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RECUPERATING GENERAL EXPRESSES HEARTFELT GRATITUDE

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 23 (Bernama) -- Former Defence Forces Chief Gen (R) Tan Sri Ismail Omar today thanked Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamallulail for visiting him at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

Ismail, rescued alive from the rubble that was once his home, lost six family members in the landslide at his residence in Taman Hillview, Ampang. His wife - Puan Sri Azizah Abdul Aziz, their son - Hijaz, two in-laws, two grandchildren and two Indonesian maids were killed in the 4.35am incident last Wednesday.

"I'm touched by the support from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Cabinet ministers, relatives and neighbours," he said in statement issued by the Defence Ministry today.

Ismail, who is currently Affin Bank chairman, expressed heartfelt gratitude to members of the search and rescue team for their tireless efforts. He also thanked the Indonesian Embassy for arranging to send home the remains of his maids - Sulastri and Sundari.

Ismail is recuperating at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital VIP ward. However, he was not yet ready to meet members of the media.

Meanwhile, Bernama was barred from site of the tragedy as policemen guarding path leading to Ismail's house said they had orders not to allow people in.

--BERNAMA

CS NSM ZS PC