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Chair in Occidental Studies soon

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - A Chair in Occidental Studies will be established at a public university soon to study all aspects relating to the European race, including their culture, world view and behaviour.

Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad said the proposal was approved by the Cabinet today.

"The ministry's higher education department will decide on the terms of reference, scope of duties to be undertaken by the professor occupying the chair and the allocation needed.

"We hope to have the chair established as soon as possible. It is important for us to understand the European race as they determine the world's development, especially in economy," Musa said after the ministry's post-Cabinet meeting today.

Musa said the decision to set up the chair was pursuant to a proposal by Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at the party's recent general assembly. The proposal was supported by party president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Najib had suggested the establishment of an Institute in Occidental Studies to study the behaviour of the European race.

Dr Mahathir had, at the assembly, pointed out that it was important to know their tendencies in order to better understand them.

Musa said that while it had not been decided which university would be involved, Universiti Malaya was being considered.

"This is because the university already has a Asia-Europe Institute. However, its role is different in that it is more to study co-operation between Asia and Europe, but that can be expanded on."