

Mahathir receives courtesy call from Gen Prem Tinsulanonda

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BANGKOK, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- It was a meeting between two longtime friends when Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is on a two-day official visit here received a courtesy call from General Prem Tinsulanonda, Thailand's 98-year-old former Prime Minister.

The courtesy call took place just before afternoon at Prem's official residence in Si Sao Thewes, Bangkok due to the Thai leader's health.

Both leaders exchanged greetings and met for about 30 minutes during which they discussed various matters.

Prem became Thailand's Prime Minister in 1980, a year before the 93-year old Dr Mahathir took over Malaysia's premiership in 1981 as the country's fourth Prime Minister.

The retired Army general held the top post for eight years until 1988 when he relinquished the position, while his Malaysian counterpart remained at the helm until 2003, leading the country during a period of rapid economic growth.

Despite leaving the top post, Prem retained his influence in the country's affairs and in 1998 he was appointed by then Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej to head the country's Privy Council.

He had held the influential position since.

The Privy Council served as an advisory body to the King, with its members held the post for life.

In 1979, Prem received two awards from Malaysia, with the first being Pingat Mangku Negara (P.M.N) award which carries the title Tan Sri, and the second in 1986, the Seri Maharaja Mangku Negara (S.M.N) award which carries the title Tun.

Dr Mahathir became Malaysia seventh Prime Minister in May this year after leading Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition to victory during the 14th General Election.

The Prime Minister who was accompanied by his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali will depart home later today.

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