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French varsity to be set up here soon

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - A French university will soon be set up in the country, focusing on technical courses such as engineering, said Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad today.

He said this was the result of talks between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and French President Jacques Chirac during the latter's recent visit here.

Musa said his ministry would start discussions with the French Embassy here.

"The university will be more inclined towards technical courses such as automotive engineering and aerospace engineering as the French are noted for their technical expertise and experience," Musa said today.

Musa also announced that the ministry had identified Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia to establish a chair in Occidental studies with focus on all aspects relating to the European race, including their culture, world view and behaviour.

The institution to study Dr Mahathir's thoughts will be established in Universiti Utara Malaysia.

Musa also said discussions to set up a Japanese university in Malaysia were in the final stages while the setting up of education offices in China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Dubai was progressing well.

"The Public Service Department has given its approval."

The ministry's secretary-general Datuk Ambrin Buang said the offices would begin operations soon.

He said the ministry would work with the Foreign Ministry, Matrade and other government bodies to turn Malaysia into a regional centre for excellence in education.