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Colombo confce of Education Ministers opens

COLOMBO, July 24: The fourth regional conference of Education Ministers of Asia and Oceania was inaugurated here today by the President of the Sri Lanka Republic, Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, reports PTL.

The nine-day conference is being attended by over a dozen Ministers of education of regional UNESCO countries as well as observers from several non-member states and territories and representatives of various inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, funds and foundations.

Sixty-five per cent population of the world is being covered by countries represented at the Colombo meeting, the fourth such conference organised by UNESCO and the first since the Singapore meeting in 1971.

Participant countries are: Afghanistan, Australia, Burma, China, Japan, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, USSR, Indonesia, Papua — New Guinea, Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka.

The conference will discuss, among other things, recent developments and emerging educational policy trends in the region, equal access to education in the perspective of democratisation of education, effectiveness in educational and mobilisation of all possible learning and financial resources, interlinking of education and productive work, reform and renewal of education closely linked to economic, social and cultural development, and forms of international and regional cooperation.

In a brief extempore speech Mr Jayawardene outlined the problems faced by his country in the field of education and drew the attention of the delegates to efforts being made by his United National Party government to establish a 'just and free society' assuring freedom of expression and movement.