

**DAP seeks halt to 'Interlok' TV shoot, 'Tanda Putera' screening**  
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**By Boo Su-Lyn**

KUALA LUMPUR, June 6 — The DAP urged Putrajaya today to ditch plans to turn the controversial novel "Interlok" into a television drama and to screen "Tanda Putera" in cinemas, amid heightened racial tension after Election 2013.

Indian group National Indian Rights Action Team (NIAT) was reported by news portal Free Malaysia Today yesterday as saying that state broadcaster Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) was planning to produce a television drama series based on "Interlok" in the near future.

"Is it true that the Interlok's return is to teach the Chinese and Indians a lesson for not supporting BN (Barisan Nasional) in the just concluded general election?" said DAP national vice-chairman M. Kulasegaran in a statement.

"Let me warn the BN government that if it takes a position to punish the voters for not supporting BN in the general election, then there will definitely be a stronger Malaysian tsunami against BN in the next general election," he added.

"Interlok", which is part of the Form Five Bahasa Malaysia syllabus in government schools, raised the ire of Indian and Chinese groups in 2011 for using the word "pariah" and for depicting Chinese characters as greedy, opium-smoking lechers.

Then Human Resource Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam reportedly said in December 2011 that "Interlok" would be dropped from the Form Five syllabus in 2012.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, however, said in 2011 that the government would not remove the controversial book from the school syllabus.

Since BN won the May 5 general election with a reduced majority, several Umno politicians and the party's mouthpiece Utusan Malaysia have repeatedly painted the election as a Chinese-vs-Malay vote, with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak calling it a "Chinese tsunami".

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng warned Umno last Tuesday that the ruling party would face a public backlash by allowing cinemas to screen the "Tanda Putera" "racist hate film".

The RM4.8 million local film, directed by Datin Paduka Shuhaimi Baba, is supposed to be a factual retelling of events surrounding the May 13, 1969 racial riots that have long been cloaked in secrecy and which Putrajaya has finally allowed for general release.

Made in 2011 by Persona Pictures Sdn Bhd with funding from the National Film Development Corporation Malaysia, "Tanda Putera" is scheduled for an August 29 screening in local cinemas, just in time for National Day.

Kulasegaran stressed today that "national unity and racial harmony must be placed above party interest".

"I call on the prime minister to accept the people's verdict and do the right thing—cancel the Interlok's return as well as stop the screening of 'Tanda Putera'," he said.

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