

Borneo Safari challenge starts in Sabah

KOTA KINABALU: Around 1,500 local and international off-road challenge enthusiasts are taking part in the 31st Borneo Safari International Offroad Challenge from Oct 29 to Nov 5.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor flagged off the participants involving a total of 530 specially modified off-road vehicles at the Sabah Tourism Board building here on Sunday. Speaking to reporters after the flag-off, he expressed his excitement about the week-long expedition which will see the participants venture into the jungles around Keningau, Telupid and Ranau districts.

Hajiji said the event had received good response, which shows that not only it is held for recreation but also allows the appreciation of Sabah's natural treasures which offer beautiful sceneries.

"And I was made to understand the participants are not only from Sabah but from abroad including India, which shows this sport is very popular. We welcome their presence in Sabah and hope everyone is able to enjoy this event," he said.

Sabah Four-Wheel Drive Association president Faez Nordin said aside from Sabah and India, overseas participants include from Japan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, New Zealand, Brunei, Thailand, Philippines, United Kingdom and Australia.

He said this year's Borneo Safari expedition will provide new challenges and improvements for the participants, such as the introduction of three different routes for the renowned annual competition.

The introduction of the three-route system, he said, is aimed at providing a smooth running of this year's convoy whereby two routes are each designated to both competition and tag-on



Hajiji (second right) flagging off the Borneo Safari 2023 participants with Christina, Joniston, Fairuz and Faez.

groups for Day 2 onwards. The third route will see a special group of 80 vehicles comprising around 180 participants, mostly from the media convoy group, venture into the restricted Trus Madi Forest Reserve after branching out from the main convoy before Day 1 campsite at Kampung Sook.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for local and international journalists to experience one of Sabah's unexplored jungles which is home to thousands of different flora and fauna. We would like to thank the State government and Sabah Forestry Department for this opportunity," he said.

The centerpiece of every Borneo Safari is its hardcore off-road competition, where this year there are 27 competitors

vying for the Borneo Safari Challenge Trophy as well as the lion share from the RM250,000 worth of prizes awaiting the teams that are able to successfully conquer all 18 Special Stages (SS) during the week-long event.

The expedition this year will venture into the villages and jungles around Keningau, Sook, Telupid and Ranau districts, taking the participants through Sabah's natural beauties, where Mount Kinabalu will be Day 7's campsite view.

Faez also expressed his appreciation to all government agencies and sponsors whose contributions created a win-win advantage for both parties in terms of product branding and awareness in tandem with the success of the event at the end of the day.

Twins excited to graduate together

SERI ISKANDAR: Twins Muhamad Amir Aziz and Muhamad Amirul, both 23, have never been apart since birth and on Sunday both brothers graduated together at the 23rd Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) Convocation Ceremony at the Chancellor Hall here yesterday.

Muhamad Amir Aziz and younger twin Muhamad Amirul received their bachelor's degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Electrical and Electronics Engineering respectively.

The twins, who hail from Langkawi, Kedah are proud that they can 'gift' their excellent success of obtaining an overall cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.5 and above to their parents who are retired teachers.

"From the womb, we have been 'together' from primary school to secondary school until we both managed to obtain degrees from the same university," they said when met by reporters at the

convocation ceremony. Muhamad Amirul is working as an electrical engineer in a company in Penang whereas Muhamad Amir is looking for an opportunity to work in the oil and gas industry.

Meanwhile, the mother of the twins, Ku Syariah Ku Shaari, 59, said she and her husband Aziz Saad, 61, were thankful that their two youngest children successfully completed their education in the field of their choice.

"Since young they have always been together. As a mother, I pray that their lives after this will go smoothly and they will be successful in this world and thereafter," she said.

Meanwhile, 1,386 graduates received their scrolls at the convocation ceremony yesterday.

From the total 114 graduates received the Phd, 198 (master's degree) and 1,074 graduates (bachelor's degree). — Bernama



Muhamad Amir Aziz (right) and Muhamad Amirul — Bernama photo