

Cahaya Mata title sponsors of Merdeka race

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad paid a surprise visit to the Sepang Circuit yesterday, in conjunction with a ceremony to name Cahya Mata Sarawak Berhad as title sponsor of the 12-hour Merdeka Millennium Endurance on Aug 31.

Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who attended the gathering of 230 drivers confirmed to take part in the Merdeka Millennium Endurance, was in fact interested in a particular one, namely his son Mokhzani.

After getting a tour of the cars and pit garages, Dr Mahathir signed on Mohzani's Posche GT3 car which will bear the No.1 competition plate for the 12-hour race.

Registered as "Jani Che Det", Mohzani, who is also a director of race organisers Sepang International Circuit (SIC), will have Aminud-din Omar and Adam Azman as partners.

Taking part for the second time, Mokhzani was fourth overall in the Group A category of the Endurance last year.

Meanwhile, Kuching-based Cahya Mata Sarawak Berhad have officially become the Endurance's title sponsor for the annual race.

Yesterday, Cahya Mata Sarawak's chief operating officer Albert Chan signed the sponsorship agreement with SIC general manager Ahmad Mustafa.

The event was witnessed by Cahya Mata Sarawak group chief officer Sulaiman Rahman Taib and Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad Datuk Adnan Shamsudin.

Also present at the ceremony was SIC chairman Tan Sri Basir Ismail.

In his speech, Sulaiman said: "The sponsorship indicates the conglomerate's long term commitment to be actively involved in motorsport as a contribution to the nation.

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"This venture is by no means a coincidence because a lot of time and effort have gone into this event."

Founded in 1974, Cahya Mata Sarawak was previously known as Cement Manufacturers Sarawak Sdn Bhd. Presently, the company also ventures into banking, stock broking, construction, steel, property development, cement, construction materials and construction services.

For the race, a total of 86 cars have been entered for it, but only 77 cars will make the grid.