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Changes not cosmetic

THE changes that will be made to the University and University Colleges Act (Amendment Bill) are not just cosmetic.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Mohamed Khaled Nordin said 61 amendments would be made to the existing 165 clauses.

"There is nothing cosmetic at all about the amendments," he said after launching the ministry-level Merdeka celebrations in Putrajaya.

Mohamed Khaled said the second reading of the Bill was expected to be tabled in Parliament soon.

It was tabled for first reading in Parliament last month.

He had earlier said that under the bill university students would still be barred from

joining any political party or unlawful organisation or taking part in any of their activities outside campus.

Another amendment, he said, was that university students would only face disciplinary action from their university and not criminal charges if they were caught joining a political party or unlawful organisation.

Earlier, Mohamed Khaled had flagged off a convoy of 500 student cyclists from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Mara.

The students rode from the entrance of the ministry in Putrajaya to UPM in Serdang, Selangor - *By KAREN CHAPMAN*