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Multi-talented Maznah bags Youth Ambassador Award

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - With 380,000 SMS votes, model Maznah Zulkifli won the inaugural Youth Ambassador Award today for her involvement in diversified youth activities ranging from extreme sports to acting.

Maznah, 29, who has been scuba-diving for 10 years, is also an avid bungee jumper, motorised paraglider and go-kart racer, besides being a television model, presenter and actress.

"I am touched by the recognition, I did not expect to win this," said Maznah who was the first woman in Asia to fly a motorised paraglider.

She received a trophy and certificate of appreciation at the National Youth Day celebration today.

The award was introduced to recognise youths who have displayed excellence in various fields such as arts, sports, fashion, innovation, entrepreneurship within or outside the country.

The winner was chosen based on the number of votes received via SMS.

The celebration, attended by 20,000 youths from 39 organisations and State youth councils, was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. Dr Mahathir also received RM300,000 from Malaysian Youth Council for the Malaysia International Peace Fund.

Themed "Driving the Nation's Excellence", the event kicked off with the presentation of contemporary music by the Malaysian Drum Symphony followed by performances from several local artistes such as Indigo, X-Factor and Rabbani.

The lively event filled with patriotic songs was also attended by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali; Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein; Malaysian Youth Council president Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo; Malaysian Association of Youth Clubs president Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar; and Deputy Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Ong Tee Keat.

The National Youth Award for the leadership category was won by electrical engineer Idris Haron, 37, while the volunteerism category was bagged by Belia 4B member Mohd Asrol Ismail, 22. Contractor Zaidi Japar, 34, took home the prize for the entrepreneurship category.

For the male category, the Tokoh Belia award went to youth activist Datuk Hassan Malek, 53, while Girl Guides activist Lau Kwai Chun, 53, won in the female category.

Each of the winners took home a trophy, RM5,000 and a certificate.

The Youth Organisation Prime Award 2003 was won by Persatuan Belia Generasi Tenaga Remaja Felda, Sg Sayong, Kota Tinggi in Johor, and the second prize went to Kelab Belia MAYC Kg Duyung in Malacca.

Pertubuhan Pengakap Kelana Kanan Seri Angkasa, Kuala Muda Kedah and Persatuan Belia MAYC Teluk Ketapang, Terengganu, both won the third prize.

The champion in this category received a trophy, RM7,000 cash, RM10,000 in activity aid, and a certificate. The second place winner received RM5,000 and a certificate, while the third place winners each received RM4,000 and certificates.