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Sarawak Yang di-Pertua Ahmad Zaidi dies

M. Jeffri Razali, Sulok Tawie; Letitia Samuel
PETALING JAYA, Tues. - Sarawak Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Ahmad Zaidi
Aduce Muhammed Noor (picture) died at the Subang Jaya Medical Centre
early today following an illness. He was 76.

His wife, Toh Puan Rosmiati Kendati, and children were at his bedside
when he died about 6am.

The State Government announced a seven-day mourning period and declared
today a public holiday.

From SJMC, Ahmad Zaidi's body was taken back to the home of his son-in-
law, Datuk Dr Anuar Masduki, in Subang Jaya, for final rites to be
performed.

Among the first to arrive at the house to pay their last respects was
Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

His wife, Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, arrived later.

Other ministers, members of the royalty and senior government officials
also turned up to offer condolences.

Among members of the royalty who paid their last respects were Raja Muda
Selangor Tengku Idris Shah and Raja Muda Perak Raja Nazrin Shah.

Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, Agriculture Minister Datuk Effendi
Norwawi, Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng
Ding, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, Deputy
Inspector-General of Police Datuk Mohd Jamil Johari, former Agriculture
Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud and Sarawak FA president Datuk Taha
Ariffin were also present.

Ahmad Zaidi's body was placed in a coffin and carried by eight pall-
bearers comprising two each from the army, police, Royal Malaysian Air
Force and Royal Malaysian Navy onto a van about 2pm.

The cortege was flown to Kuching on a RMAF C-130 Hercules transport
aircraft from Subang. The aircraft arrived at Hornbill Skyways hangar at
the Kuching International Airport at 5pm. The cortege was taken to Astana
Negeri where it will lie in state to allow dignitaries and the public to
pay their last respects.

In Kuching, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud and Cabinet
ministers were among hundreds present when the RMAF aircraft touched down.
Earlier, Abdul Taib had announced the death of Ahmad Zaidi over RTM
Sarawak and declared a public holiday.

State Secretary Datuk Abdul Aziz Husain told a Press conference that
Ahmad Zaidi had been ill for the past three weeks and was treated at the
SJMC. Ahmad Zaidi's personal doctor, Dr G.S. Hans, who was present, said
Ahmad Zaidi died of coronary artery disease (disease of the heart veins)
and end-stage kidney failure.

Aziz said the State funeral would be held tomorrow, and burial about
11am. He said the hearse carrying the remains of Ahmad Zaidi would leave
the Astana Negeri for the Samariang Muslim Cemetery in Petra Jaya.

Ahmad Zaidi, the fifth and the longest serving Yang di-Pertua Negeri,
was born on March 29, 1924. He was appointed the Yang di-Pertua Negeri on
April 2, 1985.

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