

15 MAY 1999

Mahathir-Yoong

GOVT STUDYING ASSISTANCE FOR ALEXANDER YOONG

SHAH ALAM, May 15 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the government will study the possibility of helping Malaysia's potential Formula One driver Alexander Yoong, who is facing financial problems to take part in the F-1 race.

"We are proud of his achievements. If he has financial problems, we will study whether we can help or not," he told a media conference after launching Proton's Research and Development facility here today.

The Youth and Sports Ministry contributed RM150,000 to Yoong, who is now a Formula Three driver, to help realise his ambition of becoming a Formula One driver.

However, the monetary assistance was inadequate as millions of ringgit were needed for a racing car driver to take part in Formula One championships.

Dr Mahathir said he would take pride in the achievements of anyone as long as he is a Malaysian.

" We want Malaysians to be brave to try out new things as we believe they can succeed just like the two brothers who succeeded in walking to the North Pole," he said.

He was referring to Gerald dan Justin Read, the first Malaysians who set foot in the North Pole on April 19 after enduring severe cold weather conditions.

Benson & Hedges sponsored the mission.

Gerald, 25, and Justin, 19, are from Petaling Jaya.

-- BERNAMA

RA TS