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Decision soon on apex varsity

KUALA LUMPUR: The highly anticipated decision on which university will be chosen as an apex university (a university with world class potential) will be made soon.

"I will discuss the matter in Cabinet," said Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin at the Asean Quality Assurance Agencies Roundtable Meeting at Legend Hotel yesterday.

"Hopefully we'll know the university that will be chosen for the accelerated programme for excellence (apex) before the end of August."

The nine universities vying for selection are Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia, Universiti Islam Sains Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara as well as two private universities - Universiti Teknologi

Petronas and Universiti Tenaga Nasional.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi first mentioned apex universities when he launched the National Higher Education Strategic Plan last year and hoped to see at least one named in the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

Quality assurance experts from Malaysia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Phillipines, Thailand and Vietnam will make presentations at the ongoing Roundtable Meeting.

"I believe the caucus or network of Asean quality assurance agencies can enhance national capacity building, develop an Asean quality assurance framework, share best practices, facilitate student and programme mobility and recognise qualifications," said Khaled.