

28 FEB 2002
Quran-Braille
BLIND BOY PRODUCES QURAN IN BRAILLE

By: Mohd Zahari Morad

ALOR SETAR, Feb 28 (Bernama) -- A 15-year-old blind student who has learnt the Quran by heart has now produced a copy of it in braille, complete with all 30 sections.

Nabil Mahathir, 15, of Taman Wira, Mergong, took a year to complete the work at the end of last year.

Speaking to Bernama at his house, Nabil said he took the initiative to produce the Quran in braille to enable the blind to deepen their knowledge of the Quran.

Apart from that he considers his work as a pious service to Muslims.

He began writing the Quran using the braille machine early last year by devoting an hour or two daily to the work especially in the evening.

The copy of the Quran produced by Nabil is in five books with each containing between five and six sections.

Nabil's father, Mahathir Yusof, 58, said he was trying to get a patent for his son's work and expressed the hope that the relevant bodies such as the Islamic Development Department of Malaysia (Jakim) would be able to help expand his son's works.

"I hope my son's work can be expanded so that it will benefit all blind Muslims," said the pensioner who was previously with the Royal Customs and Excise Department.

Mahathir said so far no one had reviewed the contents of the braille copy of the Quran produced by his son.

Nabil, the fifth among eight children, was born in Medina, Saudi Arabia, while the family was on pilgrimage and lost his eyesight when he was about seven months following a fall. His mother is still working with the state government.

Nabil enrolled in primary school at the age of four and stopped at Standard Five. When he was 10 he entered an Islamic religious school at Derga, near here and learnt the Quran.

After a year at the school in Derga, he was able to recite nine sections of the Quran.

To deepen his religious studies, his father sent him to the University of Khartoum, Sudan, where he studied for three years and returned to Malaysia at the age of 13 armed with a Diploma in Arabic Language and Quran Recital.

While at university, Nabil was an outstanding student and on par with those who had normal vision.

Mahathir said when his son returned to Malaysia, he had applied for a place in Insaniah, a religious institution of higher learning owned by the Kedah Government.

"However the application was rejected because Nabil did not have the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia," he said.

Then his father registered Nabil in Form One at the Sekolah Menengah Tunku Abdul Malik but he left at Form Two to enter the Kolej Islam Darul Ulum, at Pokok Sena, a private college.

He is doing a four-year degree programme at the college and the final year will be at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, where he hopes to graduate with a degree in Syariah Law.

Apart from using braille, Nabil can also use the computer where special software for the blind had been incorporated.

Yesterday he attended a test to determine efficiency in computer use at

the Digital Village. In the test he was required to give answers using the MS Word programme and also draw graf.

Nabil said he would try to get a lap-top to facilitate his studies in college.

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