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No smoking in the pits, says chairman

Arnaz M. Khairul

SEPANG International Circuit (SIC) interim chairman Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir has come down hard on safety, particularly with concern to smoking and children, during the Merdeka Millennium Endurance Race (MME) at the Sepang Circuit on Saturday.

Mokhzani said he wouldn't hesitate calling for the ejection of anyone caught smoking in the pitlane and pit area.

"In this sport, safety is of the highest concern and we should be doing everything required to ensure the highest standards," said Mokhzani.

Mokhzani was speaking at a Press conference after receiving the MME trophy from defending champions Crest Jaseri Racing Team.

Mokhzani himself will be driving in this year's MME in the Crest Jaseri Porsche GT3 alongside Alex Yoong and Faizal Hakimi Jaafar.

"These are simple things which we shouldn't be doing. A simple cigarette but flying into the wrong place can cause a catastrophic fire in the pitlane," said Mokhzani.

"And children too are not allowed in the pit area because it is simply not safe for them. We have had many close calls before and we hope this is taken seriously."

Mokhzani also said that should the need arise in the future, a new format could be introduced for the MME which would cater to the increasing level of participation especially from foreign teams.

"We have to streamline the classes and eventually we might have to run a separate race for the lower classes as the speed differential could become a safety issue," said Mokhzani.