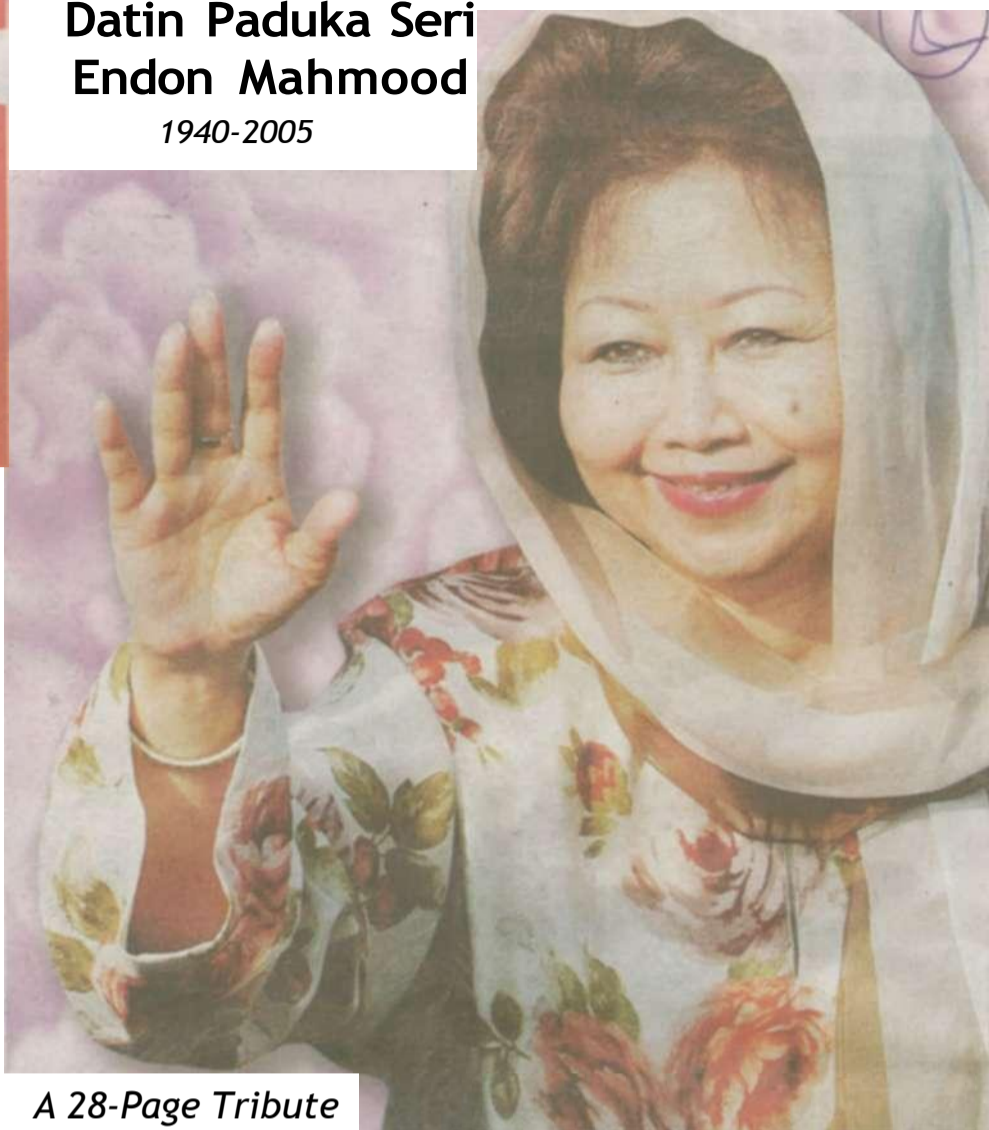


Datin Paduka Seri
Endon Mahmood
1940-2005



A 28-Page Tribute

Even during her last hours, Datin Paduka Seri Endon's thoughts were of the people and her family.

"Take care of everybody and the family," she advised her husband Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and family members gathered round her bedside.

"I promised her that I would do it," a weeping Rahmah Mahmood, Endon's sister, told *The Star*.

It rained the whole day yesterday as the nation mourned the passing of Endon.

Tens of thousands of people - from royalty, presidents, prime ministers to ordinary people - paid their last respects to our Beloved First Lady, sharing their grief with the family at the Prime Minister's residence, the Putrajaya Mosque and the burial ground.

Many wept openly at the great loss the nation has suffered.

