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## Sarawak tycoon Wee Boon Ping dies after illness

KUCHING, Tues. - Tycoon and former president of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia (ACCCIM) Tan Sri Wee Boon Ping died today after a short illness. He was 63.

His eldest son, Wee Kok Tiong, said his father died at 6.55am at the Normah Medical Specialist Centre where he was admitted last night.

He said that family members were at his bedside when he died.

His remains were later brought to his residence at Lot 235, Jalan Wee Seng Goon, off Km 2 1/2 Jalan Rock here.

He will be buried at the Hokkien Cemetery at Km14 Penrissen Road on Saturday.

Wee is survived by his wife, Puan Sri Liew Hiun Khin, three sons and seven daughters.

Wee's last public appearance was on Oct 6 when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad visited Kuching to open the annual general meeting of ACCCIM and the Chung Hwa School No. 6.

At the opening of the AGM of ACCCIM, Wee announced that he was stepping down as president, a post he held since 1978.

Born in Simunjan in Kota Samarahan Division in 1936, he studied at Chung Hwa Secondary School here where he obtained his Senior Middle 11.

Following this, he worked in his brother's sundry shop in Kuching's main bazaar.

In 1960, he and some friends opened up a construction and later a manufacturing business. He was also involved in gold mining for a few years.

In 1967, he started his logging company, a joint venture with the Ibans known as Niah Native Logging Sdn Bhd. He later sold his shares in the company and moved to Sabah where he expanded his business.

The following year, he was made managing director of Wee Kheng Chan Sdn Bhd. The same year he started the Borneo Publication Sdn Bhd and two years later published the International Times, a leading Chinese daily in Sarawak.

In the early 1980s, he diversified his business into Peninsula Malaysia, investing in properties, finance, trading and manufacturing.

In 1984, he was conferred the Panglima Setia Makhota (PSM) which carries the title "Tan Sri" by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and in 1993, he received the Datuk Amar Bintang Kenyalang Sarawak (DA) from the Yang di-Pertua Negeri. The award carries the title "Datuk Amar".

Among the companies in which he had interests are Bornion Timber, Unico Holdings Bhd, Kim Chuan Seng Holdings, Ontrade International Ltd, International Wood Products Ltd, Perdaman Sdn Bhd and Batu Lintang Rubber.

He had also been president of the Sarawak Chinese Chambers of Commerce, a member of the National Economic Consultative Council, a member of the Malaysian Business Council and chairman of the Selangor Hawkers and Petty Traders Cooperative Society.

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