

23/11/2001

The King laid to rest (HL)

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The late Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah al-Haj Ibni Almarhum Sultan Hisamuddin Alam Shah al-Haj was laid to rest next to his grandfather Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah at the Royal Mausoleum in Klang today.

The burial was carried out an hour-and-a-half after his son Tengku Idris Shah was proclaimed the ninth Sultan of Selangor at Istana Alam Shah, Klang, and bestowed the title Sultan Sharafuddin.

About 10,000 people, many with tears in their eyes, caught a final glimpse of their beloved King as the coffin was lowered into the grave at 4.30pm.

Members of the royal family and dignitaries, beginning with Sultan Sharafuddin and then Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Siti Aishah, also sprinkled air mawar (scented water) over the grave as the military gave a 75-gun salute to the late King, one for each year of his life.

Also present were the Rulers and members of the royalty of the various States, Yang di-Pertuas Negeri, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo and the Sultan of Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

After the burial, Selangor Mufti Datuk Seri Mohd Tamyas Wahid delivered the talqin (final rites).

The entire ceremony was carried live over radio and television.

Sultan Salahuddin, 75, died of heart failure at 11.57am yesterday at the Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre in Jalan Ampang.

This morning, the royal hearse was taken from Istana Selangor to the National Mosque here for the sembahyang jenazah (prayers for the dead) which started at 8.20am.

Led by Federal Territory Mufti Datuk Hashim Yahya, the prayer was joined by the Acting Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, Tengku Idris, members of the Selangor royal household, Dr Mahathir, Abdullah, Cabinet Ministers and the public.

A morning drizzle over the city sky added to the sombre mood as thousands of people paid their last respects to the King.

The hearse left for Istana Negara at 8.35am for the lying-in-state at the Throne Room.

The coffin was placed on a seven-tiered dais draped in royal yellow satin cloth with the national crescent and guarded by officers of the police and the tri-services of the armed forces.

After the foreign and local dignitaries as well as the rakyat paid their last respects, the coffin made its way through a 2.7km procession on a gun carriage pulled by slow-marching soldiers to Dataran Merdeka in front of the Sultan Abdul Samad Building.

The gun carriage carrying the coffin arrived at Dataran Merdeka where the coffin was transferred to the royal hearse accompanied by a royal salute.

The royal hearse then made its way to Istana Alam Shah in Klang, allowing the rakyat to witness the procession.

The Prime Minister passed the hearse to the Selangor Menteri Besar for the lying-in-state at the Istana.

After about an hour, the coffin was later transferred to the raised pedestal in the hall (Petarakna) of the Balai Rongseri to the throne

(singahsana) for the proclamation ceremony to commence.

The ceremony itself took about 15 minutes after which the coffin was taken out of the Balai Rongseri and placed on a a hearse pulled by 48 members of the 8th Royal Malay Regiment from Selangor.

The procession along Jalan Istana through Jalan Kampung Jawa to the Selangor Royal Mausoleum was about three kilometres long and took about hour.

Sultan Sharafuddin and members of the royal family accompanied by Dr Mahathir, Abdullah, Dr Mohd Khir, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir and Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad followed the hearse to the mausoleum.

Sultan of Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah was also present at the funeral.

Queen Elizabeth of Britain, Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra were among world leaders who sent their condolences.

People in the street also expressed their grief over the loss of their Ruler, most of whom described him as a down-to-earth and a caring Ruler.

Born on March 8, 1926 at Istana Bandar, Kuala Langat, Selangor, he was installed as Raja Muda of Selangor on May 13, 1950.

He was proclaimed the eighth Sultan of Selangor on Sept 3, 1960 and the 11th Yang di-Pertuan Agong on April 26, 1999.

Terrestrial as well as satellite TV and radio stations cancelled all entertainment programmes today.

Regular programming was replaced with the "live" telecast of the lying-in-state ceremony from Istana Negara and the State funeral.

These telecasts were interspersed with documentaries and Quranic recitals.