

Gallery on automotive industry

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SEPANG: Visitors to the Formula One Circuit in Sepang can look forward to a new attraction by the end of this year - an automobile gallery.

The Department of Museums and Antiquities will open a temporary gallery there as a "prelude" to the National Automobile Museum to be built near the main entrance of the circuit.

Its deputy director-general, Md Redzuan Tumin, said the two-storey gallery, on loan from Sepang International Circuit, will showcase made-in-Malaysia cars and motorcycles as well as imported cars used here. It will also chronicle the history

of automotive technology in the country.

The exhibition boasts 15 cars, worth RM3.1 million, not including those on loan or contributed by Bufori, DRB-Hicom, Perodua and Proton, and is expected to be launched by the end of the year, he said at the handover of the gallery yesterday by the contractor, Langkawi I.D. Sdn Bhd, to the department.

The groundwork for the permanent exhibition, the brainchild of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will begin next year.

The gallery, open free to the public, has a theatre and will use videos

and graphics to depict the automotive history.

The oldest car on exhibition is a 1904 Bushmobile. A 1923 Ford Speedster, a 1934 Alvis Firefly, and a 1949 MG TD are also on show.

Curator Darniza Daut Mohmud said the first cars were on the road in Malaya in the 1870s.

Malaysia began its national car project in 1982.

Until then, Malaysia only had an industrial area where foreign companies assembled their cars. The first foreign cars were assembled here in 1968 by Swedish Motor Assemblies Sdn Bhd.