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Bid to set world record in tree planting

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The 100,000 trees to be planted nationwide in a minute in the Millennium Tree Planting event on Oct 15 may enter the Guinness Book of World Records.

National Landscape Department director-general Datuk Ismail Ngah said officials from the Malaysia Book of Records would be present to verify the feat and pass on details to Guinness Book officials for recognition.

He said the current Guinness record accomplished in 1986 in Sao Paolo, Brazil, involved 24,199 trees planted in a week. MBR's record is 10,000 trees planted in a minute on Aug 31, 1998.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will launch the Millennium Tree Planting event at Bukit Jalil Park here.

At the same time all Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers will launch similar events in their respective States.

Ismail is confident of achieving the 100,000 trees target as public response is good.

He said planning for the event began six months ago.

He added that the feat was being attempted in conjunction with the World Habitat Day and the 100,000 target might even be surpassed.

The event will be synchronised nationwide via radio and "live" television transmission over RTM.

Ismail said the event was to encourage the public to plant more trees to improve greenery, landscape and environmental quality.

"It is to improve public awareness on the Government's aspiration to create a balance between green lungs and areas of development," he said.

The programme is being organised by the Housing and Local Government Ministry through the National Landscape Department with the co-operation of The Tree Planting Group, Government agencies, State Governments, local authorities and other non-governmental agencies.

For the event, Johor offers to plant 11,500 trees, Kedah (8,000), Kelantan (7,000), Malacca (3,000), Negri Sembilan (4,000), Pahang (6,000), Perak (12,000) and Perlis (1,000). Penang will be planting 6,000, Sabah (9,000), Sarawak (9,000), Selangor (11,500), Terengganu (4,000), Kuala Lumpur (7,000) and Labuan (1,000).

The Millennium Tree Planting event is among the efforts to turn Malaysia into a garden state by 2005.

The nationwide campaign, launched by Dr Mahathir on March 3, 1997, targets to plant three million trees by the end of this year and 20 million by the end of 2020.

Ismail said members of the public who would like to join the tree planting event could obtain further information from the nearest district office or local authorities.

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