

Muhyiddin ticked off for 'insulting' writers

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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's remarks that writers are with the government is truly insulting their intellectuality.

According to Uthaya Sankar SB, such remarks not only insult the intellectuality of the literary exponents, but also their integrity and honour, as if they would choose whether they are pro-government or are with the opposition.

Uthaya Sankar (right) was appointed by Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, to be a panel member for amending the controversial novel 'Interlok-Edisi murid'.

Being a member of the panel, he said, does not mean he is with the government.

"I attended various language and literary events with (PKR's) Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad (Seri Setia assemblyperson), but that does not mean I am pro-opposition.

"I am with a group called Kumpulan Sasterawan Kavyan (Kavyan), which works to increase literacy in Bahasa Malaysia among children and youth, but that does not mean we are `pro-government'.

"Now, Kavyan and I are in solidarity with Kampung Chetti, to help that community in writing and voicing their dissension against the state government (in their efforts to save the Malacca heritage village), and that does not mean we are with the opposition," Uthaya Sankar said in a statement.

He was responding to Muhyiddin's statement on Tuesday that many of the writers in the country are with the government and not with the opposition.

Writers should be with the people

Uthaya Sankar, who is Kavyan chairperson, said his stand is that writers have to be brave in representing the people.

"Writers should be with the people, not with the authority or with the government or the opposition," he said, adding that if they were to choose between the two, it would be better for them to be hired writers.

Literary exponents, he said, are selected intellectuals and their stature is higher than that of politicians as the gift of writing comes from God and it is priceless.

He said it is unfortunate for politicians to use writers and label them as pro-government or pro-opposition, as if they were mere followers.

Uthaya Sankar also said it is as if for the BN, writers who support issues of the people are deemed pro-opposition and those who merely follow the BN are called the government's followers.

"For Muhyiddin's attention, I am not a pro-government or pro-opposition. I am a supporter of the rakyat, especially the minority groups that you have discriminated to use for your political and racial gains," he said.

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