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Hishammuddin: Workshop a success

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THOUGH a one-day seminar wasn't enough to cover all issues relevant to formulate Malaysia's blueprint for motorsports development, Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein rounded up quite an applause from about 400 participants of the inaugural National Motorsports Convention in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

"I refuse to close this convention because we've yet to achieve our objective," said Hishammuddin at the end of the eight-hour seminar, which served as the first of a two-part National Convention.

"There's still a lot more to be done and I'm hoping that all of today's participants will take part in various workshops to be set up by my Ministry after this to address the various issues concerning all motorsports disciplines.

"We hope to get valuable input from the international experts in the second part of the Convention to be held before the Malaysian F1 GP in March, and I hope the workshops would be done by then so that we can form an effective masterplan.

"I understand that Britain, despite having a flourishing motorsports culture since 1906, are only starting to draw up their own blueprint.

"Despite being a newcomer, I hope we can beat them to it."

Jointly organised by the Sports Ministry, the Automobile Association of Malaysia (AAM) and Sepang International Circuit (SIC), the Convention discussed issues with regards to karts, dirt bikes and circuit racing to 4x4 expeditions.

A total of 12 local speakers delivered talks on the 'Development of Facilities', 'Programmes, Activities and Talent Development' and 'Technical Development and the Role of NGOs.'

Among them were AAM president Tunku Mudzaffar Tunku Mustapha, who spoke on the Technical Development of Motorsports, Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir (Racing School Development), Mofaz president Mohamed Fauzy Hamid (The Need to Develop Facilities From the Corporate Perspective), Datuk Razak Dawood of Pert (Development of Motorsport Activities) and SIC's general manager Ahmad Mustafa (Motorsport Facilities).

* SEPANG International Circuit (SIC), the organisers and promoters of the 2002 Petronas Malaysian F1 Grand Prix, will flag off the inaugural Formula Malaysia Championship (FMC), meant to serve as a platform for young local drivers to compete and develop their talents.

Designed to support Malaysia's plan to produce future world class drivers, the single-seater championship will be open exclusively to locals between 16 and 25 years old.

Yesterday, SIC general manager Ahmad Mustafa said the six-round championship would make its debut as the Support Race for the Malaysia GP on March 15-17.

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