Endon's last words

Take care of everybody

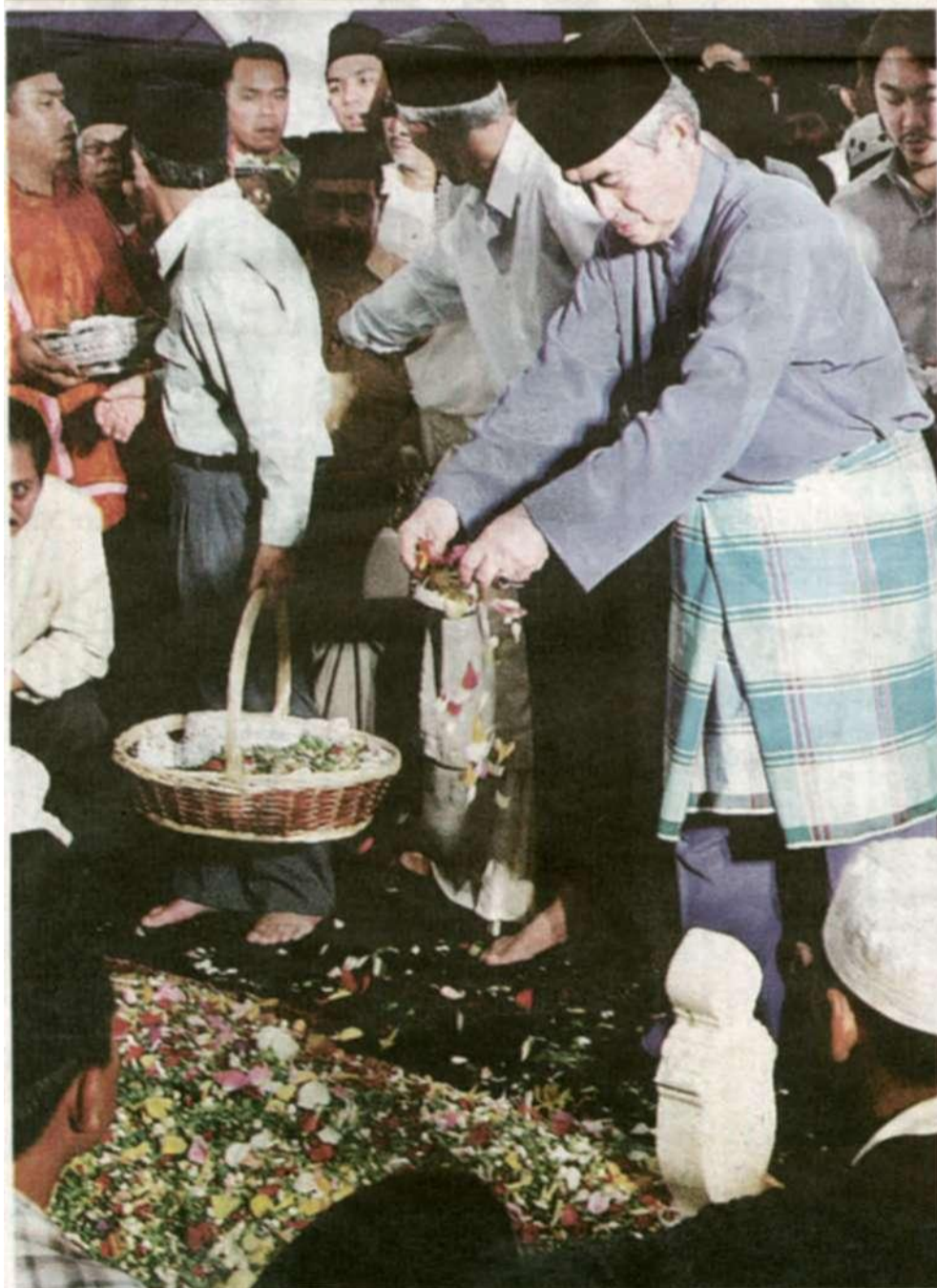
> Poignant final farewell > Endon's life and work Headers pay tribute > More stories in Pages 2 to 20



IN PRAYER: Abdullah's family members, relatives and friends praying for Endon at their official residence in Putrajaya yesterday. Thousands of Malaysians also paid their last respects after news of her death was announced.



ROYAL GOODBYE: Abdullah speaking with the King and Queen who had come to Sri Perdana to offer their condolences to the family.



LAST RITES: Abdullah surrounded by family members scattering rose petals over Endon's grave at the Putrajaya Muslim Cemetery yesterday.

Condolences from ordinary folks and VIPs

PUTRAJAYA: It was a cold and wet day, but the rains had stopped by the time Datin Paduka Seri Endon Mahmood was laid to rest in the Muslim cemetery at Precinct 20 here after *asar* prayers yesterday.

The Prime Minister's wife, 64, passed away at 7.55am after a protracted battle with cancer.

The bereft but composed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was the first to sprinkle scented water and floral petals over the grave, followed by his son Kamaluddin, 38, daughter Nori, 29, their respective spouses and Abdullah's grandchildren.

The final farewell was a poignant moment for the close-knit family, for whom Endon had always been an anchor figure.

Kamaluddin, barefoot and clad in a simple white shirt and dark trousers, had managed to hold on to his emotions for much of the day but gave way to tears at the graveside as his sister held on to his arm.

Abdullah's politician son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin also startled everyone when he leapt into the grave to assist in

laying out the body and covering it with earth.

Abdullah, who had enjoyed an unabashedly loving and devoted relationship with the late Endon, looked pale and weary with grief.

The couple were known for holding hands in public and giving each other affectionate pecks on the cheek.

And while Endon had not been passionate about his politics, she had always been what he called "my No1 supporter".

Given that, the Prime Minister showed remarkable control throughout what must have been one of the saddest days of his life.

And as some pointed out, he has buried two of the most important women in his life in two years - the other being his mother Datuk Kailan Hassan, in February last year.

Abdullah and Endon had celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary this year.

This was the first time that a First Lady had died while her husband was still in office.

VIPs including Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, his wife Datin Seri

Rosmah Mansor, and former Premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad also stood at the graveside as the traditional lumps of earth and leafy branches were laid around the body and *talqin* prayers recited.

Thousands of people ranging from ordinary folk to royalty and foreign dignitaries were at the burial where a blue tent had been erected and floor matting laid out around the grave.

Many of those who watched were overwhelmed and wept openly.

Philippines president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, clad in a black robe with a shawl over her head, and Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo were present at the burial.

The King, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Jamalullail, and the Queen, Tuanku Fauziah Abdul Rashid, had paid their respects at Abdullah's Sri Perdana residence.

A Singapore entourage led by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, which included President S.R. Nathan, Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, and



LAST RITES: Endon's grandchildren sprinkling flowers on her grave with help from Abdullah and his children.