

SPM students allotted extra 410 varsity seats

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Degree courses for those with 10As or more, says Ong

By Eileen Ng

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues: The Education Ministry has allotted an additional 410 university seats for students who obtained excellent SPM results but failed to secure places at public universities.

MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat said today 160 places were allocated for students with 10As and above, and the rest are for students with 9As and below.

"Those with 10As and above will be offered degree courses," he said at a press conference.

Ong, who is also the deputy youth and sports minister,

said those with 9As and below will also be admitted to degree courses. However, priority will be given to those who obtained 1A in five Science and Mathematics subjects.

He said this assurance was given by Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad after a meeting with Barisan Nasional component party youth chiefs yesterday.

Asked whether the students will be given courses of their choice, Ong said: "They will be given courses related to their choice this depends on the universities concerned as to whether there are sufficient places or not."

For STPM students, Ong said the movement received 17 cases of students who received

straight As but failed to gain entry into public universities.

"After the meeting, it was agreed that 14 of them will be offered places to do medicine and the others will be given courses of their choice."

Ong said it is inevitable that some deserving students will be unable to enter local universities and the movement will continue to help those affected.

He also said the movement had submitted to the Public Services Department a list of 37 students who failed to obtain PSD scholarships despite being eligible.

"We are grateful that the relevant authorities are very responsive towards the stu-

dents' plight and we are in the midst of trying to solve some minor details," he said.

Ong said the movement also appealed to the ministry to enrol diploma holders from local universities and polytechnic to the second year degree courses.

The plight of SPM students who failed to secure places in public universities despite achieving straight As surfaced early this month.

As a result, MCA Youth had amassed about 900 complaints from students and a report was submitted to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.