

PRIME NEWS

‘Write an intellectual book every year’

KUALA LUMPUR: Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is challenging Malaysians to produce at least one intellectual book a year to produce Nobel Prize winners by 2057.

He said developing countries should produce one book for every 1,000 people. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s index of standard of living and education shows that Malaysia did not meet the quota of 27,000 books a year. Only 17,000 were published last year.

“Scholars should produce books that are not only based on intellectual and empirical studies, but also tailored to the market’s needs. However, the (Unesco) study shows that not all scholars have this ability.

“I would like to challenge every scholar to produce at least a book

every year. We need to have writers and Nobel Prize winners who conduct studies, film production and research materials that are accepted internationally,” he said at the launch of the 2015 National Book Awards here yesterday.

“Writers must be fair to publishers. They must produce marketable books. Publishers need public support and financial assistance from the government to encourage them to produce more books.”

He urged publishers to use modern media such as E-books to market their titles.

“The new market will enable books to be read on computers and smartphones. I would like to call for all publishers to adapt to the new method to ensure that they remain relevant.”

Zahid had asked Prime Minister



Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi handing the Anugerah Perdana Munshi Abdullah to **Datuk Dr Nordin Abdul Rahman** at the 2015 National Book Awards yesterday. On the right is **Yayasan Pembangunan Buku Negara** chairman **Hasan Hamzah**. Pic by Mohd Yusni Ariffin

Datuk Seri Najib Razak to set aside RM2 million to help publishers produce more titles. He said Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka had offered to publish his PhD thesis.

“The Universiti Putra Malaysia vice-chancellor, who is here, knows that I did not buy my PhD. I am reluctant to publish my thesis because my research was centred around conventional communications based on the five elections covered in the print media during the

era of the former prime minister who led the country for 22 years. The current situation is different as the conventional media has moved to the online platform.”

Professor Tan Sri Dr Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas was named national book icon 2015, while Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Kim was recognised as history icon.

Zahid launched the Hang Tuah book, *Catatan Okinawa*, which provided evidence for the existence of

the Malay warrior.

Professor Emeritus Dr Hashim Musa and his co-writer, Dr Rohaidah Kamaruddin, took about a year to study data on Hang Tuah.

“To prove he existed, we needed primary data. We got this from several countries, including Japan. We found three letters written by Hang Tuah on behalf of the Sultan of Malacca to Okinawa, which at that time was known as Ryukyu, from 1480 to 1481.”