

## KERATAN AKHBAR

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### Shopping Malls Urged To Provide Reading Spaces

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The text of his speech was read by Ministry of National Unity secretary-general Datuk Seri Hasnol Zam Zam Ahmad.

Aaron added that a series of studies have shown a positive increase in the reading culture among Malaysians, with the average number of books read per person rising from two books in 2005 to 15 books in 2014, and most recently, 24 books last year.

Furthermore, the 2022/2023 Malaysian Reading Profile Study also revealed that 69.9 per cent of Malaysians read to enhance their knowledge, a positive indicator of the country's progress towards becoming a highly knowledgeable society, comparable to other developed nations.

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 4 (Bernama) -- Shopping malls have been urged to provide reading spaces and increase the number of bookstores within their premises to cater to the interests and needs of readers.

Minister of National Unity Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang said that the Malaysian Reading Profile Study conducted by the National Library of Malaysia (PNM) found that 57.7 per cent of Malaysians prefer reading in bookstores, while another 24.5 per cent enjoy reading in restaurants or cyber cafes.

"For instance, BookXcess at MyTown Shopping Mall has become a popular attraction for the younger generation," he said in his speech when launching the Karnival Baca Perdana 2024, organised for the first time by PNM, at the shopping mall here today.

Aaron added that the number of International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN) requested by book publishers for physical books increased by 50 per cent last year, or 9,332 applications, compared to the previous year.

"This data shows that the publishing industry, particularly for physical books, remains relevant and in high demand among readers, and continues to hold its place even as electronic media dominates our daily lives," he said.

In this regard, he said that the Ministry of Education is currently reviewing the existing National Book Policy (DBN), with plans to launch an improved policy next year, as the current policy was first introduced on Nov 27, 1985.

He also called on publishing companies to produce more reading materials, as research shows that 72 per cent of Malaysians are keen to purchase reading materials, with an average budget of up to RM500 annually for this purpose.

Additionally, he said the Ministry of National Unity would review proposals from the 2022/2023 Reading Profile Study to establish a National Reading Index (IMK) to monitor the overall reading levels of Malaysians from 2025 to 2030.

The minister also announced several initiatives to be implemented starting next year, including Kem Citra Baca, a programme featuring social activities, the introduction of a new National Reading Icon, the appointment of the first National Reading Figure, and the Kalam Karyawan programme.

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Sumber : <https://www.bernama.com/en/general/news.php?id=2347821>