

DPM: Encouraging progress in amending 'Interlok'
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said today there was encouraging progress in the work to amend sections of a controversial novel selected for use as a school literature book.

He said he learnt of the development from the independent panel undertaking the exercise to make changes to 'Interlok' and was expected to get the details in a few days, after which he would convey the matter to Indian community leaders.

Malaysian Indians had voiced objection to the use of 'Interlok', written by national laureate Abdullah Hussain, as the Bahasa Malaysia literature component for Form Five students in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan because it contained words regarded as derogatory to the community.

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said that after all quarters were satisfied with the amendments and had accepted them unanimously, he would bring the matter to the cabinet for approval because the matter had become a national issue.

"All this will be carried out in about a week," he told reporters after closing the 1Malaysia Foster Family Programme of the Education Ministry, in Putrajaya.

On Jan 27, Muhyiddin said 'Interlok' would continue to be used in schools, but the government had agreed to amend the sections regarded as sensitive by the Indian community.

The independent panel undertaking the amendment exercise is headed by Prof Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, head of the Institute of Ethnic Studies of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

Its members are 'Interlok' author Abdullah's wife Saroja Basri, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka director-general Termuzi Abdul Aziz; Universiti Malaya Academy of Malay Studies director Prof Zainal Abidin Borhan; Associate Prof Dr Lim Swee Tin of the Department of Malay Language of the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM); Sultan Idris University of Education Aminuddin Baki Global Education Centre director Prof Dr NS Rajendran, former Education Ministry officer G Krishnabahawan and author Uthaya Sankar.

- Bernama

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