

Film-maker in ICU

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian director Yasmin Ahmad (picture), best known for her TV commercials “Family” and “Funeral”, was warded in intensive care yesterday after she collapsed during a meeting at the headquarters of TV3 in Selangor.

She is believed to have suffered a stroke and was rushed to the Damansara Specialist Hospital.

She was said to be unconscious and on life support, but in stable condition.

“During the presentation, Yasmin felt unwell and had difficulty breathing. CPR was administered before she was taken to the hospital. But it is not true that she collapsed,” said her colleague, Mr Tan Kein Eng.

Yasmin, 51, is famous for her film *Sepet*, as well as for the two TV commercials commissioned by Singapore’s Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, which cel-



ebate family relations in spite of its imperfections.

She was also in the midst of directing a film in memory of Singaporean triathlete Thaddeus Cheong, who collapsed in 2007 after a selection race for a South-east Asian Games triathlon event. *Go! Thaddeus* was to be shown next August in the run up to the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore.

The critically-acclaimed director began her career in advertising. Her works have been shown at prestigious film festivals in Cannes, San Francisco, Berlin and Singapore and have won many international awards. AGENCIES

US-ASEAN TIES

‘We won’t expel Myanmar’

BANGKOK — The Association of South-east Asian Nations (Asean) will not consider expelling Myanmar over the detention of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, rejecting United States calls, Thailand’s Prime Minister said yesterday.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told Thai television on Wednesday that the regional bloc should consider kicking out the military-ruled member state if it does not free the Nobel peace laureate, who is on trial in prison. She has spent 13 of the last 19 years in detention.

But Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, speaking as current chair of the 10-state grouping, said that while Asean and the West “have the same goal, we cannot implement the same policy”.

“There are not enough grounds to do that (expel Myanmar). We have already done what we can under the Asean mechanism,” said Mr Abhisit, referring to the group’s public statements expressing concern over Ms Aung San Suu Kyi’s detention.

“If Myanmar is expelled it will further isolate (the regime) and will that solve the problem?”

Mr Abhisit has rejected the imposing of sanctions on Myanmar, such as those enforced by the United States and European Union.

“We are still insisting on our policy of constructive engagement and hope that the US will understand,” Mr Abhisit added.

Ms Clinton urged Myanmar



CHECKS RAMPED UP AT ASEAN FORUM

Security forces yesterday destroyed a motorcycle they suspected was loaded with explosives after it was sniffed by dogs.

It was later determined that the bike was not armed. Not taking any chances, the police destroyed it in a controlled explosion that could be heard throughout the area.

The bike, whose owner had abandoned it because it had a flat tire, was found about 270m from the main venue of the Asean Regional Forum on Thursday, said Army Lieutenant General Kanit Sapitkarak.

The bomb scare prompted security to be stepped up, with security forces checking all motorcycles entering the hotel venue of the Phuket meeting yesterday. AFP

yesterday to ensure free and fair elections that would require the release of political prisoners, of whom there are more than 2,100 behind bars according to UN figures. Elections are scheduled for 2010.

US officials earlier said they had held a rare meeting with a delegation from Myanmar on Wednesday that included talks on the treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Ms Clinton also said on Wednesday that the release of Aung San Suu Kyi could pave the way for investments from the US.

“I want Myanmar to take this opportunity to take some action to improve relations with the US,” said Mr Abhisit. AFP

We are still insisting on our policy of constructive engagement and hope that the US will understand.

Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva



BLOOMBERG

‘There’s no way he would kill himself’

SHAH ALAM — Eight more people were called by the police yesterday to assist in investigations into the suspicious death of political aide Teoh Beng Hock, reported Bernama.

The witnesses were believed to be among the last persons to have called or sent text messages to Mr Teoh 24 hours before he died.

His body was found on July 16, hours after he was questioned by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) over an alleged misappropriation of Selangor state funds.

Among the witnesses were five local councillors and three DAP members. One of the eight, 30-year-old Woo Chuan Sing, said that Mr Teoh, an aide to an opposition lawmaker in Selangor, had sent Woo a short text message asking him to be his best man during his upcoming wedding on Aug 3.




DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng at Teoh’s funeral. MALAYSIAN INSIDER

The SMS was sent one day before Mr Teoh died, reported *The Malaysian Insider*. Mr Teoh had called Mr Woo a short while later to reconfirm that he would be the best man.

“He sounded normal that morning,” said Mr Woo, who had

known Mr Teoh for nine years. “There is just no way he would kill himself,” added the businessman.

Following a public outcry, the government has set up a Royal Commission to probe MACC procedures. AGENCIES



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