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Sanusi-language

SANUSI TO MAKE KEDAH FOLKS MULTI-LINGUAL

By: Wan A. Hulaimi

BRUSSELS, June 15 (Bernama) -- Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid said villagers in the state will be encouraged to take up foreign languages as one approach to upgrade the quality of their society.

Sanusi, who disclosed this when visiting a book village at Redu, 130Km south east of here, said they would be encouraged to learn German, French or Japanese, among others.

Each village selected for the programme, would be given book assistance to learn the specified language and the state government would send assessors from time to time, he said.

Sanusi, who himself is conversant in at least five languages including German, said he has his own method of learning foreign languages.

His visit to Redu, a small village in Libin town near the Luxembourg border, was to learn the concept of a book village as practised there.

Redu is the world's second book village in the world. The first was pioneered at Hay-on-Wye in Wales in 1961.

Before arriving here, Sanusi had visited the Bredevoort Booktown in the Netherlands.

After meeting the deputy mayor of Libin, Laurent Jacquet and founder of the Redu book village, Noel Anselot, Sanusi said the proposed book village at Langkawi would be opened in November.

It would be the first in South East Asia and third in Asia after Japan which has one at Miyagawa and Kembuchi.

A big book village is being planned for the year 2000 at Ilsan, 20Km from Seoul in South Korea.

"Langkawi represents one of more than 12 book villages now. The project would introduce Langkawi and we can attract another type of tourists, those who are crazy over books of who number about 20 million," said Sanusi.

Langkawi will be different from Redu, he said, because Langkawi would also serve as a centre not only to sell used and antique books but also new books.

The initial stage of the Langkawi book village project would be made up of six Malay houses to be managed by the Kedah government but inhabited by private traders.

In the long run its management would be handed to the private sector, he said.

Sanusi said the Langkawi book village would also encourage the reading culture in Malaysia.

"We want books to be read not only for examination purpose but also as a hobby," he said.

From here Sanusi and his delegation, comprising administrative officers of the Langkawi book village, book sellers and planners, would leave for Hay-on-Wye before returning to Malaysia on Thursday.

While in Britain, Sanusi is scheduled to call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad now on holiday there. -- BERNAMA

WAH MTA RN