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Don't be complacent, says Mokhzani

ALL agencies and establishments involved in the organisation of Malaysia's Formula One race have been reminded not to be complacent in their preparations for the 2004 Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix 2004 (PMGP `04) and that they have a national duty to maintain its high standard of success.

In making this reminder, Sepang International Circuit (SIC) chairman Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir (pic) said they should not take anything for granted and should not take things easy following the successes of the last five Grand Prix.

Chairing the first meeting of the PMGP `04 organising committee, Mokhzani said Malaysia had built a very strong reputation in Formula One and that the world had high respect for the country's organisational capabilities.

"While it was good that everything went well for the last five races, it will be dangerous if we become complacent for the 2004 event. We have set a very high standard and are recognised by the F1 community. We must maintain that reputation and make the 2004 event an even bigger success," said Mokhzani, chairman of the organising committee.

PMGP `04 will be held at the Sepang Circuit from March 19-21. Malaysia hosts the second leg of the Formula One World Championship, which opens this season in Melbourne, Australia on March 7.

While noting that the overall organisation of the 2003 event went well, Mokhzani, who replaced Tan Sri Basir Ismail last month, recognised the need for traffic flow management to be further improved.

"Traffic was an issue at this year's Formula One race. We need to ensure a better traffic management system for 2004," said Mokhzani, who was told that the police had conducted a post mortem of the 2003 F1 race and that they had worked out a new traffic flow plan for the event.

SIC also pledged to provide a Formula One car for the medical and extradition team for their use during training in preparations for the event.

Chief Medical Officer Brig Gen Dr Mohd Zin Bidin highlighted to the committee the team's difficulties in their exercise as they are only provided with the FIA extradition cockpit for training five days before the race.

"To train with an actual F1 car will be very good for the team. It will definitely boost their morale and spirit during training," Dr Zin said after the meeting.

The meeting also decided to continue with the military air show at the event where spectators will be treated to a spectacular air show by six F-8 fighter jets.

While congratulating the Multimedia and Telecommunications Commission in their handling of telecommunications during the event, Mokhzani hoped that the team would continue with their excellent performance, which had drew praises from the FIA.

The meeting was told that a total of 600 pairs of frequencies were provided for the Formula 1 teams and officials and that they had not faced any kind of transmission interference during the last five events.

The Immigration Department had agreed to provide two exclusive lanes for the Formula One community during PMGP `04 to ensure hassle-free entry at the KLIA.

Mokhzani also explained the Government's reprieve on tobacco advertising at SIC; saying that cigarette companies are allowed to have advertisements at the circuit.