



SOLEMN MOMENT: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad conveying their condolences to Amir Hamzah, the eldest son of Petronas chairman Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin (below), at his home in Bukit Segambut, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday. — STARpic by ABDUL RAHMAN SENIN



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Petronas chairman dies

KUALA LUMPUR: Tan Sri Azizan Zainul Abidin, one of Malaysia's most distinguished former civil servants and a prominent corporate leader, died at his home in Putrajaya yesterday. He was 69.

Azizan, the chairman of national oil company Petronas and Malaysia Airlines, complained of breathing difficulties and chest

pains at about 4.15am and died shortly after at his home in Putrajaya.

He is survived by his wife Puan Sri Noor Ainee Che Teh and three children: Amir Hamzah, 37, Datin Norizan, 34, and Ikhwani, 25.

Describing Azizan as a determined person,

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PM pays tribute to Azizan

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Pak Lah: He contributed greatly to King and nation

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with high credibility and integrity, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he was indeed an outstanding figure who contributed immensely to the country's well-being.

"Actually, he made great contributions to the King and country. If we take into account his involvement as Petronas chairman and as a senior civil servant earlier, his services are very significant," he said when met by reporters after attending the final prayers for Azizan, led by the Grand Imam Datuk Sheikh Ismail Mohamad, at the Putra Mosque in Putrajaya.

Azizan was laid to rest at the Taman Selatan Muslim cemetery in Putrajaya in the evening.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, also attended the burial.

Dr Mahathir, holding back tears, only nodded his head when asked by reporters whether he regarded Azizan's death as a big loss to the country.

Azizan's widow, Noor Ainee, was a picture of grief as she sat beside her husband's grave during the last rites as Putrajaya experienced intermittent rain.

Among those who paid their last respects was Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail, Sultan of Perak Sultan Azlan Shah, Cabinet ministers, senior civil servants and officials from Petronas and MAS.

According to his personal assistant Tengku Taufik Tengku Aziz, Azizan



GRIEVING FAMILY: Noor Ainee being consoled by her children, while Dr Mahathir looks on at the Taman Selatan Muslim cemetery in Putrajaya, yesterday. — STARpic by RAJA FAISAL HISHAN

kept a busy schedule even hours before he died.

The Petronas chief had met Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yacop at the latter's office in Putrajaya on Tuesday evening to discuss matters relating to Putrajaya Corporation.

Putrajaya Corporation, of which Azizan was also chairman, is the developer of the federal administrative capital.

Tengku Taufik said that after meeting Nor Mohamed, Azizan held another meeting with lawyers on the Yayasan Kepimpinan Perdana.

"Then he went through his schedules for the rest of this week and for next week with me before going home at about 5.45 pm," Tengku Taufik said.

Tengku Taufik, who has been Azizan's aide for two years said: "Everything seemed normal with him and all of us were completely shocked to hear of his death.

Nor Mohamed said Azizan came by his office at 4.15pm on Tuesday and they met for over 20 minutes.

"His contributions to the nation are absolutely tremendous and his death is indeed a great loss," he said.

Nor Mohamed said Azizan was instrumental in developing Petronas into what it was today - the world's most profitable oil company - and the recent turnaround of MAS after years of losses

"A man like Azizan isn't born every day. The hallmark of Azizan's character was absolute honesty and integrity. He was the quintessential public servant of the highest rank," Nor Mohamed said.

Kuala Lumpur Mayor Datuk Mohamad Shaid Mohd Taufek said Azizan attended a meeting on Tuesday morning at City Hall here as a member of the newly set up Management Co-ordination Committee on Federal Territories.

"Tan Sri Azizan spoke a lot at the meeting. He told us of his vision to turn Putrajaya into a beautiful city that won't be spoilt by over-development like Kuala Lumpur," Mohamad Shaid said. — Bernama