

# AG looking afways to tighten laws governing private religious 'schools

**GENTING HIGHLANDS;** Tues: The Attorney-General will find ways to tighten laws to check on private religious schools, says Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad.

He said this is because private religious schools are under the purview of the state.

"If the schools continue to be under the states, then it is a question of tightening the regulations.

"But it could also become an issue of religious education coming under the purview of the min-

istry," Musa said.

He was responding to questions on the statement made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last month on tightening laws to check on 'private religious schools.

He said for the schools to come under the ministry, the government will have to look at the relevant laws and the Federal Constitution.

Deputy Education Minister Datuk Abdul Aziz Samsuddin had said on Sept 2 that the ministry

will ask its legal advisors to draw up a specific act to do so.

On another matter, Musa said the ministry has discussed in depth the matter of a **small** number of students, who are not academically inclined, creating problems in-schools.

He said the ministry has introduced vocational, technical and basic industrial skills courses to address the problem, by allowing these students to take up "hands-on" subjects.

"Our aim is to ensure that in 10

years time, 35% of Form Four and Form Five students will be able to enrol in such subjects.

"This will take care of the problems gradually," he said during a break in the second session of the National Education Convention at Aminuddin Baki Institute here today.

The three-day convention for principals and headmasters, themed **Excellence in Education Leadership as Basis for the Vision's Success**, focuses on excellence in education, particularly in

schools.

Musa said at present, only 5% of students are able to take up the subjects due to limited places in vocational schools.

"Starting next year, the subjects will be introduced at 100 regular schools. In time, we hope all schools besides vocational ones, will have such courses."

The basic industrial courses to be offered to students include introduction to engineering, agriculture, hospitality and computers.