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Closer look at censorship (HL)

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PETALING JAYA, Sun. - Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he would ensure a more stringent censorship of movies and films containing excessive violent and sexual scenes but without distorting their original storylines.

There were already censorship guidelines on such movies but more could perhaps be done to ensure that the movies screened would have minimal scenes of this nature, the Deputy Prime Minister said.

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said this when met at the Business Times Golf Invitation, a friendly tournament for government and corporate leaders held at Saujana Golf and Country Club today.

He said that youngsters might emulate the violent acts they saw in such movies but were unaware of the possible dangers they posed.

Abdullah said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's opinion on such movies would be taken into account when determining censorship of these films.

"We will take into account the Prime Minister's view on this matter.

"We will determine with the Censorship Board on how the current policy could be improved so that the elements of excessive violence and sexual scenes could be reduced," he said.

Dr Mahathir, at the Gerakan national delegates' conference yesterday, said the influx of foreign films associated with sex and violence was a contributing factor in the increasing number of cases of gangsterism in schools.

He said incidents like a child hitting his mother and shooting his father, or anything like that, which did not happen in this country years ago, were happening now possibly due to the influence of such violent films.

The issue of gangsterism in schools resurfaced when Mohd Hafizi Jumhari, 16, from Sekolah Menengah Teknik Batu Pahat, sustained serious injuries in an assault by a group of seniors on Aug 12.

And on Aug 20, 20 Form Five students of Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman in Ipoh were expelled for reviving the "high council", a much feared "disciplinary" group.