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Wife dies, Deputy Minister injured in crash

M. Jeffri Razali; Jalina Joheng; Shareem Amry

RAWANG, Sat. - Newly-appointed Deputy Education Minister, Senator Datuk Abdul Aziz Samsuddin, was injured and his wife was killed in a crash on the North-South Expressway, near Bukit Sentosa, about 75km from the city, today.

Their son, Nasrizal, 28, who was driving the family's Toyota Prado four-wheel drive vehicle, was also injured.

Datin Asmah Ali Hussein, who was seated in the back seat, is believed to have died at the scene.

The family was heading towards the Federal capital from Ipoh when the crash occurred just before noon.

Kuala Kubu Baru police chief Superintendent Azman Yusof said initial investigations revealed the four-wheel drive went out of control, crashed into the guard railing on the road shoulder before plunging into a ditch.

Passing motorists stopped to help the crash victims.

Azman said Abdul Aziz, 62, and Nasrizal were taken to the Ng and Singh Clinic in Bandar Country Homes, Rawang, which was the nearest medical facility equipped to handle emergency cases.

Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Mohd Shafie Apdal was among those who visited them at the clinic.

Asmah's body was taken to the Kuala Kubu Baru Hospital mortuary.

After their condition had stabilised, both father and son were transferred to the Subang Jaya Medical Centre at 2.30pm.

A steady stream of Cabinet members and VIPs, including Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, visited Abdul Aziz at 4.40pm.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Datin Seri Endon Mahmood arrived earlier at 4.07pm.

The others included Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng, Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman.

Also present were Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar, Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam and Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Suleiman Mohamad.

Briefing the Press at SJMC, Chua said both Abdul Aziz and Nasrizal were "mercifully" in good condition.

"(Abdul Aziz) has a concussion, but nothing serious. A scan showed that everything is clear," he said.

Azman said the post-mortem revealed that Asmah died of head injuries.

Relatives claimed Asmah's body this afternoon for funeral rites to be performed at the family's home in Jalan Opu Daeng Merewah 1, Shah Alam.

She will be buried at 10am tomorrow at the Shah Alam Muslim cemetery.

Among those who paid their last respects were Dr Mahathir, Dr Siti Hasmah, Abdullah and Endon.

Others who also paid their respects were former Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayub, Abu Hassan, former Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib and Siti Zaharah.

About 5.45pm, Abdul Aziz and Nasrizal were brought home in an SJMC ambulance to enable them to pay their last respects.

While Nasrizal stayed behind, Abdul Aziz was taken back to SJMC for

treatment.

Dr Mahathir had yesterday announced Abdul Aziz's appointment as Deputy Education Minister. He was formerly Dr Mahathir's political secretary and was sworn in as a Senator early last month.

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