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Dr M is Rotary Man of the Millennium

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was today presented with the "Rotary Man of the Millennium" award.

The award was presented by Rotary International District 3300 Governor Datuk Jaffar Mohamad Ali at the officiating ceremony of the 65th Rotary International District 3300 conference.

Dr Mahathir, in his speech, urged the people to adapt swiftly to changes in the new era to effectively reap benefits.

He said the future was not without challenges as the pace of technological changes, the borderlessness of nations and the ever increasing flow of information technology would have a great impact.

"It is important that Malaysians be ready and responsive to these changes," he said.

He also said the world today was fraught with problems including that of war, famine and poverty.

"The humanitarian approach of Rotary International in providing community service worldwide, has helped to alleviate some of these miseries and sufferings."

Jaffar said the award was in recognition of the Prime Minister's success in steering Malaysia out of the economic downturn despite the criticisms levelled against him.

He said Dr Mahathir, who was a Rotarian in Alor Setar 30 years ago, showed perseverance and determination in not only bringing the country out of the downturn, but making it economically stronger in the process.

"We truly feel the Prime Minister deserves this award as he had brought the country to such great heights and we strongly believe that under his leadership, the country would reach greater heights in its pursuit of Vision 2020," he said.

Jaffar also presented Dr Mahathir, who celebrated his 74th birthday recently with a giant birthday card signed by all Rotarians attending the conference.

Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng, past Rotary International director Datuk James Peter Chin and past Rotary International president Glen W. Kinross.

More than 800 participants, including those from Thailand, Taiwan, Amsterdam and India are attending the three-day conference which began yesterday.

The conference will discuss the role Rotary International plays in the world today while workshops on E-Commerce, the Multimedia Super Corridor and Addiction and Aids would also be held.

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