

19 AUG 2002

Friend-Die

PM'S OLD FRIEND DIES WITHOUT FULFILLING WISH FOR MEETING

ALOR SETAR, Aug 19 (Bergambar) -- An old friend of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has died, before the former's request for a meeting with the prime minister could be fulfilled.

Pekan Rabu Cooperative founder and former chairman Mustaffa Ismail, 86, died at the Pusat Perubatan Utara here two days ago and was buried at the Bukit Tinggi Muslim cemetery in Kepala Batas, near here, yesterday.

Mustaffa's assistant and close friend Mohamad Nazar Shamsudin, 42, said Mustaffa had planned to bring him along for a meeting with the prime minister.

"Pak Pa (Mustaffa) told me the reasons he wanted to meet Dr Mahathir, and he had submitted two letters seeking a meeting," he told Bernama here today.

According to Mohamad Nazar, Mustaffa last met Dr Mahathir when the prime minister visited Kedah in June this year.

Mustaffa leaves behind two wives and two adopted children.

Mustaffa had known Dr Mahathir since the 50s and Mustaffa's house used to be a meeting place for Dr Mahathir and his friends.

Dr Mahathir is still a member of the Pekan Rabu Cooperative.

-- BERNAMA

MNH YBY