

Nation mourns Abdullah's passing

Former PM fondly remembered as Malaysia's 'father of human capital development'

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia mourns the loss of its fifth prime minister, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who passed away at the National Heart Institute (IJN) at 7.10pm yesterday. He was 85.

Affectionately known as Pak Lah, Abdullah stepped into the role of prime minister in 2003, succeeding Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. He stepped down in 2009.

Abdullah will be laid to rest at Makam Pahlawan, Masjid Negara, today.

His body was sent to his home in Kuala Lumpur last night and will be brought to Masjid Negara this morning, said son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin.

"From 11am to 1pm, his body will be placed at the main prayer hall at Masjid Negara for those wishing to pay their last respects.

"For non-Muslims, we ask that they come appropriately clothed. Cloaks will also be given at the mosque if required. He will be

buried at Makam Pahlawan," he told a press conference at IJN last night.

Khairy added that the decision to have the former prime minister buried there was made after discussions between the family and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

On Abdullah's final moments, Khairy said he was surrounded by loved ones before his passing.

"All of his family members were with him at the time of his final moments, including his wife Tun Jeanne. Pak Lah left us in a calm state.

"On behalf of the family, I would like to thank IJN for taking care of him so well. They did all they could to ensure he was peaceful during his last moments," he said.

With his gentle demeanour and a focus on nurturing human capital, Abdullah earned the title of Malaysia's "father of human capital development".



Mark of respect:

Abdullah will be laid to rest at Makam Pahlawan, Masjid Negara.

Abdullah also has two stepchildren, Nadiyah Kimie and Nadene Kimie, from Jeanne's previous marriage.

In a statement, IJN chief executive officer Prof Datuk Seri Dr Mohamed Ezani Md Taib said the hospital was saddened by Abdullah's passing.

"Tun Abdullah was admitted on Sunday morning after experiencing breathing difficulties.

"He was placed under intensive care at the Coronary Care Unit, where he was closely monitored. Despite all medical efforts, he passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loved ones.

"The entire IJN family is united in grief as we mourn the loss of Tun Abdullah," he said.

The hospital also said Abdullah's humility and grace touched many of its staff.

"We extend our heartfelt condolences.

"May he rest in eternal peace, Al-Fatihah," he said.

He was instrumental in introducing the National Human Capital Policy, leaving a lasting impact on the nation.

In recent years, he suffered from dementia, a condition that gradually took away his ability to

recognise even those dearest to him.

Abdullah leaves behind Jeanne and his children, Nori and Kamaluddin, from his first marriage to Tun Endon Mahmood, who passed away in 2005.