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Dr M delivers McDougall Memorial lecture today

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FORMER Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad will deliver the 23rd McDougall Memorial Lecture at the 32nd Session of the United Nations Conference of the Food and Agricultural Organisation at Caracalla here today.

This is the traditional lecture at the opening ceremony of the FAO conference given in tribute to Frank McDougall, who was active in public health in the League of Nations.

McDougall was one of the first to note, more than 70 years ago, the connection that exists between community health, nutrition of individuals, agricultural development and economic policy.

(The first McDougall lecture was by Arnold J. Toynby of the United Kingdom in 1959.

(Previous speakers included heads of state and government and men of stature such as Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere (1963), Rockefeller Foundation president John D Rockefeller III (1961), Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda (1979) and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (1981).

(Former Chilean President Patricio Aylwin Azocar was the 22nd speaker at the last lecture here in 2001.)

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, arrived here early yesterday morning.

In the afternoon, he performed Friday prayers at the Islamic Cultural Centre (Rome Mosque) at Viale della Moschea. He was received by the centre's secretary-general Dr Abdellah Redaouen.

In the evening, FAO director-general Jacques Diouf called on him at his suite at the Westin Excelsior at Via Vittorio Veneto.

Malaysian ambassador to Italy Datuk Lily Zachariah hosted dinner for Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah at her residence, Villa Mandorli, at Via Lucio Volumnio, Al Quattro Miglio.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah will leave for London later today on a private visit.