

17 OCT 1999

Sports-F1 (Praise)

M'SIA PRAISED FOR SUPERB ORGANISATION OF GRAND PRIX

SEPANG, Oct 17 (Bernama) -- The International Automobile Federation (FIA) have lauded Malaysia for the superb organisation of the inaugural Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix at the Sepang F1 Circuit today.

Sepang International Circuit (SIC) managing director Hussin Mohamed Ali said FIA race director Charlie Whiting felt that Malaysia had emerged as among the best organisers of a Formula One World Championship.

"Whiting praised us for our organisational ability as Argentina and Brazil, for instance, took five years to become organisers like Malaysia," he told reporters after the grand prix.

He said the organisers also received praise from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who told them that there was now greater acknowledgment from abroad of such capabilities of Malaysia.

Hussin said the organisers did face some problems but they did not affect the smooth organisation of the race.

He said the response from the public to the event was most encouraging although tickets sales were initially slow.

He said the total revenue from ticket sales was RM40 million and the organisers earned another RM30 million from sponsorships.

"Today's crowd is estimated to be nearly 80,000. At the grandstand, there were 32,275 people including a lot of foreigners," he said.

Hussin said the organisers would have a greater task next year as there would be expectations of even a better race.

"The task will be heavier next year as we have succeeded in organising the race well, and everyone will expect us to do better. We will ensure that it's more successful next year," he added.

-- BERNAMA

ere sk