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Wan Hafizam wins award for heroic deed

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PETALING JAYA, Thurs. - Wan Hafizam Ismail, whose selfless sacrifice in donating part of his liver to a stranger made headlines last year, was today named the 175th winner of the Guinness Effort Award.

The 23-year-old administrative assistant with Universiti Malaya offered part of his liver to help 14-month-old Mohd Afiq Iqmal who was suffering from terminal liver failure.

Mohd Afiq's plight was highlighted in the New Straits Times early last year and his future looked bleak until Wan Hafizam came forward with his offer.

Despite concerns from the medical fraternity, the operation was successful and made local history by being the first transplantation involving a non-family member.

Wan Hafizam, whose sacrifice also received the attention of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, received a Guinness Effort Award certificate, a personalised pewter goblet and a home theatre set.

He said that he was well and leading a normal life.

He even counted sky-diving as one of his hobbies.

He has also pledged to donate his organs when he dies.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Suleiman Mohamad who presented the award to Wan Hafizam praised him for his noble deed and urged others to emulate him.

"It is the Government's aim through Vision 2020 to establish a caring society," he said, adding that he would also donate his organs after his death.

The ceremony was held in conjunction with Mohd Afiq's second birthday where a cake was presented to him.

Also present were the toddler's parents, Shamsiah Salimin and Mohd Iqmal Zaini, grandmother Zaleha Thamby Chik, Guinness Anchor Bhd managing director Terry Challenor and Guinness Effort Award Scheme panel chairman A. Sri K. Nayagam.

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