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This is a job for the bomoh hujan

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THERE could be an unlikely central figure doing a special job at the Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix this weekend.

And it's one job that neither Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone nor the other motorsport bigwigs can do.

This special job is to ensure that nobody gets wet during the event, at least for an hour or so. And only a bomoh hujan, a practitioner of magic, is able to stop, delay or relocate the rain.

Strange as it sounds, these bomohs are common in this part of the world and it is an open secret that their services have been employed to ensure fair weather for events ranging from football matches and golf tournaments to Malay weddings and high-profile outdoor social engagements.

There's a good chance at least one of them will be used at the country's first Formula One event because a heavy downpour during the current monsoon season can spoil the months of preparation put to stage it.

Although the Formula One drivers are used to racing in the rain, they wouldn't want to be caught wet when they do their parade in vintage cars with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Sunday.

The Prime Minister will lead the one-lap parade in a roofed 1932 Rolls Royce but the drivers will be following behind in 11 convertible vintage cars. If it rains, they would surely soak.

As it is the only opportunity for the 100,000 expected spectators to see the drivers' faces before they don full-face helmets, the organisers can't afford to cancel the programme either.

Whatever the case, the Malaysian Grand Prix just couldn't afford a shower during those few minutes and Sepang International Circuit (SIC), organisers of the race and events at the Sepang F1 Circuit, agree.

SIC chairman Tan Sri Basir Ismail, when asked on the matter last week, did not deny the possibility they would engage a bomoh hujan.

So if the rain should stop for the parade, only to resume immediately after, or the weather stays fine at the circuit but rain elsewhere, don't be surprised.

This is the hallmark of a bomoh hujan at work and you have been warned.

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