fund Bill, asked the other MPs to read the Al-Fatihah for Mohamed Zin.

Condolences were also extended by Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad who said he lost a good friend.

"He was a highly respected Umno leader who rose from the ranks to become a Chief Minister and continued playing an important role in Malacca's

rapid development," he said.

In Kuantan, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob said Mohd Zin was a credible leader who showed his capability in guiding Malacca towards achieving the status of an industrialised State.

"He had a vision to see Malacca becoming a Koridor Ilmu (Corridor of Knowledge)," he said.

In Teluk Intan, Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon also expressed his condolences to Mohd Zin's family.

DAP MP for Kota Melaka Lim Guan Eng, who also extended his condolences to Mohd Zin's family, said: "As a member from Malacca, I regard his death as a loss to Malacca."

Senator Datuk Ibrahim Ali tabled a motion in the Dewan Negara to extend condolences to Mohd Zin's family and pray for his soul. The Senators were saddened by the death of a leader who was clean, had integrity and was loved by friends and foes as the Malacca Chief Minister, he said.

In Alor Gajah, the body of Mohd Zin arrived at his house, Seri Aduka, in Kampung Melekek at 7.50 tonight. A crowd including State Executive Councillors and senior government officers had gathered at his house after the announcement of his death.

All official State functions tomorrow and Friday have been cancelled as a mark of respect.

(END)