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Muhyiddin-Formula

FORMULA ONE ASPIRANT YOONG GETS RM150,000 FROM GOVERNMENT

KUALA LUMPUR, April 28 (Bernama) -- In a move to launch Malaysian drivers into Formula One racing, the government has taken the lead by granting RM150,000 to F-1 aspirant Alexander Yoong.

Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today it was a token sum from the government in appreciation of Yong and his family's effort to compete in the Formula One.

"Its costs millions of ringgit to take part in Formula One. We want to see our drivers in Formula One but we can't take the lead role as we can't afford it," he told reporters after representing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the launch of The Prime Minister's Cup Indy 40 Enduro Langkawi 1999, here.

Muhyiddin said Yoong, who is currently participating in the Formula Three race in Britain. was doing everything on his own and it was time for the government and the private sector to help him in his quest to become the first Malaysian in the Formula One.

The minister said he would discuss with Yoong and his father soon to find out what was needed to pursue his dream and to work out a plan.

"We want to see how much it costs and what type of assistance he needs. At the moment, he is going around looking for sponsors on his own and we will try our best to do something.

Muhyiddin said Yoong was doing well in the Formula Three and it would be not long before he achieved his dream of competing in Formula One.

He said the ministry would help in developing motor sports but big corporations like Petronas, which is currently sponsoring the Red Bull Sauber Petronas Formula One team, could take over once a driver got to the top.

On the go-kart championship which offers RM100,000 in prize money and is scheduled for Aug 14-15, Muhyiddin said 160 riders from 40 teams were expected to compete.

Among the countries expected to take part in the RM1 million meet are Holland, Italy, Germany, France, England, Thailand and Malaysia.

-- BERNAMA

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