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DPM takes a swipe at the organisation of other sports

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WHILE congratulating rally driver Karamjit Singh for making the nation proud by becoming the world champion in the Production Car World Rally, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (pic) yesterday took a swipe at the organisation of other sports.

"Karamjit was committed towards improving his performance. He did it quietly and there was no meddling by officers like in other sports.

"He was also committed towards proving that the national car is one of the world's best production car. Proton (Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional) must be proud of having both a good car and a good driver," he said.

Abdullah said the success of Karamjit and Proton should be emulated by sportsmen and officers managing other sports.

He said that some officials of other sports associations would usually blame one another for the failures of their charges.

"Other sports always get into trouble when their athletes fail to achieve the desired results. Sometimes it is due to internal politics and at other times due to indisciplined sportsmen.

"We lose a lot because we spend a lot...it is our fault (for spending too much)," he said.

He said when a coach and a manager are engaged in fights and pursuing personal agendas, the sportsmen whom they lead will lose interest in the sport.

"This is because the officials will concentrate on resolving their indifferences and not towards improving performance in the sport," he added.

Karamjit and co-driver Allen Oh took their first World Championship title with a total of 32 points after claiming a strong third position and four championship winning points on the final leg of the Rally Australia.

The results on Sunday also makes the Malaysian duo the first drivers to win both the FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship as well as the FIA Production Car World Rally in the same year.

Karamjit, who arrived in Kuala Lumpur last night from Australia, said the FIA Production Car World Rally Championship victory was an unexpected one.

"It is good to have won two FIA championships in one year. The world championship victory however, was totally unexpected since this is our first year in competition and it was supposed to be a learning year," said Karamjit.

Pert team manager Datuk Abdul Razak Dawood said it was a relief that the team had fulfilled a mandate given by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when the team began competing on the world stage this year.