

Stepping away from A-obsession

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Datuk Dr Ahamad Sipon has not named the best student

PUTRAJAYA: The Education Ministry has avoided controversy over who exactly is top scorer in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia examination by not naming one.

Instead, it has chosen to celebrate the achievements of the “100 excellent pupils” nationwide in a shift from the A-obsessed culture among Malaysians.

Education director-general Datuk Dr Ahamad Sipon's Press conference yesterday saw him and reporters engaging in a friendly exchange of who were the top students in the examination.

There was no mention of whether anyone had equalled or bettered the remarkable 17 1As record set by Nur Amalina Che Bakri in 2004.

Ahamad also declined to be drawn into the issue of whether a pupil who had 16 1As performed better than

one who scored 14 1As and four 2As.

“We will not be saying who is the best student. We actually do not want to say it. All students have their own strengths and it is not fair to say who is the very best and so on.”

The ministry has also not named the top performing school over the last few years.

Last year, students like

Comparison of five individual subjects' results (in percentages) between 2006 and the previous two years.

YEAR	BAHASA MELAYU		ENGLISH		HISTORY		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE	
	A's & B's	D's, E's & Fail	A's & B's	D's, E's & Fail	A's & B's	D's, E's & Fail	A's & B's	D's, E's & Fail	A's & B's	D's, E's & Fail
2006	47.5 %	33.2 %	26.2 %	60.2 %	24.2 %	57.7 %	33.6 %	55.3 %	26.8 %	44.9 %
2005	46.6 %	31.8 %	26 %	60.1 %	32.4 %	48.3 %	37.3 %	51.1 %	27.5 %	42.7 %
2004	48 %	31.5 %	21.3 %	64.9 %	28 %	51.1 %	35 %	53.9 %	30 %	41.1 %

Chong Huey Ee (who scored 15 1As and one 2A) were baffled by the ministry proclaiming that Elizabeth Jack of Klang and Chin Shiang Jin of Kota Kinabalu who scored straight 1As in all 15 subjects were the top students.

Overall, there was a drop in showing in some critical subjects.

Students generally did better in English with more scoring As but fewer candidates qualified for certificates.

Despite the slight drop in performance, he said this was nothing to be alarmed about.

He said fluctuations were

normal and that the ministry would conduct “a study on declines in subjects of more than three per cent”, including History, Science and Engineering Technology.

Ninety per cent, or 319,670 out of a total of 358,884 students, received their SPM certificate this time around, compared with 91.1 per cent last year. Of that, 22.8 per cent obtained distinctions (1A and 2A), 44 per cent obtained credits (3B to 6C) and 23.2 per cent obtained passes (7D to 8E).

A total of 35,329 or 10 per cent of candidates failed (grade 9G).

Ahamad said a total of 4,311 students (1.2 per cent) landed straight As, with 918 obtaining 1A for all their subjects (0.3 per cent), compared with the previous year's 1.09 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively.

There was no analysis for the performance of rural pupils compared with their urban counterparts, but Ahamad said that female candidates fared much better than their male counterparts.

He did not, however, provide statistics on this.

Ahamad also announced the names of five special needs pupils who had performed

well in the SPM, a continuation of a trend Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein started in 2005.

They are Mohd Faiz Shuhaimi (7 As) from SMK Tun Habab, Johor, who is deaf; Muhammad Raizan Ab Rahman (7 As) from SMK Bandar Utama, Selangor, who is paralysed; See Jhuan Jiat (9 As) from SMK Sam Tet, Perak, who is deaf; Siti Hawa Apandi (5 As) from SMK Seri Mahkota, Pahang, who is paralysed; and Syarnissa Ahmad Dahiuri (7 As) from SMK Hill Crest, Selangor, who is vision impaired.