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Ministry confident of meeting one million book donation target

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Rural Development Ministry is confident of collecting one million books for the book donation campaign which will end on Nov 9.

Its Minister Datuk Annuar Musa said response to the campaign had been encouraging since its deadline was extended from Sept 30 to Nov 9 and so far it has received 545,850 books.

Annuar said this at the bulk book donation presentation by Utusan Publication & Distribution Sdn Bhd, Penerbitan Fargoes Sdn Bhd, Malaysian Book Publishers Association and Malaysian Book Importers Association at the ministry today.

"Within one to two weeks, we can achieve the one million books' target and we will be receiving the last bulk donation from Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka on the last day of the campaign," he said.

On the last day of the campaign, Annuar said the Ministry would also be launching 1,001 reading centres nationwide where the donated books will be placed.

The reading centres which had been identified by the Ministry were located in various public places such as in longhouses, suraus, coffee shops apart from proper reading centres.

He said Members of Parliament will be invited to develop and oversee the progress of the reading centres in their areas.

"They will also be responsible in continuing the book collection to enrich the centres," he said adding that September/October each year would be book donation months.

The Ministry, he said was proud of its success of setting up 1,001 reading centres nationwide within less than a year because for the past five years, the Ministry had only able to set up about 200 centres.

"In less than a year, we have been able to increase the number of reading centres by 500 per cent and this was done without increasing the burden on the Government," he said.

At the function, Utusan Publication & Distribution which was represented by its general manager Ishak Hamzah and Penerbitan Fargoes managing director Mohd Haneefa Ibrahim donated RM100,000 worth of books each.

Meanwhile, Mabopa president Datin Azizah Mokhzani presented 10,000 books which were donated by 12 publishers and MBIA president Kevin Sukumaran donated RM40,000 worth of books.

The book donation campaign was launched by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 5 in conjunction with the national reading month. It is to promote the reading habit among rural residents.

The campaign was co-organised by Petronas, Community Development Department, Pos Malaysia Bhd, Astro, the National Library and Radio, Televisyen Malaysia.

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