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Marina: Pray for dad's successful op

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be in good hands when he undergoes his second coronary bypass today.

The team will be headed by Tan Sri Dr Yahya Awang, the cardiothoracic surgeon responsible for performing the first cardiac coronary bypass on the former prime minister in 1989.

An expert from the US, Professor Dr Hartzell V. Schaff, has also been flown in to be part of the surgical team at the National Heart Institute (IJN).

Dr Schaff has 34 years of experience and practises cardiothoracic surgery and general surgery at the Mayo clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Dr Mahathir will also be attended to by a panel of doctors

headed by IJN medical director, Datuk Seri Dr Robaayah Zambahari.

Dr Mahathir, 81, was admitted to the IJN on Sunday for the elective coronary bypass surgery. Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali was by her husband's side.

Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir urged Malaysians to pray for her father.

"We pray that everything will go well. The family would appreciate it if Malaysians could also pray for the success of his surgery."

Marina said her father was fit and healthy but decided that it was the right time to have the bypass.

She stressed that the second coronary bypass was not an emergency procedure.

The IJN said in a statement that doctors had advised Dr Mahathir against having any visitors, except for immediate family members.

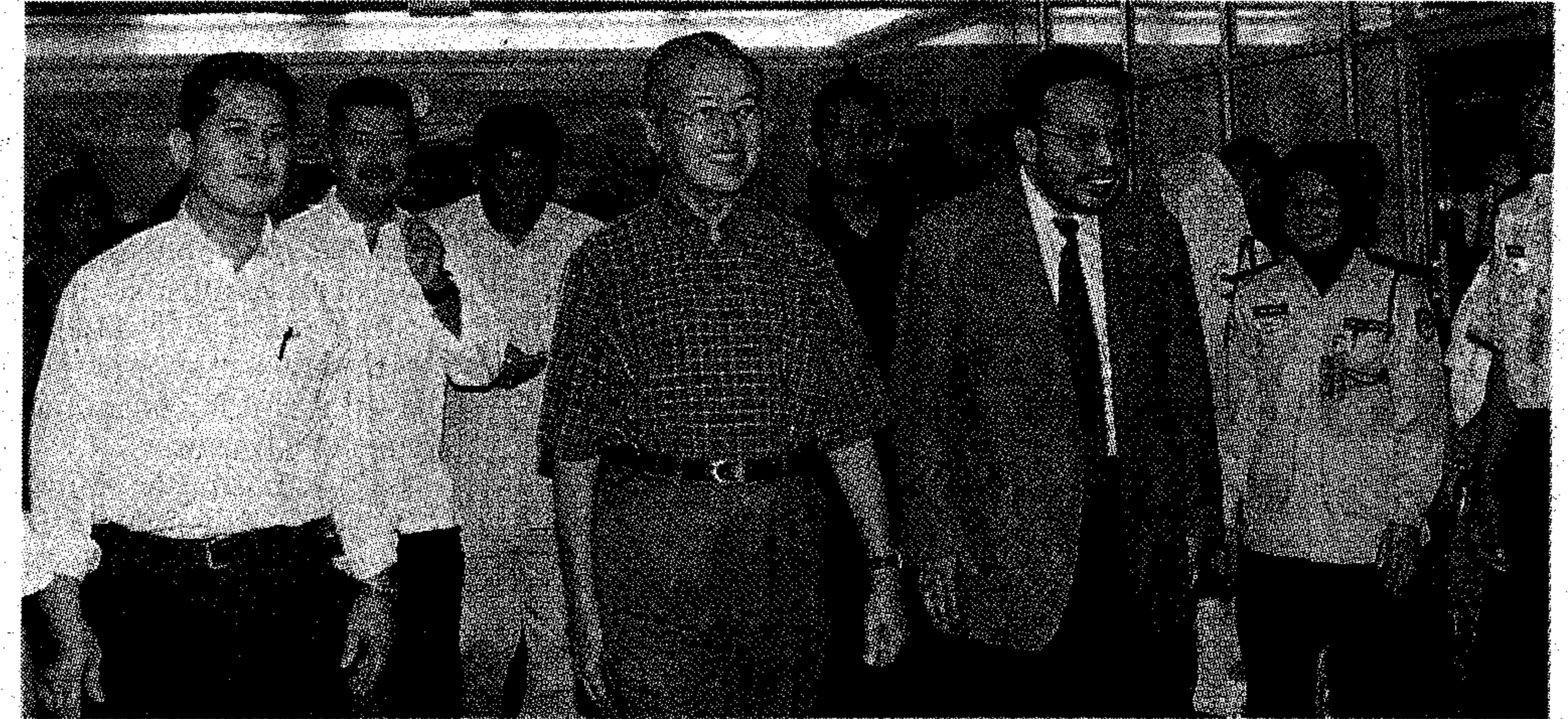
Security at the IJN was tighter than usual yesterday to prevent visitors from trying to see Dr Mahathir. A security guard was stationed near the lifts and policemen were guarding his ward.

Although Dr Mahathir is discouraged from having visitors, Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim and Deputy Internal Security Minister Datuk Johari Baharum were at the hospital yesterday.

Rais, who spent more than an hour at the IJN, refused to comment on Dr Mahathir's condition.

Johari said he didn't see Dr Mahathir as he was resting but met Dr Mahathir's family members.

On Jan 24, 1989, Dr Mahathir, who was then 63 years old, underwent a successful coronary bypass operation at the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will undergo a second coronary bypass today. This photograph was taken when he was discharged on May 24 after being admitted to the National Heart Institute for lung congestion linked to a heart attack.

Dr Mahathir suffered a heart attack on Nov 9 last year and was admitted to the IJN.

The *International Herald Tribune* newspaper had reported that Dr Mahathir's doc-

tors had found three blockages in the heart.

On May 14, Dr Mahathir was rushed to the Langkawi Hospital after he complained of breathing difficulties and was

transferred to the IJN the following day.

He was discharged 10 days later after recovering from lung congestion linked to a heart attack.