

17 MAR 1999

Ling-Circuit

CABINET WANTS FI CIRCUIT TO BE LIGHTED UP FOR NIGHT RACINGS

KUALA LUMPUR, March 17 (Bernama) -- The new Sepang F1 Circuit will be lighted up to cater for night racings and other events as a way to fully utilise it, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

He said that the Cabinet today decided that steps be taken to light up the RM286 million circuit, touted to be the best in the world.

"They cannot have one race a year and then leave it lying like that. It must have a lot of other things," he told reporters before chairing his ministry's post-cabinet meeting, here.

Dr Ling said the beautiful circuit could be used for other purposes like parades and night-time racing, similar to the Shah Alam Racing circuit at Batu Tiga which is equipped with lightings.

Dr Ling said he believed that Malaysia Airports Berhad (MAB) which owns the circuit would have to study ways to fully utilise the 5.542-km circuit.

On the cost of lightings, Dr Ling said he would leave it to Malaysia Airports.

Built on 260 hectares of a former palm oil estate, the circuit, completed in December last year, was officially opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 9.

The circuit will host the World Grand Prix Motorcycle Championship's opening leg on April 18 and the Formula One on Oct 17.

On the role of MAS and MAB in promoting the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang, he said both agencies have an important role of running and promoting the airport.

"...the two organisations work very closely together, and they have to work and cooperate very closely if they are going to succeed in making KLIA a very important hub," he said.

On the performance of KLIA, he said it was improving in terms of services but needs to improve in aspects like reducing the number of lost bags.

The ratio of lost bags in KLIA is 25 per 10,000 bags per day, compared to eight bags per 10,000 per day, by world standard.

"KLIA keeps on improving. But you cannot think of being complacent and relaxing...25 per 10,000, per day, this still needs to be brought down," he said.

On cargo clearance at KLIA, Dr Ling said the service was getting more efficient under the computerised system.

"I have been talking, for example, to the Malaysian-American electronics industry which is a big user. They commended us in terms of security and integrity. It is much better than Subang (Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport)," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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