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Mahathir-Award

MAHATHIR GETS AWARD FOR SUPPORT OF CYCLING EVENTS

PUTRAJAYA, June 6 (Bernama) -- The International Cycling Union (UCI) today presented Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad with its Merit Award for his strong support of cycling events when he was prime minister.

The award was presented by Datuk Darshan Singh, a member of the UCI Management Board.

The UCI contends that Dr Mahathir had put Malaysia on the world map with several major international cycling events, including the World Cycling Championship in 1997, the Track World Cup Championship 2000-2001 and the Le Tour de Langkawi (LTdL) races.

After the award ceremony, Dr Mahathir said that the staging of international events like the LTdl cycle race and the Formula One (F1) had generated much income for the country and drawn more visitors to its shores.

He said the government had made the right decision in allowing the crowd-pulling competitions to be held in Malaysia.

"The LTdL, which shows all of Malaysia, is aired by many international television stations all over the globe. That in itself is of such high value to the country," he said.

The benefits were numerous, he said, so much so that the former prime minister of another country regretted the mistake of not constructing an F1 racing circuit.

Dr Mahathir said the LTdl was initially intended to take participants along the scenic routes on the legendary island of Langkawi but it eventually grew to include those in other parts of the country.

"But I sincerely hope that the organisers of LTdL will not forget about having the race in Langkawi, something which has happened in the past," he added.

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