

14 JUL 2004

Abdullah-Azizan

AZIZAN MADE IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO M'SIA, SAYS ABDULLAH

PUTRAJAYA, July 14 (Bernama) -- Petronas Chairman Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin who died today is indeed an outstanding figure who contributed immensely to the country's well-being, especially in the economic sector, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

Describing his death as a big loss to the nation, he said Azizan, during his lifetime, was a determined person, with high credibility and integrity.

"Actually, he made great contributions to the King and country. If we take into account his involvement as Petronas Chairman and as a senior civil servant earlier, his services are very significant," he said.

Abdullah paid tribute to Azizan when met by reporters after attending the final prayers at the Putra Mosque here led by the Grand Imam Datuk Sheikh Ismail Mohamad.

The 69-year-old Azizan who died at his official residence here after complaining of chest pains was laid to rest at the Taman Selatan muslim cemetery this evening.

Tengku Taufik, who has been Azizan's aide for two years said: "Everything seemed normal with him and all of us were completely shocked to hear of his death.

Azizan complained of breathing difficulties and chest pains at about 4.15 am and died shortly after at his home in Putrajaya, according to a MAS official.

" He looked as healthy as he normally was. When we first heard the news, some of us could not believe it," said Tengku Taufik.

" He had very hectic schedules and most of the time had to attend multiple meetings. Sometimes he had to limit the duration of these meetings," he added.

Dr Mahathir, in holding back tears, only nodded his head when asked by reporters whether he regarded Azizan's death as a big loss to the

country.

Azizan's widow, Noor Ainee, was a picture of grief as she sat beside her husband's grave during the last rites as Putrajaya experienced intermittent rain.

Earlier, more than 1,000 people attended the prayer for Azizan's remains which arrived from Bukit Segambut at 3pm.

Among them are Home Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid, Federal Territories

Minister Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad, Minister in the Prime Minister's

Department Datuk Dr Abdullah Mohd Zain, Chief Secretary to the Government

Tan Sri Samsudin Osman and Petronas President and Chief Executive Officer

Tan Sri Hassan Marican.

Met at the Taman Selatan cemetery, Education Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said he personally learnt a lot of Azizan's noble qualities.

"I learnt so much from him about honesty, hardwork, commitment and love for the country and people," he said.

Describing Azizan as a very sincere and dedicated man, Hishammuddin said he was in fact a role model for all Malaysians, especially the future generation.

"I hope we'll be able to pass on these attributes to our future generation. He is a role model to us all for we can learn so much from his dedication, earnestness and determination to see his fellow countrymen become successful in this challenging world," he added.

-- BERNAMA

MAM TOM