

05 JUL 2003

Sulaiman-Obituary

UMNO MOURNS THE LOSS OF TUN SULAIMAN

KUALA LUMPUR, July 5 (Bernama) -- Umno is mourning the loss of its permanent chairman Tun Sulaiman Ninam Shah who succumbed to leukaemia at the Pantai Medical Centre here at 5am today.

The loss leaves a deep scar in the body which is Umno as Sulaiman was not only a charismatic chairman but a highly experienced veteran in Malaysia's political arena.

His laid-back and relaxed attitude always brought a smile to the Umno delegates in any of the party's general assemblies.

He always entertained the delegates with his anecdotes and often caused laughter amidst the serious discussions pertaining to national and party agendas in the assemblies.

In his 28 years as Umno permanent chairman, the general assembly last June was the first which Sulaiman failed to chair due to his ill-health.

In an interview with Bernama on June 18, he spoke of his regret and sadness for not being able to attend the assembly which he felt was historical, being the last time Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would open it as party president.

In fact, Dr Mahathir in his keynote address, said the assembly felt a little different without Sulaiman's presence.

Sulaiman was born on Jan 2, 1920 in Muar, Johor.

Before being active in politics, he once served as a police constable from 1939 to 1942 and held the post of Muar OCPD until 1945.

He was also appointed senator in 1979 and Dewan Negara deputy president in 1982 before he retired from the civil service in 1985.

Sulaiman started his involvement in the corporate world by selling newspapers, magazines and religious books.

He was once the director of Laksamana Tour Sdn Bhd and chairman of Top Coach Builder Sdn Bhd and Malacca-Singapore Executive Express Bhd besides having been chairman of Bank Rakyat.

In the political arena, Sulaiman joined Umno in 1947 and won a state assembly seat for Parit Jawa, Johor in the 1959 general election.

He became the Muar Umno chief from 1973 to 1986 and began his duty as Umno permanent chairman in 1975.

Among the medals awarded him are Darjah Panglima Setia Mahkota which carries the title "Tan Sri" and Panglima Mangku Negara (PMN) while in 2001 he was awarded the Seri Setia Mahkota Malaysia which carries the title "Tun".

-- BERNAMA

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