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The right step, says Dr M

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad applauded Mofaz Motorsport's effort in the development of motorsports in light of Malaysia being the host to one of the prestigious Formula One rounds in 1999.

Dr Mahathir said the introduction of the Indy 40 Enduro go-kart endurance race on Aug 30 is in line with Malaysia's commitment to develop world class drivers of the future.

"It's a good start for the development of motorsports. Even Michael Schumacher started his racing career driving go-karts," said Dr Mahathir after receiving the Prime Minister's Cup challenge trophy and launching the Indy 40 Enduro race in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"We hope that events such as this will unearth future national drivers although it won't be possible to have a Malaysian in the driver's seat in 1999 (Formula One race in Sepang) because of the time constraints."

Dr Mahathir, who is also the patron of the race, received the gold and silver plated cup from Mofaz president Mohamed Fauzy Abdul Hamid and CRG (Italy) president Giancarlo Tanini.

He also commented on the size of the cup in comparison to the Thomas Cup.

"It's even bigger than the Thomas Cup, which is appropriate as it has been named the Prime Minister's Cup," said Dr Mahathir in jest.

Also present at the ceremony were the Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, and Sports Ministry's Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil.

The race, to be held at the Morac International Karting Circuit in Langkawi in conjunction with the country's 40th Merdeka celebrations, will see 40 drivers from the corporate sector competing for the RM40,000 first prize money.

Mofaz Motorsport are the race organisers and their president, Mohamed Fauzy said there will be five international entries taking part in the 40-minute endurance race.

"Two teams from Singapore and Thailand have confirmed and we are expecting another team from South Korea."

Each corporation are allowed to engage four drivers per entry, of whom only one can have experience in motorsports.

Italian-made karts will be provided for the race and will be auctioned off after the inaugural event.

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