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Turning KL into F1 city

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THERE will be a distinct look and feel to Kuala Lumpur for three days beginning March 19 - the capital city will be "bathed" in Formula One colours.

This is in conjunction with the Petronas Malaysia F1 Grand Prix at the Sepang circuit from March 19 till 21.

The city has also lined up a host of activities including a first-ever Grand Prix festival and street parties at selected zones like Bukit Bintang, Changkat Bukit Bintang, Bangsar, Jalan P. Ramlee and a "F1 - Salute to the Team Winner" event under the Kuala Lumpur Grand Prix City programme being held for the second year running.

Organised with City Hall in collaboration with Sepang International Circuit and major sponsors, this month-long programme will see the city being suitably "dressed" for F1 with hotels, shopping complexes and entertainment outlets organising Grand Prix oriented activities in a bid to woo more local and foreign tourists during March.

The programme was launched by Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir at the Shook Restuarnt in Starhill Centre recently.

Also present were Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Mohmad Shaid Mohd Taufek, Sepang International Circuit chairman Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir and YTL Corporation managing director Tan Sri Francis Yeoh.

Highlight of the celebration will be "KL Night", when for three nights, 100 powerful searchlights will beam 1.6km (one mile) into the sky and 20 buildings in the city centre will be lit in rainbow colours.

Kadir said more activities should be planned in a big way from next year like car and motorcycle races and other events.

"For the races, I am sure we can close some roads in the city. The month of March should be made F1 month to attract more tourists including the F1 fans," he commented.

"March is a low season for tourism because it is the only time of the year when not many activities are held unlike the other months when there are plenty of events including the Water Festival, Colours of Malaysia and Food and Fruit festival."

Meanwhile, Mohd Shaid said City Hall was proud to promote F1 through the "KL GP City" programme to attract more tourists and make the race at Sepang the best of 18 in the world.

Other events planned include an exhibition of cars called "Vintage Concourse", SMS competition in which the grand prize is a Waja 1.8 and a concert by well-known entertainers.