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Former Bank Negara chief Ismail dies at 79

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Former Bank Negara Governor and Permodalan Nasional Bhd chairman Tun Ismail Mohamed Ali died today at the Ampang Puteri Specialist Hospital. He was 79.

The longest-serving central bank governor leaves two sons - Iskandar, a merchant banker, and Ahmad Kamal, an architect. His wife Toh Puan Maimunah Abdul Latiff died two years ago.

A qualified lawyer, Ismail was born on Sept 16, 1918, in Port Klang. He was the second eldest among 10 children in his family.

Eldest son Iskandar said his father was admitted to the hospital one and a half weeks ago.

"He passed away just before 11am. He was admitted with flu but unfortunately his resistance was low, and he had an aneurism burst."

The body of the veteran civil servant was taken to his residence at 23, Jalan Taman U Thant, and was buried at the Ampang Muslim Cemetery soon after asar prayers.

Ismail was the elder brother of Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Among those who paid their last respects at Ismail's residence were Dr Mahathir and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Others who were present included Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa.

Regarded as one of Malaysia's most gifted bankers, Ismail was Governor of Bank Negara from 1962 to 1980, setting the record as the longest-serving central bank governor in Asia.

\* OBITUARY: PAGE 4

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