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Sepang braces for best-ever 12-hour Merdeka Endurance

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OVER 200 gruelling laps round the Sepang Circuit awaits racers on Aug 31 and preparations are going at a feverish pace with some last minute drama adding spice to the script of this year's Merdeka Millenium Endurance Race (MME).

It's almost certain to the best edition thus far considering the excitement and added bonuses awaiting motorsports fans at the Merdeka Motorsports Carnival, of which the MME is the main event.

There was a high profile withdrawal yesterday in the form of Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir whose Porsche GT3 could not be prepared in time for the race which is just a week away.

As such, his teammates Tommy Lee and Aminuddin Omar will drive alongside Tengku Hammam in a similar car, but it remains to be seen if Mokhzani, son of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, makes a last minute entry for the race.

Proton Pert launched their MME team at a restaurant in Subang Jaya last night and the line-up looks impressive with former Merdeka 300km Race winners Keifli Othman and Sharjihan Ghouse among the notable entries.

"I'm hoping for a better result this year after not finishing the race in a Satria GTi last year. The team and car look good and I'm looking forward to the race," said Sharjihan, 28, who partners Faidzil Alang and Faizal Hakimi in the MME.

Keifli will partner Malaysian Super Series hotshots Eric Yeo and Jimmy Low in the first Pert Waja, which is equipped with a Mitsubishi Evolution 6 engine.

Competitors have another chance for night testing tonight and the Sepang track is expected to be packed with MME hopefuls wishing to fine-tune their vehicles.

The circuit is open for night testing from 8.0pm to midnight tonight.