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Dr Mahathir honoured by UCI

Arnaz M. Khairul

THE International Cycling Union (UCI) yesterday approved the grant of the UCI Merit, the highest honour for contributions towards the sport, to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The award comes at a time when the world is paying tribute to Dr Mahathir before he steps down from his post on Oct 31.

UCI based the award of the UCI Merit based on Dr Mahathir's vision to promote the country through cycling, namely his patronage and support for the now 2.2 grade Le Tour de Langkawi and cycling in general.

The Malaysian National Cycling Federation (MNCF) had nominated Dr Mahathir for the award prior to the UCI congress meeting in Hamilton, Canada on Tuesday, which was approved by the UCI management committee.

MNCF deputy president Datuk Naim Mohamad said the federation was thankful to UCI for recognising the efforts of Dr Mahathir and the award will be handed to MNCF president Abu Samah Wahab after the Genting Challenge event on Oct 19.

The Genting Challenge is a race to the summit of the highland resort, symbolic of Dr Mahathir's struggle to drive the progress of the nation throughout his 22 years as Prime Minister.

"This makes the race even more symbolic. Although Dr. Mahathir has informed us that he can't be there, the UCI delegate will present the award on that date and our president will accept it on his behalf.

"We will later set a date to present the award to the Prime Minister," said Naim.