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Convicted Khir's offer:

Dental service for jail time

The Federal Court has maintained that former Selangor menteri besar Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo is guilty of using his position to obtain two plots of land and a bungalow at Section 7 in Shah Alam eight years ago. But Chief Judge of Malaya Justice Zulkefli Ahmad Makinudin has reserved sentencing to consider Dr Khir's offer to give free dental treatment to the poor for two years instead of serving jail time. > **See Page 4 for reports by MAIZATUL NAZLINA**



Convicted: Dr Mohamad Khir - accompanied by his wife Zahrah Kechik, relatives and supporters - leaving the Federal Court in Putrajaya after his appeal was dismissed. — MOHD SAHAR MISNI/The Star

'Find out why students shying away from science subjects'

By NEVILLE SPYKERMAN and PATRICK LEE
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PETALING JAYA: A national-level committee is needed to find out why students are not interested in taking up science subjects.

"This has to be done before steps can be taken to reverse the trend," said Universiti Utara Malaysia vice-chancellor Datuk Seri Dr Mohamed Mustafa Ishak.

He said students naturally pursued careers in fields they were interested in and suggested a relook

at how science subjects were taught and learnt.

"We need the data to address the problem so that action can be taken to strike a balance between science and arts," said Dr Mohamed, adding that the Education Ministry has to create enthusiasm for teaching and learning science in classrooms.

He was asked to comment on a study which found that Malaysian students were losing interest in science. Only 21% of those in upper secondary chose to study science subjects in 2014.

The study was carried out by the

Academy of Sciences Malaysia.

Universiti Malaya deputy vice-chancellor (Academic and International) Prof Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud said science should be made relevant to students.

"Students need to see the connection between science and their possible careers," he said.

He said there might be a perception that science subjects were more difficult than arts.

"Courses like business are seen as more attractive options," he said.

National Space Agency (Angkasa)

director-general Dr Noordin Ahmad said students should be allowed to choose the subjects that they wanted to study rather than forcing them into the arts or science streams.

He said students might not like the options of subjects in the science stream.

"Ultimately, companies want well-rounded graduates," he said.

A Form Five student, who only wanted to be known as Marie, opted for the arts stream after finding science "boring".

"I didn't find the subjects interest-

ing," said the 17-year-old from Kuala Lumpur, whose ambition is to become a manga (Japanese graphic comic) artist.

Jing Min, 16, said he was forced to go into the science stream by his parents.

"I don't really like biology but the other subjects are okay," said the Form Four student from Damansara.

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