Beat: Vips

Singapore;s founding father Lee Kuan Yew dead at 91

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USPA News - Former Singapore prime minister Lee Kuan Yew, who is widely recognized as the founding father of modern Singapore and who led the country for more than three decades, died early Monday after a battle with severe pneumonia, the government said. He was 91. Lee "passed away peacefully" at the Singapore General Hospital at 3:18 a.m. local time on Monday, the prime minister`s office said in a statement.

The former prime minister had been hospitalized with severe pneumonia since early February, but an infection worsened his condition and caused it to become critical last week. Lee`s son, current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, declared a week-long period of national mourning and ordered flags to be flown at half-mast. His office said Lee`s body would lie in state from Wednesday through Saturday, after which a state funeral service will take place on Sunday afternoon. U.S. President Barack Obama, in a statement released from the White House, hailed Lee as "a true giant of history" and offered his condolences on behalf of the American people. "A visionary who led his country from SingaporeÃ¢€™s independence in 1965 to build one of the most prosperous countries in the world today, he was a devoted public servant and a remarkable leader," Obama said. The president added: "Minister Mentor LeeÃ¢€™s views and insights on Asian dynamics and economic management were respected by many around the world, and no small number of this and past generations of world leaders have sought his advice on governance and development." ... He was a true giant of history who will be remembered for generations to come as the father of modern Singapore and as one the great strategists of Asian affairs." Former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, who was in office at the end of Lee`s tenure as prime minister, said he was "deeply saddened" by the news, and added that he respected his "effective leadership of his wonderful, resilient and innovative" country. "I will always be proud that Lee Kuan Yew was my friend," he said.

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