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Lebanon honours Dr M with its highest award

Farush Khan in Beirut

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad received Lebanon's highest award - Wissha Al-Akbar (The Grand Cordon of Lebanon) - from the Lebanese government on Monday night.

He was the third to receive the award, established seven years ago.

First to receive it was Lebanon's parliament president Nabih Berri, followed by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri.

The award was presented to Dr Mahathir during a dinner hosted by Hariri.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu.

Twenty-five businessmen who joined Dr Mahathir during his three-day official visit here were also present.

Among those in the business delegation were Malaysia Airlines Bhd chairman and chief executive Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli, chairman of Arab Malaysia Group Tan Sri Azman Hashim, group chief executive officer of Best World Land Bhd Datuk K. Kenneth Eswaran, Berjaya Group Bhd chairman and chief executive officer Tan Sri Vincent Tan and DRB Hicom Group chairman Datuk Mohd Saleh Sulong.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister met Berri and Hariri.

Hariri admired Malaysia's policy which had elevated the country to a leading economic power in East Asia.

Hariri said Lebanon encouraged Malaysian businessmen to invest in the hotel sector and establish joint industrial projects.

He said Lebanon which was learning from the Malaysian experience had in the last five years made great strides in implementing a plan for economic recovery.

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