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Agong-Abdullah

KING'S DEATH BIG LOSS TO COUNTRY, SAYS DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- The Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has described the death of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah today as "a great loss to the country and the people".

"I personally feel very, very sad. He was a very good King, one whose heart is with the common people," Abdullah said when contacted by Bernama today.

Describing him as "a people-friendly and people-centred" monarch, Abdullah said the people would readily come forward to shake the King's hands whenever he visited them.

"I have seen this happening whenever I accompany the King during his visits to various places," he said.

Abdullah said Sultan Salahuddin was very understanding and very concerned about problems faced by the people.

"During my many audiences with the King, he has always talked about the people, their problems. He wanted the people to have a healthy environment," Abdullah said.

The late Sultan Salahuddin also kept emphasising that there should be no extremist inclinations in fulfilling religious obligations, he said.

The King also valued peace and prosperity in the country and had on many occasions spoke on the need to preserve them at any cost, he said.

"All these showed that he was a King who cared for the welfare of the people.

"I am sure that all Malaysians feel a sense of loss, I personally feel very sad," Abdullah added.

Sultan Salahuddin, 75, the country's 11th Yang di-Pertuan Agong passed away at the Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre here shortly before noon today of heart failure after two months of illness.

The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the King's death over Radio Television Malaysia.

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