

02/06/2000

More karting circuits may be built

LANGKAWI, Thurs. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the Government would build more karting circuits, especially if the sporting event formed part of the Rakan Muda programme.

"Interest in karting among the people is increasing and we may build more karting circuits, in every State," he said.

"We have one at the Sepang Formula One circuit and another in Klang."

Dr Mahathir said the Government had spent large sums of money on stadiums, badminton halls and other similar facilities.

He said there was no problem building more kart circuits if there was interest among the people.

The Prime Minister was asked if there were enough karting circuits in the country to meet the growing interest among the people.

He said all the world's leading Formula-1 drivers started with kart racing and Malaysia could follow suit.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters after receiving a challenge trophy from Edaran Otomobil Nasional chairman Tan Sri Mohd Saleh Sulong for the Asean Kart Prix 2000 at the Morac circuit here this weekend.

The race is jointly organised by Mofaz Motorsports, Langkawi Development Authority and the Langkawi Motorsports Club.

Also present was Mofaz Group of Companies president Mohd Fauzy Abdul Hamid.

On whether he thought karting involved only certain sections of society, he said that was not so.

"Anybody can take up the sport," he said, "In fact, we expect about 5,000 spectators to show up at the kart prix."

Asked if the Government would accord special status to Aishah Nawawi, 14, the seventh generation descendant of Mahsuri, Dr Mahathir said: "We may consider something ... maybe she wants to come back to Langkawi and become a citizen ... we will consider it if there is a request."

Dr Mahathir said it was a happy and interesting occasion that a link to Langkawi's history was being established.

"She (Aishah) is said to be the seventh generation descendant of Mahsuri who had cursed Langkawi and said it would not prosper for seven generations. Today, Langkawi has developed well ... maybe, the spell is over.

"I don't know ... anyway, I don't believe in these things."

However, it would be nice if Malaysia could establish a link with Mahsuri's descendants, he added.

(END)