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ASM tasked to find solutions to address issue of SPM holders not furthering their studies

By YEE XIANG YUN



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KOTA TINGGI: It is worrying that 72.1% of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) candidates do not want to continue their studies after secondary school, says Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Minister said that research is being conducted by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) to identify solutions for the lack of interest among SPM holders in furthering their studies.

He said instructions have been given to ASM, the country's scientific advisory body under his ministry, to come up with its own research to find out the "real numbers" as well as the necessary measures to address the issue.

On the data released by the Statistics Department recently, Dr Adham said that it will be a huge loss for the nation if the statistics reflect the real situation on the ground.

“Once ASM completes its research, it will be presented to the government to implement the necessary measures and programmes to ensure that this lack of interest will not become a hindrance for the nation to head towards a high-tech generation,” he said.

Dr Adham was speaking to reporters after launching the Keluarga Malaysia National Science Week at the Kota Tinggi tourism information centre here on Sunday (Aug 28).

The Statistics Department recently released a report stating that about 390,000 out of 560,000 SPM candidates - or 72.1% - were interested in joining the workforce immediately after the examination, while only 170,000 students were interested in continuing their studies.

The 2019 study also cited three main reasons behind the lack of interest among 17 and 18-year-olds to further their studies; job opportunities in the gig economy, interest in becoming social media influencers and their impression that continuing their studies would not guarantee better jobs.