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900,000 books so far in nationwide drive

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The National Book Donation Drive has to date collected about 900,000 books worth RM10 million.

Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa said today he was sure the target of one million books could be met by the Nov 11 deadline.

Annuar said the books would be sorted out into three categories: for primary school pupils, secondary school pupils and adult reading.

"Once sorted out, the books will be placed in 1,000 reading centres to be set up nationwide," he told reporters at the Parliament lobby here.

The book drive was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in September. It is organised with the co-operation of Astro, Petronas and Pos Malaysia.

Annuar said the Government would top up the cost to purchase additional books to make sure that all reading centres had an equal number of books.

Most of the books, donated by individuals and publishers, are English books.

"Even though some of the books are old, they are still good books," Annuar said.

A large percentage of the books, about 20 per cent, were collected from Kuala Lumpur while about 12 per cent were collected in Penang. Kelantan collected the least number of books (five per cent).

Annuar said the book donation drive was likely to be made an annual affair to be launched every September.

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