

31 OCT 2003

Uniten - proud

UNITEN DOES M'SIA PROUD BY BECOMING SOLAR CYCLE CHALLENGE CHAMP

BANGI, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- Universiti Tenaga Malaysia (Uniten) made Malaysia proud when its Solar Cycle team came out first in both the bicycle and tri-cycle categories in the World Solar Cycle Challenge (WSCC) racing competition in Adelaide, Australia, last Sunday.

The Uniten team beat other international teams from Vietnam and Italy, as well as the inter-State teams from New South Wales, Victoria and South Australian, among others.

The biennial eight-day event began on Oct 19 and covered over 1,500 kilometres.

In announcing the results, Uniten Vice-Chancellor, Prof Dr Zainul Abidin M. Sharriff, was quick to point out that this achievement was a present to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who retired today as Prime Minister.

"(It's) a very tremendous achievement in our point of view and serves as a gift to Dr Mahathir on his retirement," Dr Zainal Abidin told a press conference here today.

He said both the Uniten 1 and Uniten 2 solar-powered vehicles were champions this time after finishing second in the bicycle category in 1999.

He said Uniten came up with a new and better design which helped the team improve its speed and endurance.

It was also a test of teamwork, endurance and determination to excel, he said, adding that it also showed the spirit of "Malaysia Boleh" among the 19-member team.

Dr Zainal Abidin said the university spent RM170,000 on establishing the team and sponsoring the trip to Australia and the money came from Tenaga Nasional Bhd.

"It is a quite a lot but we think for the sake of the students, for the learning process in every aspect of their studies, especially in design and technology, we had to do it. Now it has proved worthwhile in that we emerged champions," he said.

He also revealed that Uniten planned to enter the four-wheeler category in the next WSCC event and hoped to raise RM2.5 million in sponsorship to ensure its success.

"The cost of developing and building both the bicycle and the tri-cycle solar vehicles was already about RM50,000 and RM60,000, respectively," he said.

-- BERNAMA
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