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also addressed by Deputy Prime Minister and Political Adviser to the President Kazi Zafar Ahmad, Education Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud and president and secretary of BTA, Deputy Prime Minister Dr M.A. Matin, Ministers, high government officials were present at the function. President Ershad regretted that students often put barricades on roads and railway lines

demanding nationalisation of colleges or right to copying in examinations. And in the process, thousands of passengers of trains and other vehicles suffered due to the blockade, he said.

Turning to the poor literacy rate of the country, President Ershad said it was a matter of shame for the nation that its literacy rate was as low as 30 per cent. He said that though Bangladesh had established itself at various international field, its rural population were still illiterate. He stressed on the improvement of primary education and said that improvement of primary education would help raise literacy rate.

The President said that the government did not want to impose recommendations of the Education Commission constituted last year. He said that there would be discussions, seminars and symposia on the Education Commission report before its implementation. Referring to the efforts taken by his government for improving the condition of the teachers, the President said that Islam as a religion had put education and teachers to high esteem. He said that he had tried his best within limited resources of the country to improve the socio-economic status of the teachers.

President Ershad declared a grant of Taka one crore to the benevolent fund of the teachers.

Referring to the current year's flood, the President said that this year people were not afraid since they had been feeling confident remembering the successful handling of devastating flood last year. He said this year the government had made forward planning in terms of finance & food stock.

BSS adds: speaking on the occasion, Deputy Prime Minister and Political Adviser to the President, Kazi Zafar Ahmad called upon the teachers to maintain their unity under the leadership of President Ershad for realising their demands as well as achieving recognition in the society.

Kazi Zafar recalled that President Ershad had created a unique history in the country by decorating the post of the Chairman of Bangladesh Federation of Teachers Association and said it was because of President Ershad, the teachers of the country had started learning to stand with their heads up the economic condition of the teachers had also improved considerably during the rule of President Ershad, he added.

In his speech Education Minister, Anisul Islam Mahmud called upon the teachers to perform their noble responsibilities teaching the students with a missionary zeal.

The Education Minister recalled the contribution of the present government under the dynamic leadership of President Ershad for the improvement of the education as well as the teaching community and said that time had come to evaluate the qualitative standard of education in the country.

Listing a number of measures to improve the education system in the country suited to the need of the age, Mr. Anis said the government was considering the establishment of two affiliating universities in the country.

About the 1973 university ordinance, the education minister pleaded that time had come to evaluate whether the ordinance which was promulgated with the objective of better functioning of the universities had been achieved that objective or not.

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