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Mahathir-F1

F1 SPURS MALAYSIA'S MOTORSPORTS INDUSTRY, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

SEPANG, March 18 (Bernama) -- The interest generated by the Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix will spur the growth of motorsports in the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

This, he said, will not only benefit sports enthusiasts but also the domestic automotive industry.

"In two years, the Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix has elevated Malaysia's involvement in motorsports and has put Malaysia firmly on the international motorsports calendar," Dr Mahathir said in his message in the official programme for the Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix.

According to Dr Mahathir, the huge publicity that followed the event throughout its 17 rounds, "Malaysia's image will continue to grow positively, making the Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix all the more important".

"I wish to congratulate Sepang International Circuit and its parent company, Malaysia Airport Holdings Berhad for an excellent job."

"I would also like to thank the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile), FOM (Formula One Management) and their officials. The sponsors especially Petronas, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for its continued support," said Dr Mahathir.

The Sepang F1 Circuit here, built at a cost of RM286 million, is hosting the Malaysian Grand Prix for the third time.

Dr Mahathir is the prime mover behind the staging of the F1 race, held for the first time here in 1999.

A total of 22 drivers from 11 teams are taking part in this year's race of the second leg.

-- BERNAMA

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