



Former info minister Tok Mat dies
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Former Information Minister and one-time Umno secretary-general Mohamed Rahmat died at his home in Bukit Damansara in Kuala Lumpur today, three days short of his 72nd birthday.

Tok Mat, as he was popularly known, died in his sleep, according to his eldest son and Pulau member of parliament Nur Jazlan.

Nur Jazlan said the family came to know that Tok Mat had died at about 8am when his mother, Salbiah Abdul Hamid, tried to wake up her husband.

"He died in his sleep," he told reporters at the house.

Nur Jazlan said Tok Mat would be buried at the Bukit Kiara Muslim Cemetery after the "Asar" (evening) prayers today.

Nur Jazlan said his father had been suffering from kidney ailment for about 10 years and had been on dialysis treatment.

Tok Mat served as the information minister twice, from 1978 to 1982 under then prime minister, the late Hussein Onn, and from 1987 to 1999 under then prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He was also Malaysia's ambassador to Indonesia, with ministerial status, from 1982 to 1984.

He held the post of Umno secretary-general from 1988 to 1996 and as the BN secretary-general from 1988 to 1999.

Rock singers told cut their long hair

As the minister of information, Tok Mat introduced the "Setia Bersama Rakyat" (Semarak) programme aimed at instilling in the people greater love for the country.

Tok Mat was also known for his firmness.

One instance where he displayed it was when he ordered rock singers to trim their long hair if they wanted to participate in programmes broadcast over Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM).

Among those who followed the directive were the rock groups Wings, with lead singer Awie, and Search, with lead singer Amy.

- *Bernama*

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