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Penang education fair a hit

Thousands descend on PISA to explore courses and career options

GEORGE TOWN: Thousands of visitors thronged The Star Education Fair 2010 at the Penang International Sports Arena (PISA), with the youngsters eager to explore their career options and dotting parents taking a keen interest.

Many turned up as early as 10am, an hour before the official opening.

Among them was 18-year-old Fionseca Teh, who was hunting for a medicine-related course and did not want to miss the chance to find out more about the programmes being offered.

"I like biology, so something related to medicine would appeal to me," said the former SMK Kulim student, who was accompanied by her mother Empi Naong.

Also looking for medical-related courses were friends Karitha Mahendran and Sitresh Letchumanan, both 18.

Karitha said she had a passion for a career in medicine as she wanted to help people while Sitresh said it was a field he had always set his sights on.

The fair attracted people from near and far, with some coming

from the East Coast.

Cousins Chin Han Zhong and Chong Khye Shern, both 18, and from Terengganu, were spotted at The Star Education Fund booth, getting advice on potential scholarship options.

"We knew there would be quite a variety of courses on offer, so I brought them here to explore their options," said their uncle Teo Yee Siong.

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, in his speech, said the fair, which was in its 10th year, would be helpful for students who had just completed their SPM or STPM examinations.

"School leavers can determine the choices of their studies, besides getting advice and counselling from established educators here."



Glad to meet you: Lim sharing a light moment with visitors at the SEGi College booth. With them are (standing, from right) Ngiam, Kamal, SEGi College Penang principal Jeffrey Goh and vice-principal Chionh Hai Pin.

"I hope *The Star* will continue its tradition of holding the fair for many years to come," he said, before launching the fair yesterday.

Also present were Star Publications (M) Bhd executive director Tan Sri Kamal Hashim; group managing

director and chief executive officer Datin Linda Ngiam; regional operations manager Chung Chok Yin; education editor Chelsea Ng; and Penang news editor Eddie Chua.

At the Suria FM booth, former Roda Impian host Halim Osman

entertained the crowd and livened up the atmosphere.

Highlights during the two-day fair which ends at 7pm today include career talks and the Spin & Win Contest where over 4,000 prizes await winners.

You can't miss this: An eye-catching booth with a double-decker bus concept at the ASA Overseas Education Specialist booth in The Star Education Fair in PISA.



Response is 'overwhelming'

GEORGE TOWN: Exhibitors at The Star Education Fair 2010 were kept busy distributing brochures and leaflets of their programmes as well as attending to enquiries from the many visitors.

Streams of students and parents jammed their booths to check out a wide array of courses offered by local and foreign institutions of higher learning.

Among the exhibitors was INTI International College Penang where half the total amount of its brochures were snapped up in just two hours.

Its promotions and marketing department head Michael Tneh said they brought along 20 boxes containing 200,000 brochures but only

12 boxes were left as of 1pm.

"The response is so overwhelming. We underestimated the number of brochures needed to bring along.

"We will be bringing more tomorrow (today) which is the last day of the fair as we are anticipating the number of enquiries to double," he said.

Another exhibitor, ASA Overseas Education Specialist, caused many heads to turn with its red London double-decker bus booth.

Its country manager Winnie Tan said they wanted to tell students that they would be "driven" to their destination which represented their education dreams.

Earlier, representatives from

Equator Academy of Art, Han Chiang College, INTI International College, KDU College, PTPL College, SEGi College and Sentral Technology College pledged 67 scholarships worth RM1.16mil to The Star Education Fund.

They are among 46 local and foreign institutions nationwide which are offering 398 scholarship awards worth RM13.8mil this year.

In his speech, Star Publications (M) Bhd executive director Tan Sri Kamal Hashim expressed his heartfelt thanks to the colleges for their generous contributions and support to the fund.

He hoped that they would continue their support in the years to

All ears: Potential students listening to Tneh (left) explain the courses offered by INTI International College at the fair.

come for the benefit of deserving students, adding that since the fund's inception in 1994, a total of 2,438 students had received scholarships worth more than RM60mil.

Star Publications group managing director and chief executive officer Datin Linda Ngiam said the fund was set up as there was a need to do something for bright students who were deprived of further education due to the lack of financial means.

The Star Education Fund manager Susanna Kuan said special consideration would be given to physically-challenged applicants, adding that

applicants need not necessarily be top academic achievers.

"We will also consider their family background before giving out the scholarships to the students," she said.

Interested parties can obtain the application forms from the The Star Education Fund booth or download them from <http://thestar.com.my/edufund>.

Submission for applications closes on March 26.

See Nation 10

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