

18/03/1998

Dr Mahathir conferred prestigious builders award

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was tonight conferred the most prestigious award of builders and contractors for his meritorious services in the promotion of the construction industry.

The award, known as the International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractors' Association - Atsumi Award, was instituted in 1993 by the late Takeo Atsumi, a world-renowned master builder.

His wife, Itsuko, presented the award to Dr Mahathir at a dinner at the Palace of the Golden Horses in Sungei Besi, held in conjunction with the five-day IFAWPCA 29th convention.

It carries a cash prize of US\$3,000 and is presented during each convention, which is hosted by Malaysia this year.

The association had chosen Dr Mahathir as this year's recipient in recognition of his tremendous contribution towards the promotion of the construction industry in Malaysia.

Among some of the projects of which the Prime Minister was the prime mover were the construction of the Penang Bridge, the North-South Expressway, the Kuala Lumpur Tower, the Petronas Twin Towers, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang and the federal administrative centre of Putrajaya and the hi-tech city of Cyberjaya.

He was also noted for encouraging Malaysian contractors to spread their wings beyond Malaysian shores.

In his acceptance speech, Dr Mahathir said, in jest, that his involvement in the construction industry was confined to asking people to build things.

"Fortunately, they have succeeded. So, all these projects are not the result of my own effort but rather the dream of this country to have something worthwhile to show to others."

Although many of them, like the KLIA, had been termed as mega projects, Dr Mahathir added that they were actually small compared to similar projects elsewhere.

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