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RM3.8m birthday gift from billionaire Lim Goh Tong

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - What possibly can you give an 80-year-old billionaire for his birthday?

For Tan Sri Lim Goh Tong, chairman and founder of the Genting Group of Companies, nothing.

But Lim had an idea on how to make his birthday memorable - hold a grand dinner for 800 guests with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali as guests-of-honour.

And instead of receiving gifts, Lim, through his foundation Yayasan Lim, donated RM3.8 million to nine organisations for various charity and medical causes.

The recipients were Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Medical Faculty (RM2 million), nine old folk homes (RM600,000), Malaysian Wetlands Foundation (RM500,000), Malaysian Red Crescent Society: North Korea Famine Relief (RM200,000) and RM100,000 each to the National Heart Foundation, Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman, National Cancer Society, National Kidney Foundation and the Malaysian Liver Foundation.

In paying tribute to Lim, Dr Mahathir praised the tycoon and described him as a model entrepreneur for his ability to translate government policies into reality.

Lim, he said, was among the pioneer group of Malaysian entrepreneurs who successfully worked with the Government to develop Malaysia, even before the Malaysia Incorporated concept was introduced.

"His success story is typical of Malaysians who work hard to make a fortune and a name for themselves and to contribute to the development of the country.

"The Government is happy for his success," he said, adding in jest that "for obvious reasons because Lim pays a lot of taxes".

Earlier, Lim said he was grateful for the co-operation given by the Government and various quarters which successfully realised his dreams and visions to help develop Malaysia in the tourism sector.

His speech was read out by his son Datuk K.T. Lim.

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