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Showcasing progress in education

PUTRAJAYA: The 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) next month has provided Malaysia the best platform to showcase its success and progress in education.

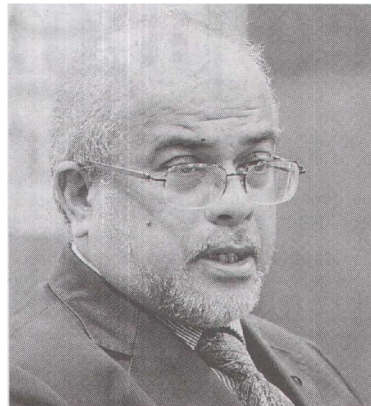
The triennial conference at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from June 15 to 19 is expected to be attended by 1,500 delegates from 53 countries.

Besides education ministers, several countries will be represented by heads of government and prime ministers holding the education portfolio.

They will be joined by other stakeholders such as senior education officials, academicians and youth and non-governmental organisations.

"The conference is about the growth, success stories and future strategies in education for Commonwealth countries.

"Malaysia is honoured to be chosen for the first time to host this prestigious event, which augurs well for efforts to transform the country into a global education hub," said Education Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Zulkurnain



Education Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Zulkurnain Awang says Malaysia will share its success stories and innovations.

Awang.

This year's event, he pointed out, was special as the conference, themed "Education in the Commonwealth: Towards and Beyond Global Goals and Targets", would be celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Zulkurnain said the Kuala Lumpur meet would have the highest number of participants since the first conference was held in Oxford, Britain in 1959.

"This is one of the most important events in the Com-

monwealth calendar.

"It is aimed at facilitating broad discussions on the progress of the education system among member countries."

On Malaysia's progress in the education field, Zulkurnain said it was willing to share its success stories and innovations with others.

"Many officials, some as far as the West Indies, have shown keen interest in our system. As host, I think the conference gives us the chance to show-

case our achievements and assist others."

Four forums will take place during the conference.

They are the stakeholders forum with the theme "Making Connections and Building Partnerships"; youth forum ("Educating the Youth — Future Commonwealth Perspectives"); teachers forum ("Educators for the Future — The Commonwealth Perspectives"); and the inaugural vice-chancellors' forum ("How far universities are changing and

shaping our world").

Zulkurnain said what's significant about the forums was the diverse background of its participants.

"It will have, among others, youths, stakeholders and school leaders who can contribute ideas to improve the education system. It gives everyone a chance to brainstorm for ideas and new strategies."

This year's conference has an added speciality as it would see youths taking part in a homestay programme in Malacca.

Zulkurnain said the introduction of the VC forum by Malaysia was part of the "Six Action Areas" adopted at the 6th CCEM 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa, which saw discussions centred mostly on tertiary education.

The "Six Action Areas" aims at achieving universal primary education, eliminating gender disparities in education, improving quality in education, using distance to overcome barriers, supporting education in difficult circumstances and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on education systems.