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# Over 10,000 students miss 2023 SPM exams due to family, health issues

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*Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek said that of the total, 8,676 were candidates from schools under the ministry; 1,263 were private candidates and the remaining 221 were other candidates, from schools under government agencies, state religious secondary schools and private schools among others. NSTP/DANIAL SAAD*

KUALA LUMPUR: Family problems, accidents, illness and work were among the main reasons for more than 10,000 candidates who registered for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2023 did not sit for the exam.

Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek said that of the total, 8,676 were candidates from schools under the ministry; 1,263 were private candidates and the remaining 221 were other candidates, from schools under government agencies, state religious secondary schools and private schools among others.

"For the examination year of 2023, a total of 383,685 new candidates registered for at least six subjects.

"Among them, 10,160 candidates, or 2.6 per cent of the total, were absent from the exam, which compares to 14,858 candidates, or 3.8 per cent of the total, in 2022.

"In other words, the figure represents a decrease of 4,698 candidates or 1.2 per cent in 2022. The absentee rate has decreased from 3.8 per cent to 2.6 per cent," she said in a parliamentary written reply, in response to several members of Parliament.

The MPs inquired about the number of SPM absenteeism and measures to tackle the issue. Among the MPs include Zakri Hassan (PN-Kangar), Roslan Hashim (PN-Kulim Bandar Baharu) dan Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (BN-Ayer Hitam).

Fadhlina said the ministry has outlined four interventions to improve student attendance at school and participation in the SPM, including optimising guidance and counselling services in schools through student development programmes.