This green car 'can' go far

Vehicle made of 400 tin cans among students' creations at Shell eco competition

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SEPANG: Yes, tin cans have been recycled for many uses but how about an ingenious plan to build a car with them?

With its body made up of 400 flattened tin cans, the prototype car fits one adult driver and at RM7,000, it is perhaps among the most cost-efficient cars to build.

The vehicle, designed by a team of students from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), is among 120 eco-friendly mobiles competing in the Shell Eco-Marathon Asia 2012 competition.

UPM Green Blitz team manager Abdulrahman Yousif Abdullah, a fourth year mechanical engineering student, said the car had been tested on the road to make 200km on just one litre of fuel.

"Except for the engine, all other parts of the car are made from reusable items, including the headlights and the windscreen.

"Our goal is to achieve a remarkable distance with the using just one litre of fuel," Abdulrahman said at the Sepang International Circuit here yesterday.

The team from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia invented a dual-powered vehicle using battery and solar energy for the urban concept car category.

The 170kg car took eight months to develop and costs RM40,000 to build, said third year mechanical engineering student Neo Rong Gen.

"We have placed eight solar-powered panels on our car. On a fully-charged battery and with good sunlight, the car can run up to 20km," Neo said.

Launched in 2009, the Shell Eco-Marathon Asia is a competition to challenge high school and tertiary students to design and build energy-efficient vehicles that can travel the furthest using the least amount of fuel.

About 1,000 students from 18 countries are competing this year, with Malaysia seeing the largest representation with 28 teams.

The event, which was flagged off by Malaysia's Performance Management and Delivery Unit chief executive officer Datuk Seri Idris Jala, ends today.

Solar innovation: The Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia team setting up its prototype for display during the Shell Eco-Marathon Asia 2012 challenge at the Sepang International Circuit.