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Grand welcome for Formula One drivers

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IT was a rare opportunity for guests at the Formula 1 formal dinner held at Mandarin Oriental Hotel last Thursday as they were able to meet and get acquainted with the F1 drivers.

With Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed as the guest-of-honour, the event was a splendid gathering for the 800 guests.

Among those first to arrive to welcome guests were Sepang International Circuit chairman Tan Sri Basir Ismail and Petronas president and chief executive officer Tan Sri Hassan Merican.

Some of the F1 drivers present were Mika Hakkinen of McLaren Mercedes and wife Erja and Eddie Irvine and Michael Schumacher of Scuderia Ferrari.

Others seen were McLaren's other driver David Coulthard and girlfriend Heidi Wichlinski and F1 fans Craig Pollock and Derek Wright from London and Mario Ellien from Switzerland.

Seen too were Agfa Film (M) Sdn Bhd managing director Peter Buytaert, EAC Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd managing director Jack T.T. Ng, Japan Tobacco International (M) managing directors Tomoyuki Shimada and wife Tomoko and Y. Abe as well as general manager S. Tomioka, Tag Heuer chief executive officer Christian R. Viros and Sincere Fine Watches marketing manager Barbara Tay.

Others seen were Singapore Press Holdings deputy sports editor Yap Koon Hong, Time International managing director Irwan Danny Mussry, British High Commission counsellor Howard Parkinson, Irish ambassador Brendon Lyons, Siobhan Adams from London, and The Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry director of marketing Lorraine Ellison.

Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad managing director Hishan Abdul Rahman, SIC board of director member Syed Zaid Albar and Mercedes-Benz motorsports director Norbert Haug were also present at the grand dinner.

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