

Revised module a 'good example of how to manage sensitive issues'

NST- 27/11/2007

PEKAN: The introduction of the revised version of the Ethnic Relations module for public universities is a good example of how sensitive racial issues could be managed.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the Cabinet, representing all races, had discussed the revised module before giving it the green light.

"All of us were satisfied that the module is the best source of reference on ethnic relations in this country," he said after launching

an entrepreneurial programme at the Pusat Giat Mara here yesterday.

He said the ability of the ministers, as members of the racially diverse Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties, to discuss and agree on "an acceptable solution augured well for the future of race relations in the country.

"It is proof that the spirit of co-operation within the BN could solve such sensitive issues," he added.

The controversial module had

gone through six drafts before the final version was approved by the government on Wednesday.

Changes included the removal of references to the Kampung Medan riots, the involvement of political parties in the May 13, 1969 incident, and historical errors on Sabah and Sarawak.

Additions to the revised version included more information on the contribution of the Chinese and Indian leaders in the fight for independence as well as the contribution of the non-Malays in the

country's economic and political development.

Introduced early last year as a compulsory subject for first-year public university undergraduates, the module drew flak from various groups over some of its contents.

The guidebook of the module was withdrawn in July and a special committee, headed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Malay World and Civilisation Institute director Prof Datuk Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, was formed to draft a new version.