

## **Nearing 100 and driving above 150km/h - Dr M is fast and furious**

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**Yoursay**

A video posted on Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Facebook page shows the former prime minister, who celebrated his 99th birthday on July 10, flooring the pedal at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC).

At the beginning of the three-minute-and-14-second video, Mahathir is shown seated in the passenger seat of the Audi Q5 SUV as he is driven around the circuit by its non-executive chairperson Mohamed Azman Yahya.

However, towards the end, the nonagenarian takes over the wheel and at one point is filmed clocking a top speed of 154km/h.

Earlier, as Azman negotiated the track's bends and chicanes and even performed a slide, he quizzed the former premier on the plan behind constructing the circuit.

"We don't have many tourist attractions, and having a race would stimulate tourists and visitors from foreign countries to come over," he replied.

“Also, we need to entertain the people. The people want to see something. They see (the races) only on the TV screen. They want to see the real thing,” he added.

Mahathir said he and former SIC chairperson Basir Ismail talked about it and decided that it would be a worthwhile investment, with the main aim of hosting Formula One races.

The former prime minister, who officiated the circuit on March 7, 1999, said this was an achievement to be proud of as Malaysia was the first developing nation to become the stage for the competition.

On why he chose the location in Sepang, he replied: “Because we have land... For the airport (KLIA), we acquired 25,000 acres. So there is room (for the circuit) and it is not too far (from the airport which was constructed later).”

Azman agreed that it was a good location, pointing out, “We run races for Porsche Carrera Cup Asia, Ferrari Challenge, for GT World Challenge Asia, they all like Sepang because it is very convenient for them.”

In August, netizens heaped praises on Mahathir and popular automotive website Paul Tan, dubbing him the “99-year-old car guy” over a video depicting him test-driving the new Proton S70.

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