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TAJUK ARTIKEL	STUDENTS RAISE THE BAR IN MATHS AND SCIENCE
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BIDANG	SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
KATA KUNCI	STEM

## Students raise the bar in Maths and Science

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**PETALING JAYA:** Students' improvement in Mathematics and Science in the Programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa) 2018 is good but more needs to be done, say educationists.

Parent Action Group for Education Malaysia (PAGE) chairman Datin Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim commended the improvement, calling it good news.

She said students were gradually being exposed to more higher order thinking skills (HOTS) questions to inculcate the thinking culture.

However, Noor Azimah said the improvement was marginal, adding

that Malaysia was far from being among the top third by 2025.

"Teachers are still calling for more training on how to tackle HOTS questions in order for students to be more familiar and thus be quick to answer them within the stipulated time," she said.

Melaka Action Group for Parents in Education (Magpie) chairman Mak Chee Kin said it was a positive development.

"It's good news as the new Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (KSSM) syllabus covers HOTS and critical topics.

"However, the number of students taking STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects has dropped at an

alarming rate and is of great concern.

"Many fear the subjects are tough and that it is difficult to score As, jeopardising their chance to enter public universities," he said, adding that the government should look into this matter.

Educationist Prof Tan Sri Dr T. Marimuthu said although the increment was not significant from the previous Pisa ranking, the improvement was encouraging.

"Step by step, we will be able to reach the desired level.

"Science and Maths are important subjects as we enter the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0); these changes require scientific minds.

"The efforts by the Education

Ministry and other parties to encourage students to enter the sciences through education policies have produced encouraging results," he added.

Marimuthu hoped that teachers and policymakers would be motivated by the rankings to work harder for the next Pisa edition.

Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Jamil Maah, director for Universiti Malaya's (UM) Centre for Foundation Studies in Science, agreed that it was a positive sign.

He said many public universities, including UM, had a STEM centre to promote STEM subjects to school students as well as students in higher learning institutes.

"We have been working together

with public and private universities, as well as NGOs, to promote the importance of these subjects to students.

"The hard work pays off and students are becoming interested in the sciences. As we face IR 4.0, we need professionals who are technically sound," he said.

Mohd Jamil also hoped that the STEM options in next year's subject packages for Form Four students would allow them to take STEM subjects.

"This is good news and we look forward to helping organisations in promoting STEM.

"It's high time we upgrade our facilities and the way we teach these subjects," he said.

DISEDIAKAN  
OLEH

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