

# Malaysian riders in MotoGP no more a dream - Dr Mahathir

01/11/2019

SEPANG, Nov 1 -- To see local riders and the country's own team lining up the grid on the race day of the Motorcycle Grand Prix (MotoGP) is no longer a dream for Malaysians, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said Malaysians should be proud of the biggest development to own MotoGP team Petronas Yamaha Sepang Racing Team (SRT), as well as seeing Malaysian riders pitting their skills against world-class riders in the World Championship.

“It represents a big step forward of motorsports in the country. To see Malaysian riders lining up the grid on race day is no more a dream.

“This year, we will have our Malaysian boys, Hafizh Syahrin Abdullah in the MotoGP and Adam Norrodin in Moto2, and of course our Malaysian team, Petronas Yamaha SRT team competing against the world champions in all three classes,” said the prime minister, as quoted in the 2019 Shell Malaysia Motorcycle Grand Prix (MotoGP) official programme book.

This year marks 20 years of the Grand Prix at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC), best known for its high-octane international motorsports events such as the Formula 1 (F1) Grand Prix and MotoGP.

Since March 9, 1999, when SIC was officially opened, the circuit has proven to be a catalyst to the development of motorsports in the country and also the region.

Dr Mahathir noted that these developments, coupled with the continuous improvements of facilities at SIC, endless support and involvement from corporate partners and agencies such as the main driver of the event, Shell Malaysia, have made the Malaysian Grand Prix (GP) one of the most popular Grand Prix races in the global calendar.

The Malaysian GP was awarded the Best Grand Prix Award in 2012 and 2017 by the Grand Prix Commission.

Last year, the Grand Prix chalked up a record turnout of 169,827 spectators for the three-day event, the highest in the history of the Malaysian GP.

“I believe we can reach another high this year, thanks to the unwavering support from fans from near and far. I would like to once again welcome everyone to the Shell Malaysia Motorcycle Grand Prix 2019.

“I hope you will have an enjoyable time in Malaysia and take pleasure in enjoying the diverse cultures our country has to offer,” said Dr Mahathir.

The 28th edition of the Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix runs from today to Sunday at the Sepang Circuit.

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