

**Death Of Mohd Po'ad A Great Loss For Me - PM
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SUBANG, March 31 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak described the death of his private secretary, Datuk Mohd Po'ad Jelani, who died of lymphoma cancer, as a great loss for him and the Prime Minister's Office.

He said throughout his entire life, Mohd Po'ad had discharged all his duties with high level of dedication and reliability, besides having great personality.

"I'm deeply saddened by the demise of Mohd Po'ad because he had been working with me since 1999, when I was the Education Minister.

"I hired him after seeing his leadership characteristics as the Malaysian Youth Council secretary-general," he told reporters after paying his last respect to Mohd Po'ad at the Subang Air Force Base Mosque here tonight.

Mohd Po'ad, 50, breathed his last at 9 am today at the Raffles Hospital, Singapore, where he was receiving treatment.

Najib arrived at the mosque at 7.30 pm and joined the congregation to perform Maghrib and also funeral prayers.

The prime minister, who is currently on a visit to Sarawak, also extended his condolence to the family.

Also present were Baling Member of Parliament Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim and the staff of the Prime Minister's Office.

The remains of Mohd Po'ad arrived at the base from Singapore at 6 pm and were then taken to his hometown in Kampung Janda Baik, Bentong, Pahang for funeral.

Meanwhile, Mohd Po'ad niece Ana Farahah Mohd said her uncle was admitted to the Ampang Hospital during the recent school break before being flown to Singapore last Tuesday to undergo chemotherapy treatment.

"He was a strict man, but generous and kind hearted towards his nieces and nephews," she said.

Efforts to interview Mohd Po'ad's wife and children failed as they refused comment.

Mohd Po'ad leaves behind wife Datin Hamizah Abdul Khalid, 48, and three children, Nabilatasha, 23, Nabila Afiqah, 21, and Muhamad Irfan Hazim, 16.

Mohd Po'ad had served as Najib's special aide in the Education Ministry in 1999 before

being appointed as Deputy Prime Minister's private secretary on April 1, 2004 and eventually as Prime Minister's private secretary.

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