

'Pas using sports for political mileage'

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KOTA BARU: Pas is using sports to gain political mileage rather than producing able athletes, said Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said.

An example, she said, was

Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat's recent statement that Kelantan might organise women-only Muay Thai (Thai kick-boxing) events.

She said this had contradicted Pas' earlier stance of not allowing women to participate in sports.

"They (Pas) are using sports for politics. From banning women's participation in sports, they are now planning kick-boxing events for them. This shows they are not sincere in developing sports."

When the two-day National Women Sports Nisa' Games 2007 in Kelantan was held in

February, Azalina said it was unfortunate that members of the opposite gender, including participants' relatives, the public and the press were barred from attending.

National Council of Women's Organisations deputy president Datuk Ramani Gurusamy said barring men

from the games was a sad day for Kelantan, its people and for sports.

Earlier, Azalina launched the country's first sports event for teachers organised by her ministry. The "Sukan Warga Pendidik" has more than 200 school teachers in Kelantan participating in various sports

such as football and volleyball.

The minister said sports in Kelantan had regressed under Pas rule. She said when sports was given the back seat, health and other related aspects would also suffer. She said sports was important because it could lead to a healthy lifestyle.