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'Study why teens don't want to pursue studies'



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Backed by science: Dr Adham visiting an exhibition booth after the launch of the Keluarga Malaysia National Science Week at the Kota Tinggi tourism information centre.

KOTA TINGGI: The Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM), the country's scientific advisory body, is conducting a study to provide solutions for the lack of interest among secondary school leavers to further their studies.

This was to address a recent report by the Statistics Department which showed 72.1% of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia school leavers do not want to pursue their studies, said Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba.

"The figure is worrying and if it reflects the real situation on the ground, it will be a huge loss for the nation.

“I have instructed ASM, which is under my ministry, to come up with its own research to find out the real numbers as well as the necessary measures to address the issue.

“Once the study is completed, it will be presented to the government to implement measures and programmes to ensure that this lack of interest will not become a hindrance to the nation in heading towards a high-tech generation,” he told reporters after launching the Keluarga Malaysia National Science Week at the Kota Tinggi tourism information centre here yesterday.

Earlier this month, the Statistics Department released a report stating that about 390,000 out of 560,000 SPM candidates, or 72.1%, preferred to join the workforce after the examination. Only 170,000 students were keen to pursue their studies.

The study, conducted in 2019, cited three main reasons for the lack of interest among these 17 and 18-year-olds: job opportunities in the gig economy, interest in becoming social media influencers, and an impression that continuing their studies would not guarantee better jobs.

Meanwhile, Dr Adham said that participation in the Keluarga Malaysia National Science Week had exceeded the ministry’s expectations and target of 1.5 million entries, which was set when the programme was launched on April 1.

“Initially, we expected to hit our target by October (which is) when the programme ends but as of Aug 27, a total of 1.67 million entries from students aged seven to 30 nationwide have been recorded.

“This shows that the programme is a good platform to encourage exploration and interest in science and technology among students from primary to tertiary level,” he added.