

Fitting farewell for a true statesman

In loving memory: Abdullah's wife Jeanne (centre) and daughter Nori Abdullah Badawi (on Jeanne's left) paying their last respects at Makam Pahlawan. - Bernama



Thousands pay respects as ex-PM laid to rest

KUALA LUMPUR: From royalty to the common man, thousands came to pay their last respects to former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

VIPs silently paid tribute, while even strangers wiped away tears as the solat jenazah (final prayer for the deceased) was performed after the zuhur (noon) prayer.

Dark clouds lent a sombre atmosphere to the funeral but at 3.05pm, sunlight bathed the grounds of Masjid Negara, as though offering a final salute to the man who once led the nation with humility and calm resolve.

The country's fifth prime minister was then laid to rest at Makam Pahlawan (Warriors Mausoleum), the resting place of Malaysia's most revered national figures.

Terengganu Ruler Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, accompanied by his son Tengku Setia Mahkota Raja Tengku Muhammad Mud'az, was there to pay his final respects.

Selangor Ruler Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah and Tengku Permaisuri of Selangor Tengku Permaisuri Hajah Norashikin also expressed their sadness and grief.

Four former prime ministers were there too.

The sixth prime minister, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, arrived at the mosque at 10.40am after the Kuala Lumpur High Court granted his request to be excused from his ongoing trial yesterday.

Two-time former prime minis-

ter Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived 50 minutes later, followed by the eighth prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin at 12.20pm, while the ninth prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob arrived at 12.34pm.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim led Cabinet members, including Deputy Prime Ministers Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, in paying respects.

Fadillah described Abdullah's passing as a profound loss for Sarawak, adding that Pak Lah had left a lasting legacy in the state through the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy, which significantly propelled its economic development.

"On behalf of myself, Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg and the people of Sarawak, I extend our heartfelt condolences to Tun Jeanne Abdullah and the entire family," he said.

The Sabah State Legislative Assembly also conveyed its condolences to Abdullah's family.

Speaker Datuk Seri Kadzim M. Yahya said the entire state assembly was deeply saddened by the statesman's passing.

Also present to pay their last respects was Singapore's Senior Minister and former prime minister Lee Hsien Loong.

All of them had words of comfort and condolences for Abdullah's wife, Tun Jeanne Abdullah, and his family members.

The day began with an unusual stillness, with grey skies overhead. By 8.15am, the vehicle carrying Abdullah's remains arrived at Masjid Negara, accompanied by relatives and close friends.

His remains were brought into the mosque's main prayer hall, where religious attendants carried out the Islamic cleansing ritual.

Originally scheduled for 11am, the public viewing to pay respects was brought forward by an hour.

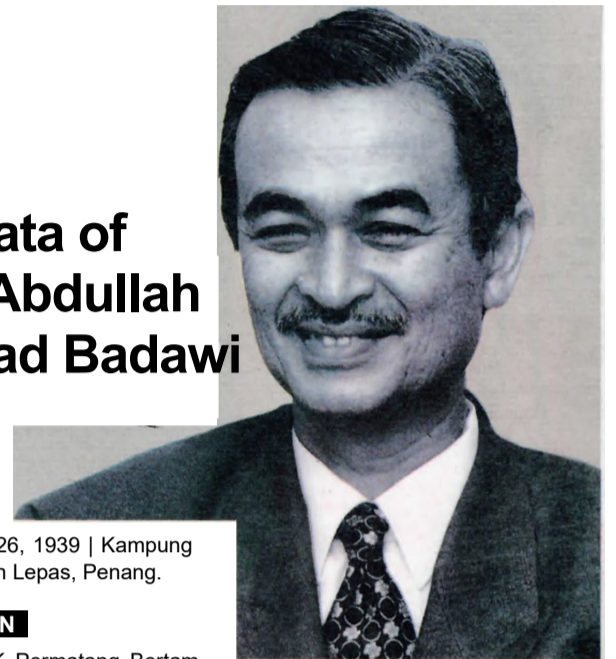
From 10am, dignitaries, national leaders and members of the public streamed into the mosque, filling every corner.

By noon, the mosque swelled with an unusually large congregation and the atmosphere was heavy with emotion.

At 1.50pm, pall bearers carried the coffin bearing Pak Lah's remains out of the main prayer hall to Makam Pahlawan. A tearful Jeanne, surrounded by family and close friends, followed closely.

The crowd remained hushed as the burial rites were carried out, concluding with the recitation of the talkin - gentle reminders of the soul of the life that was, and the journey that lies ahead.

Biodata of Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi



■ **Born:** Nov 26, 1939 | Kampung Perlis, Bayan Lepas, Penang.

EDUCATION

- Primary: SK Permatang Bertam (1947-1950).
- Secondary: Bukit Mertajam High School.
- Form Six: Penang Methodist Boys' School.
- Tertiary: BA (Hons) in Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya (1964).

PERSONAL LIFE

- Son of Ahmad Abdullah Fahim and Datuk Khailan Hassan.
- Married Tun Endon Mahmood (d. 2005); later married Tun Jeanne Abdullah.
- Children: Tan Sri Kamaluddin and Nori.

POLITICAL CAREER

- Joined Umno in 1965. Resigned from civil service to enter politics full-time in 1978.
- MP for Kepala Batas (1978-2013).
- **Held several key ministerial portfolios:**
 - Defence, Foreign, and the Prime Minister's Department.
 - Appointed DPM in 1999. Succeeded Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as PM on Oct 31, 2003.
 - Led Barisan Nasional to a historic landslide victory in the 2004 General Election, winning 198 of 219 parliamentary seats.
- **Key Umno posts:**
 - Supreme Council member (1981)
 - Vice-President (1984, 1987, 1990, 1996)
 - Deputy President (2000-2003)
 - Served as PM until April 2, 2009.

Credit: Abdullah's official website

Pak Lah's death at the age of 85 - he passed away peacefully at the National Heart Institute at 7.10pm on Monday - also prompted an outpouring of tributes from all across the country, and the

LEGACY & ADVOCACY

- Championed Islam Hadhari, a progressive, humanist approach to Islam.
- Advocated moderation, reform, and anti-corruption.
- Focused on agriculture, education, and rural development.
- Introduced five economic corridors under the 9th Malaysia Plan.
- Oversaw ex-gratia payments to judges affected by the 1988 Judicial Crisis.
- Established the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to replace the National Bureau of Investigations.

POST-PM CONTRIBUTIONS

- Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia chairman.
- International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies patron and founder.
- World Islamic Economic Forum founding patron.
- Adviser to Malaysia Airlines and national economic development corridors.
- **International roles:**
 - Inter Action council member.
 - Boao Forum for Asia board Member.
 - Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group chairman (2010-2011).
 - Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council founding member.

political divide.

It was a fitting farewell for a leader known as a statesman - one who governed not with thunder, but with quiet strength and moral clarity.