

Annals of amity

31
contd. from page 1
occasion and a momentous event.

President Ershad concluded his remarks with a self-composed poem befitting the occasion. The poem drew immediate appreciative attention from the leaders.

The Charter which was amended at the summit has eight objectives along the three principles.

The principles underlines the sovereign equality of the members affirms that the co-operation would not substitute the bilateral relation and it would not be inconsistent with bilateral or multilateral obligations of the members true to its terms of reference.

Objectives include promotion of welfare of the people of the region to improve quality of life.

The Council of Ministers consisting of the Foreign Ministers will meet twice a year to formulate, among others, policies of the association while the Standing Committee of the Foreign Secretaries will monitor the co-ordination of the programme. Provision has been made for the Action Committee, Technical Committees. There will be Secretariat but the venue has not been decided and each member will contribute to the financing of the projects.

ERSHAD

Speaking on the occasion President Hussain Muhammad Ershad said the first SAARC summit imparted a new political impetus to advance the valuable work of creating new spheres of cooperation.

"What we have set out to do, we have done," he told the concluding session of the two-day summit.

The meeting, the President said, has been the first occasion for the intimate and fruitful interaction of the national leadership of the seven member-states. "In this way the concept of the framers of the Charter has been brought to fruition," he observed.

He said the SAARC Charter provides a sturdy frame for future cooperation and created the essential conditions for the success of future summits.

The President said the meeting has brought home to the Government and people of Bangladesh the positive gains to be secured from regional cooperation and understanding.

President Ershad said the discussions among the leaders had been held in an atmosphere of "free and frank exchange reflecting the basic unity of purpose which brought all of us together."

The farsighted leadership and the practical guidance that the Heads of State and Government have given to the preparations for the meeting and their inspiring participation in it, are irreplaceable investments in the

future of SAARC as in the future of its member-states.

WANGCHUK

The Bhutanese King Jigme Singye Wangchuck said that the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) would herald the dawn of a new era of peace, friendship and cooperation in South Asia.

King Wangchuck expressed his confidence that the vision which brought them together would continue to sustain and inspire.

"Collectively with our vast human and natural resources, we now have the potential to exert a positive influence on the future direction of our global community," he said.

"We have established a viable forum for regular consultation on all issues of mutual concern in pursuance of our common aim to promote peace, progress and prosperity," King Wangchuck said.

SAARC, the King of Bhutan said, was the manifestation of our collective wisdom and political will to bring about meaningful regional cooperation in spite of differences in foreign policy and security perceptions.

RAJIV

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi described the outcome of the first South Asian regional summit as "a new dawn" for the one billion people in the region.

He told the concluding session that he was convinced that the SAARC would succeed because it emanated from "common aspiration" of all the member-nations.

The Indian Prime Minister said that this Association was the most populous of all such regional enterprises in the world and expressed the hope that seven countries would be able to turn it into a forum of "regional peace".

He stressed on the involvement of peoples of these countries in the SAARC and said that it had to be made a peoples movement to make the cooperation a success. Only the participation of the people in a big way could make the cooperation of all these countries worthwhile, Mr Gandhi said.

The Indian Prime Minister said that they had come to the capital of Dhaka two days ago with great hopes and added that all were now satisfied with the first summit of the seven countries, the adoption of the Charter reflected the determination of these countries to engage themselves for peace and economic emancipation of the region, Mr Gandhi said.

The Indian Prime Minister referred to the heritage of all these countries and said that they drew inspiration for the cooperation from similar sources and common aspirations. Nine areas had already been identified for cooperation, he said and hoped that the painstaking efforts over the last few years would now be worthwhile.

Mr. Gandhi expressed his gratitude to other Heads of State and Government for choosing the Indian capital as the venue of the next South Asian summit and said his country would be welcoming them in November, next year".

Mr. Gandhi concluded his speech reciting in Bengali, to the applause of all, from the works of rebel Poet of Kazi Nazrul Islam. Ushar Duare Hanibonghat, Amra nibo renga prabhat—Amra ghuchabo timir raa—badhar bindachal".

BIRENDRA

King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal said that establishment of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation held great promise for the future and assured of his country's contribution to make SAARC a living reality.

The Nepalese Monarch expressed the hope that as the concrete programme moved forward, our people would begin to enjoy the benefits from our common endeavours.

King Birendra said he was certain that what had been achieved at the Dhaka summit was a "new thinking, a modus vivendi, an approach as it were towards a new way of living together". He expressed his firm conviction, "If we had succeeded in creating an order based on the principles of mutuality in matters of common interests, we could certainly have stolen a march in progress in many fields".

Emphasising the importance of the summit, the King said "it was very necessary to put words into deed and turn them into reality". He was however, cautious in remarking that there was "enough reason to

our people cut of proportion".

Tracing the legacy of the people of the region, the King of Nepal said "we in this part of the world have been slow in giving proof to our ability to organise ourselves through a recognition of the fact that other's existence and identity are just as important as our own". This had resulted in loss of time and in sufferings from the ills common to the countries of the Third World, he added.

King Birendra stressed that, time had therefore come to "enter into a new era of partnership among ourselves", for the well-being of our people.

ZIAUL HAQ

Pakistan President General Ziaul Haq said that the deliberations of the first summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation would make a signal contribution to the consolidation of peace and stability in the area.

He said that the decisions taken by us would not only provide a solution to the problems of poverty, hunger and disease in the region but also create conditions conducive to the successful completion of our respective national development plans in other spheres.

President Zia said that the SAARC charter and the Dhaka Declaration had marked the beginning of a new chapter the dawn of a new era in this region.

President Zia said that the Charter had set out the objectives, principles and the manner in which we shall strive to ameliorate the social and economic conditions of our countries.

Similarly, he added, the Declaration has articulated our collective will to secure through joint efforts and sacrifices the blessings of prosperity and lasting peace in the region.

President Zia said "Our resolution to conduct relations with each other on the basis of the universally accepted principles of sovereign equality of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-use of force against each other and non-interference in the internal affairs of others is a harbinger of amity and harmonious and cooperative relations."

He described the SAARC documents as a major landmark in the history of regional cooperation in the South Asia.

"We have given a clear sense of purpose and direction to our common endeavour and we have responded to the challenge of our times in a truly befitting manner," he said.

President Zia said that the Dhaka summit had also provided them an opportunity of discussing a number of bilateral matters of mutual concern.

Our meetings in this respect have been most beneficial and have led to a better understanding of each others perceptions on various issues, contributing to the further consolidation of our personal relationships with each other, he said.

The Pakistan President attributed the success of the deliberations to the able guidance and wise counsel of President Ershad both inside and outside the Conference room.

He pointed out that the long and varied experience of President Ershad, who presided over the summit meeting, reflected profound qualities of statesmanship and understanding of the aspirations of the peoples of South Asia.

JAYEWARDENE

Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene appealed to the member-countries of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to maintain harmony among the grouping to further the cause of beneficial cooperation among them.

President Jayewardene expressed the hope that "there would not be any mutiny aboard the SAARC which has been set afloat" today.

"We have launched the ship today, may it travel around the world, enter the ports of hunger, poverty, unemployment, malnutrition and seek to provide comfort to these ills", the Sri Lankan Head of State told the session.

In a brief speech which was mingled with emotion and wit, President Jayewardene said, "The night comes, the dew drop slips into the glittering sea, SAARC has slipped into the glittering sea. May it sail long for the welfare of the humanity."

President Jayewardene's speech which followed the signing of Charter of SAARC urged the signatories to "work hand in hand" to promote the