

24 FEB 1998

Grand Prix

MAHATHIR IS PATRON OF MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 24 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Grand Prix received a massive boost as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has agreed to become the patron of the prestigious event for the second time in as many years, the organisers said today.

Malaysian Grand Prix event director Hussin Mohd Ali said Dr Mahathir's decision to be the patron of the Malaysian Grand Prix to be held at the Pasir Gudang Circuit on Apr 19 will play a crucial part in contributing to the overall success of this year's race.

Hussin said Malaysia Airports Berhad (MAB) which is involved in the Malaysian Grand Prix for the second time welcomed the news which will spur the company to give its best to ensure that every thing run smoothly.

"We are delighted the Prime Minister has agreed to be the patron once again. His support went a long way in bringing about the success of last year's Grand Prix and so we are grateful that he is the patron again this year," Hussin said in a statement.

"Everyone involved with preparations for the grand prix are extremely excited with the news," he said.

The Prime Minister's support for motorcycle racing is an extension of his involvement in motorsports for it was Dr Mahathir who is responsible in bringing the World Formula One Championship to this country.

Malaysia is scheduled to stage one round of the World Formula One Championship in 1999 at the state-of-the-art Sepang Circuit near the new Kuala Lumpur International Airport which is expected for completion by the third quarter of this year.

Hussin said MAB, the organisers of the Malaysian leg of the World Grand Prix Championship has shifted into overdrive as far as its preparations for the race is concerned.

"There is still about two months remaining but our staff have already been mobilised and are working full time to make sure that the race will be a grand success," said Hussin.

He said Johor Land Bhd, the company responsible for upgrading work at the Pasir Gudang Circuit is working round-the-clock to ensure everything is completed on time for the track inspection by the International Motorcycle Federation (FIM) officials on March 17.

Ticket prices for this year's event has been fixed at RM200 (grandstand), RM100 (uncovered seats), RM60 (general admission from Apr 17 to 19) and RM15 (general admission on Apr 17 and 18).

Ticket sale via telephone is already available and members of the public who want to make bookings can call 03-7553040 or fax 03-7552020. --  
BERNAMA

HRS ZUL