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More world leaders send condolences messages

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - More world leaders including Saudi Arabia's King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz and French President Jacques Chirac have sent messages of condolences on the death of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah.

The others included Iranian President Mohammed Khatami and United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

The messages were sent to the Acting Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Chirac said it was with great sadness that he learned of the demise of the King.

"On this sorrowful occasion for your country, I wish to convey to Your Majesty as well as to the people of Malaysia, in my name and on behalf of the French people, my sincere and heartfelt condolences," he said in the message to Sultan Mizan.

Khatami, in his message to the Prime Minister, said he had offered his prayers for the late King.

Bername reports that UAE Vice-President and ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and Sharjah ruler Dr Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi also sent condolences to Sultan Mizan and Dr Mahathir.

Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz and Defence Minister Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz also sent similar messages.

New Zealand's acting Prime Minister Jim Anderton, in his message released by the High Commission here, said: "The death of the King on Wednesday marks a sad day for our close neighbour Malaysia and for New Zealand."

He said it had been hoped that the King and the Raja Permaisuri Agong, Tuanku Siti Aishah, would make a state visit to New Zealand in January next year.

"I am saddened that we will be unable to welcome Their Majesties. It had been the King's personal wish to visit New Zealand.

"We extend our greatest sympathy to the royal family, in particular to Her Majesty, the Raja Permaisuri Agong, and also to the Government and people of Malaysia at this time of mourning."

Meanwhile, among the foreign dignitaries at the funeral of the King yesterday was Jordanian Ambassador to Malaysia Mazen Juma who represented King Abdullah II of Jordan.

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