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Adam works to help the blind with translations into Braille

JOHOR BARU, Fri. - Mohd Adam Lee Abdullah was born blind but the 28-year-old librarian does not see the handicap as an obstacle to a successful career.

He has translated the Quran, a speech by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Vision 2020 and eight books from the standard text into Braille.

His translations of the Quran and Dr Mahathir's speech have been printed.

The translation works were done over the four-year period that he has been serving at a library run by the Johor Public Library Corporation in Jalan Gertak Merah here.

Using WindowEyes Version 3.0, Adam was first exposed to the computer some eight years ago during a nine-month stint in the US.

"I went there for a short course on Introduction to Braille Literacy. At that time, we were taught the "dos-based" programme because Windows was considered too sophisticated for us.

"I learnt how to operate Windows 95 in 1995 when there was some advancement in screen reading programmes," he said.

Elaborating on the translating procedure, Adam said firstly, a standard text would have to be scanned.

"After that, the text must be edited using a word processor and stored in plain text file.

"It is easier to translate an English text into the Braille format because of the availability of the "MS-Dos Prompt Braille" translator software. The software will automatically translate the standard text into Braille format to be printed.

"However, we need an extra person to do the formatting for Malay text," he added.

Adam is the youngest in a family of 10 children, and three others are also blind.

Having completed his primary education at the Princess Elizabeth School for the Blind in Johor Baru, Adam went on to pursue his secondary education at the English College here, where he obtained the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia certificate.

He worked as a volunteer at the Princess Elizabeth School for the Blind for a year before becoming a librarian.

Adam continues to volunteer his service at the school during his leisure time.

Asked about his aspirations, Adam said he hopes to translate more primary and secondary school reference books into Braille format to help blind students.

"I also hope that all blind-related organisations will share their materials to benefit the country's blind society," he added.

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