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MAHATHIR-AWARD ⁸⁹
FROM ZAINOOR SULAIMAN

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LONDON, MAY 25 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS BEEN CONFERRED THE HONORARY AWARD OF FREEDOM OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF CARPENTERS.

THE SCROLL WAS PRESENTED TO HIM BY J.G. RIDLEY, THE MASTER OF THE BRITISH ANCIENT GUILD OF CARPENTERS AT A BRIEF CEREMONY HELD AT THE PREMISES OF THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSION HERE YESTERDAY.

AMONG THOSE PRESENT WERE THE PRIME MINISTER'S WIFE, DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH ALI, AND MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER DATUK MON JAMALUDDIN.

THE GUILD CONFERS SUCH AN AWARD ONLY ONCE IN ABOUT 20 YEARS. AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE AWARD WAS QUEEN JULIANA OF THE NETHERLANDS, IN 1951.

THE GUILD WAS ESTABLISHED SOME 650 YEARS AGO BY MASTER CARPENTERS WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSTRUCTING THE WOODEN BUILDINGS OF LONDON DURING THOSE DAYS. -- MORE

0925MST 25 05 89

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U E966 AAE

MAHATHIR-AWARD 2 LONDON

THE PRESENTATION OF THE AWARD TO DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS RECOMMENDED BY THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

SPEAKING AT THE CEREMONY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID CARPENTRY HAD, FROM HIS EARLY DAYS, GIVEN HIM COUNTLESS HOURS OF SATISFACTION.

+AND TODAY, IT IS A MEANS OF RELAXATION TO ME,+ HE SAID, ADDING THAT THERE WAS NOTHING HE ENJOYED MORE THAN TO RETREAT FROM THE CARES OF GOVERNMENT TO HIS OWN WORKSHOP.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT FROM HIS EXPERIENCE, STATE CRAFT WAS INDEED A CRAFT WHICH REQUIRED ALL THE QUALITIES OF CRAFTSMANSHIP -- PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND ENDEAVOUR, ATTENTION TO DETAIL, LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION IN ACHIEVEMENT.

IN MALAYSIA, HE SAID, THE PEOPLE WERE SEEKING TO INSTILL SUCH VALUES IN THEIR CHILDREN.

+WE WANT EVERY CHILD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, TO HAVE A TRADE OF SKILL,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THAT IN THIS AGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, IT WAS TEMPTING TO OVER-VALUE THE WIZARDRY OF MACHINERY AND TO UNDER-VALUE THE SKILL OF THE PEOPLE.

HE WAS HAPPY TO SEE A RETURN TO PLACING A HIGH VALUE ON CRAFTSMANSHIP.

-- BERNAMA

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