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Zafar for sound basic education

BARBADOS, Oct 30 (BSS): Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed today urged the Commonwealth countries to evolve appropriate strategies for a sound, basic education.

He said this was fundamental to any qualitative improvement of higher as well as scientific and technical education.

The Prime Minister stated this at the inaugural ceremony of the eleventh conference of Commonwealth Education Minister at Frank Collymore Hall, here this morning. He was speaking on behalf of all visiting ministers and heads of delegation in response to the inaugural address of Prime Minister L.E. Sandiford of Barbados.

Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed referred to the contemporary world situation. "On the one hand we were experiencing an atmosphere of relaxation of tensions, and on the other, acts of arrogance, illegal occupation, and racial discrimination", he said.

He expressed the hope that the Commonwealth would be able to tilt the balance in favour of peace, progress and development.

The Prime Minister, who also holds the Portfolio of Education, observed that in many ways the

future of the Commonwealth would lay in fostering educational exchange and in strengthening cultural links among member nations. He hoped that the conference would be an important milestone to that end.

Earlier, when Kazi Zafar Ahmed arrived at the conference venue, he was received by Prime Minister L.E. Sandiford of Barbados and Commonwealth Secretary General Emeka Anyaoku, who conveyed their felicitations to President Hussain Muhammad Ershad.

Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed apprised both Mr Sandiford and Mr Anyaoku about the priority assigned to education sector by President Ershad in his development goals. He made a particular mention of the scheme of free primary education being introduced under President Ershad's initiative, commencing next year.

Also for girls, education would be free up to class VIII.

The inaugural ceremony was also addressed by Secretary General Anyaoku. The inaugural address was delivered by the Prime Minister of Barbados.

The conference will conclude on November 2.