

03 FEB 2004
Khailan-Buried
ABDULLAH'S MOTHER BURIED

KEPALA BATAS, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's mother, Datuk Khailan Hassan, was laid to rest at the Masjid Al Jamiul Badawi cemetery here this afternoon.

She was buried next to Abdullah's grandfather, Abdullah Fahim, a veteran ulama who had contributed a lot to developing Islam and fighting for the country's independence.

Thousands of people, including Abdullah and his family, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, who had cut short their holiday abroad, and cabinet ministers attended the funeral.

Earlier, Abdullah, his family and several dignitaries joined in prayers led by the imam of Masjid Al Jamiul Badawi, Datuk Abdul Rahim Abu Bakar.

The last rites were led by the Mufti of Penang, Datuk Hassan Ahmad.

Khailan, 79, died at 5.05pm yesterday after complaining of breathing difficulty. She died 94 days after Abdullah, became Malaysia's fifth prime minister.

Abdullah, 64, is the eldest of four siblings. The others are Aminah, 60, Datuk Ibrahim, 57, and Mohamed Tahir, 50, who stayed with her in the ancestral home in Jalan Perak here. Khailan also leaves behind 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

The cortege left the house at 3.10pm and the burial was completed at about 4.35pm.

Hundreds of people, including 100 members of the Royal Malay Regiment based in Sungai Petani, Penang and Bukit Kayu Hitam, 60 members of the Royal Malaysian Air Force and 60 Rela and Pemuda Umno members, formed a line stretching about 200m to carry her remains to the mosque.

Earlier, Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid,

Penang Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Abdul Rahman Abbas and former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, joined more than 10,000 people in paying their last respects to Khailan.

During her lifetime, Khailan had supported her husband, the late Datuk Ahmad Badawi's, struggle in Umno and was active in the Women's Institute and the Umno branch here but kept out of the limelight.

Her family initially wanted to bury her next to her husband in the same cemetery by there was no empty plot.

A tahlil will be held for her at the mosque tonight. Abdullah is expected to attend before leaving for the federal capital.

People from all walks of life had kept streaming to Abdullah's ancestral home since yesterday to pay their last respects and offer their condolences.

Besides cabinet ministers and chief ministers, Indonesian ambassador to Malaysia Drs KPH Rusdihardjo and the representative of Timor Leste were also present, as well as opposition leaders and several artistes.

They included Parti Keadilan Nasional president Datin Seri Wan Azizah Ismail and its vice-president, Saifuddin Nasution.

Police controlled traffic leading to Abdullah's ancestral home and the stretch from Jalan Maju to Jalan Perak was closed to vehicles to facilitate traffic flow.

Seberang Perai Utara OCPD ACP Mohamed Sharif Hassan said 250 security personnel including those from the traffic police and the Federal reserve Unit were deployed to the area from 5.30pm yesterday to 5pm today.

A local resident, noting the massive crowd from outstation, commented that this was a sign that Abdullah was a leader loved by the people.

Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, in extending the condolences of the cabinet, said Khailan's death was not only a great loss to her family and society but was also the loss of a model mother.

"We are sad, and my Cabinet colleagues and I extend our condolences on the death of the prime minister's mother," he told Bernama when met at Abdullah's ancestral home.

-- BERNAMA

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